

Prefatory Notes for Richard Holbrooke, *To End A War*

The following excerpt is from *To End A War*, Richard Holbrooke's account of his efforts to negotiate the Dayton Peace Accords, which ended the war in the former Yugoslavia in 1995. The reading shows what a real, high-level, multi-party, multi-interest negotiation is like, though in many ways the Dayton Peace process was unusual.

Rather than having you read the entire 400 page book, you will only read 32 pages which describe in detail what happened during the final days of the negotiation. In simplified terms, the negotiation was an effort to end a bloody war among the ethnic groups that composed the former Yugoslavia, including the Serbs, the Croats, and the Bosnians, who were largely Muslim, though their Federation was composed of many ethnic groups. The problems of how to divide territory and where to establish national boundaries were complicated by the atrocities committed by all sides, by the realities of war (boundaries overrun by advancing armies and paramilitary groups), by the refugee problem created by the fighting, and by the fact that Bosnia itself was a patchwork of ethnic enclaves, with a large number of Bosnian Serbs who wanted to be part of a greater Serbia, even though they often acted independently of Serbia.

Since you are coming into the middle of the story, here is a roster of the main characters who appear in the excerpt:

Christopher = U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher

Clark = Lieutenant General Wesley Clark, U.S. Army, working at NATO headquarters

Izetbegovic = Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic

Karadzic = Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic

Milosevic = Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic

Sacirbey = Bosnian Foreign Minister Muhamed Sacirbey

Silajdzic = Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic

Tudjman = Croatian President Franjo Tudjman

Zubak = Federation President Kresimir Zubak, Croat leader in the Bosnian government

As you read, ask yourself:

- What tactics and strategies are being used by the participants?
- What sorts of behaviors work, which do not, and why?
- How do participants build trust or undermine trust?
- Why do setbacks occur and how do participants handle them?
- What does it take to produce the final breakthrough?
- What was the most familiar aspect of this negotiation, given your experiences in this course?
- What was the most surprising or unusual aspect of this negotiation?

RICHARD HOLBROOKE

**TO END
A WAR**



RANDOM HOUSE

NEW YORK

DAY SIXTEEN: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

How much longer could we continue without significant progress on the key territorial issues? The question hung over us during a particularly gloomy 8:00 A.M. staff meeting. Having worked on Silajdzic the previous evening, I decided the next target should be Milosevic, and shortly after 10:00 A.M. Chris Hill and I invited him to take a walk.

It was a clear, dry day—and extremely cold. Dressed in bulky ski jackets and overcoats, we paced the perimeter of the base, trailed discreetly by security guards, for almost two hours. Chris and I put it to Milosevic bluntly: Secretary Christopher was returning to Dayton the next day, and we had no progress to report. Rather than ask for specific concessions, we called for a major gesture of “goodwill” from Milosevic to show he was serious about an agreement. I offered Milosevic two models for Dayton. In one, he could “play Sadat,” and show the Bosnians he was ready to make major concessions to get peace. In the other, we could shut down without an agreement, in which case the sanctions on his country would remain in place and the war might resume. Milosevic, in a thoughtful mood, said he would consider “what kind of gesture” he could make.

By a long and roundabout route we arrived at the Wright-Patterson Officers’ Club around noon and went to the table that was always reserved for Milosevic. I called Rosemarie, who had taken Silajdzic on a similar walk. She decided to bring him to the club for lunch. Arriving fifteen minutes later, she led Silajdzic and John Menzies to a table at the opposite end of the large central dining room, as far from Milosevic as possible.

Thus the stage was set for an unusual diplomatic effort that was later termed the “napkin shuttle.” Leaving Milosevic, I walked across the long dining room to greet Silajdzic. “Are you ready to negotiate right now?” I asked him. “Milosevic is willing to talk about Gorazde.” Haris was interested, but when I invited him to join our table, he refused.

I returned to Milosevic, who was eating his steak with Chris Hill. “Silajdzic is ready to discuss Gorazde,” I reported. Taking out a napkin, Milosevic started drawing a rough map of the area between Sarajevo and the beleaguered enclave. “We can offer safe conduct along these two roads,” he said, indicating the two existing routes between the cities, both now under Serb control. Hill and I objected, saying that the Bosnians would not feel that “safe conduct” would be very safe in light of the last four years. “They will need a genuine, defensible corridor,” I said. “Okay, then I will give them a kilometer on each side of the road,” Milosevic replied.

Carrying Milosevic’s napkin sketch across the room, I sat down with Silajdzic, who, after a moment’s thought, replied with a countersketch showing a

much wider corridor and substantially more land for the Muslims. As the other diners looked on in astonishment, I walked rapidly across the room carrying the two precious napkin sketches, and sat down again with Milosevic.

This scene was repeated half a dozen times over the next hour. Neither man would move to the other’s table, but they eyed each other carefully across the room. Bit by bit, Milosevic yielded land and territory, until the gap between the two men was fairly narrow. Haris went to a phone and called Izetbegovic, who told him to keep negotiating. Finally, I said to Silajdzic, “Don’t you realize that you are gaining something important here? You have to sit down with him. If you come over to Milosevic’s table now you might get what you need.” Reluctantly, Haris followed me to Milosevic’s table. The two men greeted each other in characteristic fashion—Milosevic clapping Silajdzic on the back with false camaraderie, Silajdzic unwilling to look Milosevic in the eye.

The other diners gradually left, and by three in the afternoon we were alone in the large room, Milosevic, Silajdzic, Hill, and myself. Rosemarie and Menzies, having delivered their man, had silently slipped away. The two men argued, in English and in their common tongue, over every detail of the area between Sarajevo and Gorazde. The road, the hydroelectric plants, the destroyed mosques, the small village along the road where General Mladic came from—all were discussed with passion and anger.

They did not resolve their differences, and the meeting ended without agreement. *But for the first time the two sides had actually negotiated on a territorial issue.* Our long talks with each man had had an effect; there was a noticeable change in tone. For the first time, Milosevic accepted the need to create a secure land corridor to Gorazde. Once we had crossed this mini-Rubicon—“actually, the Drina,” Hill joked—we were, in essence, arguing over the location and width of the corridor. These were negotiable. Although we did not resolve the Gorazde issue in the “napkin shuttle,” the meeting marked the first time anyone on either side had shown a readiness to look for territorial compromises.

During the day, Federation President Zubak again threatened to resign. This time his anger was aimed at Tudjman and his fellow Croats, who, he felt, were selling out the Posavina, his home area. He did not feel he could go home again if the territorial agreements at Dayton did not include a Serb “giveback” of some of this land. He felt that the land negotiations were, so far, effectively conceding the Posavina to the Serbs. If this happened, he said, he would have to resign and leave Dayton immediately.

My first instinct was to let him depart. Zubak had been nothing but trouble at Dayton. Susak had always told us to ignore him. But Izetbegovic and Sacirbey both said we should help retain Zubak. After several emotional meetings

and a pledge from both Tudjman and Izetbegovic not to ignore the Posavina, Zubak again backed off, and agreed to stay.

It was time for our next high-level visitor from Washington, Tony Lake. Accompanied by Sandy Vershbow, he arrived in the midafternoon at the base. After a briefing at the Hope Center, Tony and I called on the two Presidents. Tony had decided not to try to negotiate during his short visit, but rather to send a strong message, in President Clinton's name, to reinforce our effort.

The meeting with Izetbegovic was fairly routine, but the Lake-Milosevic meeting set off some sparks. Milosevic began with a typical ploy. "I hear you're the most anti-Serb official in Washington," he said. Tony was pleased by what he considered an implicit compliment. At my request, Tony stayed for an early dinner at the Officers' Club so that we could discuss sanctions. Milosevic came right at Tony, making an all-out effort to change American policy, but Tony held his ground, telling Milosevic that while initialing at Dayton would result in suspension, lift could come only with full implementation. This set off a heated debate over what constituted implementation. But Milosevic knew that in real terms suspension of the sanctions would give him what he needed most, immediate relief for his people.

After two brief calls, one on Izetbegovic and the other on Silajdzic, Tony left for Washington. His trip had conveyed the urgency we attached to the negotiations. I summarized his core message late that evening in a memorandum to Warren Christopher: "Tony said there was no second chance for the U.S.; that this was our last, best shot and that Congress was going south on us; that if they didn't reach agreement when you get here we will turn them over to Carl, Pauline, Jacques, and Wolfgang, and our role will greatly diminish."

It had also given Tony and Sandy Vershbow a sense of Dayton. At one point, as we walked alone through the parking lot, Tony leaned toward me and said, "This is the craziest zoo I've ever seen." This was, in fact, exactly what we hoped our colleagues in Washington would remember; it helped if they understood the special weirdness of Dayton.

After Tony left, Hill and I went to see Izetbegovic, hoping he would be encouraged by the progress Silajdzic had made on Gorazde. Instead, I encountered more tension and disarray within the Bosnian camp. The immediate cause was an article by Roger Cohen in that day's *New York Times* in which unnamed "western diplomats" said that Silajdzic, whom Cohen described as "a brilliant, whimsical man with a Hamlet-like tendency to speak in riddles," had emerged as "the key figure—or 'swing vote' in the Bosnian delegation." Seated next to Izetbegovic, Sacirbey began reading excerpts from Cohen's article in a voice dripping with anger and sarcasm. After he finished, Sacirbey

paused. "There is only one 'swing vote' in this delegation," he almost shouted, "and that is Mr. President, sitting right here." Throughout this charade Izetbegovic sat motionless, with a slight smile playing across his face. What had happened seemed all too clear: Izetbegovic had been unnerved by Tony Lake's private call on Silajdzic and the direct Milosevic-Silajdzic talks. Encouraged by Sacirbey, he had slapped Haris down—hard.

The Clark Corridor. During the meal with Tony Lake, I had suggested to Milosevic that we resume the negotiation over Gorazde after dinner. After his humiliation, Silajdzic could not continue the negotiation, so we invited Milosevic to our building. We hoped to find a route between Sarajevo and Gorazde that would satisfy the Bosnians. To do this, we decided to introduce Milosevic to PowerScene.

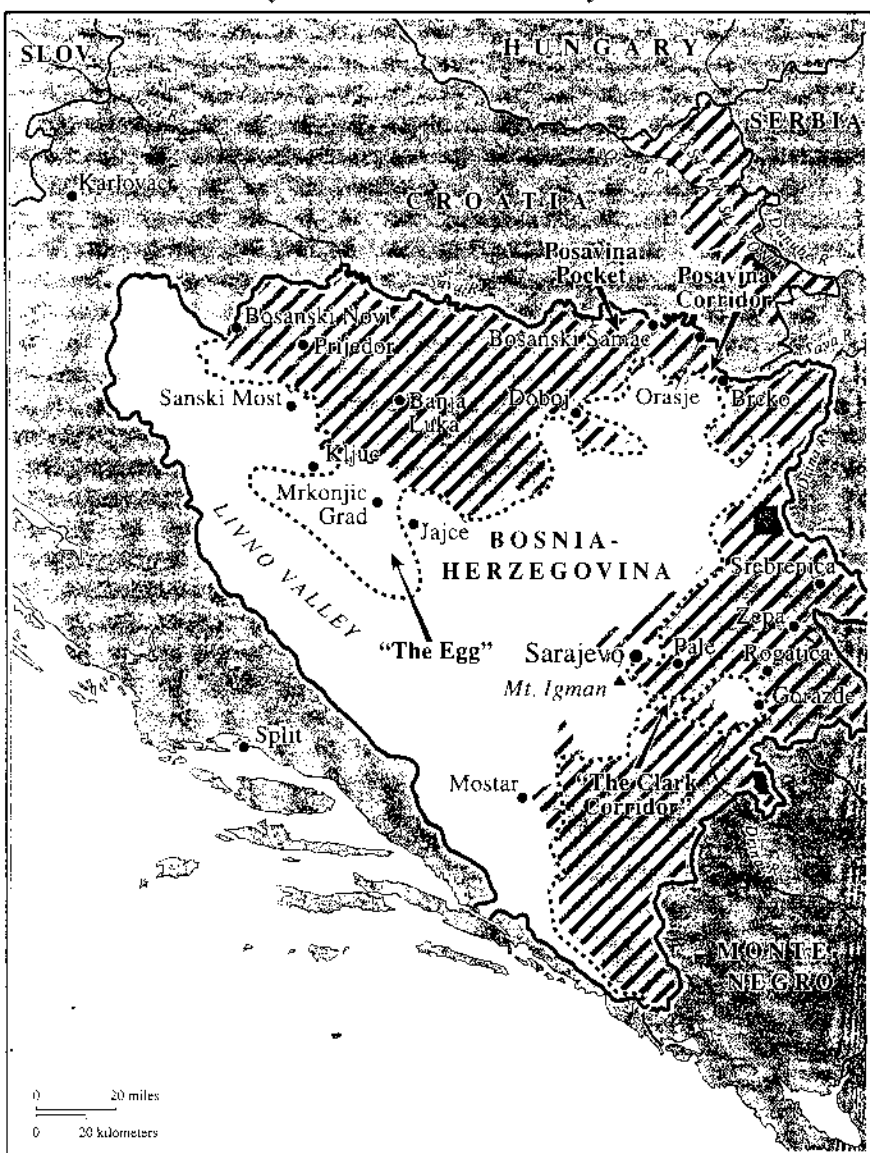
General Clark had brought to Dayton a special unit of the Defense Mapping Agency, personally headed by Major General Philip Nuber. Among other tasks, the map experts were supposed to compute the exact percentage of land that each map proposal gave the sides. They brought with them a highly classified \$400,000 imaging system, called PowerScene, first used during Desert Storm. The entire country of Bosnia had been filmed and stored in this extraordinary "virtual reality" machine, visible in three dimensions, accurate down to two yards. Simply by manipulating an ordinary joystick, the viewer could "fly" fast or slow, look straight down, straight ahead, or sideways at any angle. PowerScene was impressive. To foreigners especially, it was a vivid reminder of America's technological prowess.

The Mapping Agency installed its large computers in a room directly across from my bedroom, with a huge sign warning all unauthorized personnel to stay out. Only a handful of people had access to the American building to begin with, so this sign—the only one of its sort inside the compound—naturally attracted endless visitors, who found "flying" the roads and mountains of Bosnia even more enjoyable than Packy's All-Sports Bar. As visitors dropped in, noise from this accidental video arcade often went on late into the night. But the video game would play an important role in the resolution of the Gorazde problem.

Clark and his colleagues had prepared well for the meeting. Flying the land between Sarajevo and Gorazde endlessly on PowerScene, they had found a route that could link the two cities. It was a small dirt track located halfway between the two roads, both now controlled by the Serbs, that had once connected the two cities.

Milosevic arrived alone at the room containing the PowerScene computers around 11:00 P.M. He was fascinated by the technology and spent some time playing with the joystick, "visiting" portions of Bosnia. Then we began an in-

Key Territorial Issues at Dayton



- Dayton Agreement inter-entity boundary line, November 21, 1995
-  Bosnian Serb-controlled area, November 1, 1995
-  Croat-Muslim Federation-controlled area, November 1, 1995

tense examination of the dirt track that Clark thought we might upgrade. Milošević began by offering a three-kilometer corridor through the mountainous terrain. This was far too narrow, we told him, and demonstrated the point by showing him, on PowerScene, that the ridgelines had a clear line of sight on the road and his proposed corridor was therefore too narrow to defend.

For almost two hours we examined the maps and "traveled" across the hills and valleys of the Gorazde area, courtesy of PowerScene. The session was made far livelier, even raucous, by the substantial amount of scotch consumed by some of the participants. This later led people to say that Milošević had made some key concessions under the influence. But, as usual, I saw no evidence that the alcohol affected him. Milošević knew what he was doing, and he remembered every detail of the discussion the next morning.

Using maps and an old-fashioned technology—crayons—Clark sketched a corridor that cut a wider swath through the hills east of Sarajevo. As he drew the connector, it was no longer simply a narrow, indefensible road. Instead, its width now averaged 8.3 kilometers, and stretched from ridgelines to hilltops so as to minimize the areas in which the road was vulnerable to direct fire from the high ground. After hours of argument, Milošević offered us a substantially revised, widened version of this route between Gorazde and Sarajevo. It was after 2:00 A.M. We shook hands, and Milošević drained his glass again, saying, "We have found our road."

We called it the "Clark Corridor," or, sometimes, the "Scotch Road." In his report the next day, General Kerrick said he was "still recovering from scotch exchange with Milošević [which I drank] for my country—and I don't even drink scotch."

When the lengthy session on the Clark Corridor finally ended, I sent a long message, entitled "Closure or Closedown: The Situation as of 2:00 A.M.," to Warren Christopher, who was about to leave Osaka for the long return flight to Dayton:

The Bosnians still wish us to believe that they are getting a lousy deal. Yet they know it is not only a good deal but the best they will ever get. Logically, therefore, they should accept. But the dynamics of their delegation make this a very close call. Izetbegović spent nine years of his life in jail, and is not a governmental leader so much as a movement leader. He has little understanding of, or interest in, economic development or modernization—the things that peace can bring. He has suffered greatly for his ideals. To him, Bosnia is more an abstraction, not several million people who overwhelmingly want peace. Haris, on the other hand, is more modern and focused heavily on economic reconstruction, something Izetbegović never mentions. . . .

Milošević seems to be enjoying himself at Dayton Place, although he likes to intimidate people. Standing up to him when he attacks is the key; he respects

people who act as tough as him. He is always testing us. In order to move him, we must lay down very firm markers and not move them unless we know exactly what we are getting in return. I'll see you at the airport. Have a good trip back.

DAY SEVENTEEN: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

When the Bosnians saw the Gorazde map early the next morning, they were impressed, but did not accept it. This did not worry us: it was standard Balkan negotiating procedure not to accept anything that came from the other side without trying to change it. (This tendency was so pronounced it had become a joke: the best way to confuse someone in the Balkans, we often said, was to accept his initial proposal without change, at which point he would change his own position.) The Bosnians wanted two things: more land south of Gorazde, and firm assurances from the United States that the dirt track would be upgraded into a paved, all-weather road. After discussions with Joulwan and the Army Corps of Engineers, Clark informed us that IFOR engineers would upgrade the road during the summer months and added a key sentence to the military annex: "a two-lane all-weather road will be constructed in the Gorazde Corridor." This satisfied the Bosnians. But they still wanted more territory around Gorazde, especially some land on the south bank of the Drina River, the river that carried so much historical and emotional importance to all former Yugoslavs.*

We planned a day of high-level visitors who would increase the pressure on the reluctant parties. Perry and Slocumbe were due at 10:00 A.M., General Joulwan would arrive from Europe at noon, and Christopher would return in the late afternoon. These visits were carefully sequenced: Perry and Joulwan would symbolize American military power and determination, and set the stage for the final push when Christopher returned.

The meetings left a powerful impression on the delegations. Izetbegovic, who knew from Sacirbey and Perle that the Pentagon was opposed to the Equip and Train program, asked for Perry's personal commitment to it. After an edgy exchange, Perry gave Izetbegovic what he wanted, using words that would be cited often by the Bosnians later: "If we get a peace agreement, I will make the Equip and Train program happen." This was no more than a repetition of commitments made by Christopher, Lake, and myself, but it was important that Izetbegovic hear it directly from the Secretary of Defense.

Joulwan joined the meetings two hours later, bringing with him Major General William Nash, the blunt, cigar-smoking First Armored Division comman-

der, who was scheduled to lead most of the American troops in Bosnia. It was symbolism at its best. With their straightforward warnings and uniforms bristling with medals, the generals made a powerful impression. It was Joulwan's inspired idea to bring Nash, whose no-nonsense style impressed the Balkan leaders; this was, after all, the man who would actually command the American troops on the ground in Bosnia.

With the exception of Perry, the visitors did not get into the details of the negotiations. But they sent a potent message: the physical presence of Joulwan and Nash in Dayton gave NATO a tangible reality in the eyes of the parties, and set the right tone for the final phase of the negotiations, which we planned around Christopher's return. Thirty minutes after they left, at 4:30 in the afternoon, the Secretary of State's big plane touched down from Osaka.

* The Yugoslav writer Ivo Andric won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1961 for his epic novel *The Bridge over the River Drina*.

Showdown

(November 18–21, 1995)

Human error is a permanent and not a periodic factor in history, and future negotiators will be exposed, however noble their intentions, to futilities of intention and omission as grave as any which characterised the Council of Five. They were convinced that they would never commit the blunders and iniquities of the Congress of Vienna. Future generations will be equally convinced that they will be immune from the defects which assailed the negotiators of Paris. Yet they in their turn will be exposed to similar microbes of infection, to the eternal inadequacy of human intelligence.

—HAROLD NICOLSON, *Peacemaking 1919*

DAY EIGHTEEN: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Deadlines. Negotiations have a certain pathology, a kind of life cycle almost like living organisms. At a certain point—which one might not recognize until later—the focus and momentum needed to get an agreement could disappear. *Something* could happen to break our single-minded commitment. Either endless squabbles over small details would replace the larger search for peace, or the Europeans would leave, publicly signaling an impending failure. We worried that if we were still at Wright-Patterson over the Thanksgiving holiday, only a few days away, it would create the impression that we had stayed too long and accomplished too little.

That morning I wrote a short note to myself:

There is a sense here that peace is probably inevitable because of the dangers if we fail. That may be true, as far as it goes. But the critical question—will the Bosnians grasp an imperfect peace or let the war resume—remains unresolved. Their delegation is divided and confused. Silajdzic told me that he had not talked to Izetbegovic in over twenty-four hours. They have let other opportunities for peace slip away before. It could happen again.

Kerrick was even bleaker in his daily report:

Endgame personal dynamics taking downward spiral. Milosevic and Pale Serbs never seen together—rarely speak. Izetbegovic, Mo, Haris continue to amaze us all with their desire to torpedo one another—and possibly even peace.

Christopher did not want to leave Dayton again without a deal. Tired from his quick round-trip to Asia, he had met briefly with Izetbegovic and Milosevic on arrival Friday night, and then went to sleep. The rest of us went to the Officers' Club for another lobster dinner with Chris Spiro and Milosevic. Milosevic seated Tom Donilon next to him to discuss American politics. Tom said that if Dayton failed, the congressional backlash would leave Serbia even more isolated, and the embargo would never be lifted. Donilon's straight-talking style appealed to Milosevic, and he engaged Tom in a sophisticated discussion of American politics, even offering his thoughts on how to handle the budget confrontation with Gingrich.

We thought Saturday would be "the big day, a hell of a day." We told the parties that we wanted to finish the negotiations by midnight Saturday, spend Sunday morning cleaning up final details, and make the announcement later that day. This was obviously unrealistic, but it gave us a twenty-four-hour cushion for our real deadline, which was completion of the negotiations Sunday night and an announcement on Monday.

In the morning staff meeting, we reviewed the status of the negotiations with Christopher. Most of the General Framework Agreement—the umbrella document—had been accepted by the parties, except for the issue of mutual recognition among the three states. Of the eleven draft annexes, agreement was in hand or within sight on nine: the military annexes (Annexes 1-A and 1-B), the constitution—with the exception of the central bank, which was still in dispute (Annex 4); arbitration (5); human rights (6); refugees/displaced persons (7); national monuments (8); public services (9); civilian implementation (10); and the International Police Task Force (11). This was more than we had originally thought possible. But the two toughest problems were still unresolved—the map (Annex 2) and elections (Annex 3):

- *The map.* Of the big issues, only Gorazde seemed close to resolution. Sarajevo, Brcko, the Posavina Corridor, and the Posavina pocket were unresolved. Contrary to our initial hopes, there had been no trade-offs between Dayton's political provisions and the map. We would have to negotiate the remaining map issues literally kilometer by kilometer.
- *Elections.* The problem of refugee voting still stymied us. Milosevic held to his view that voters must register in person in Bosnia. The Bosnians wanted to allow absentee registration and let people vote

where they had lived in 1991, the year of the last prewar census of Yugoslavia. In practice, this would mean that Muslims from, say, Banja Luka who were now refugees in Germany would be allowed to vote in the Banja Luka district for a Serb presidential candidate, opening the possibility that Muslims could become a swing bloc in an election between Serb candidates. To the Serbs, of course, this was unacceptable.

Elections and the OSCE. Just before Christopher arrived, we settled a serious disagreement over how to conduct elections. Everyone agreed that an international body should oversee the elections, but there had been an early disagreement over which organization should have the job, and a more serious problem over what the international community's role should be. Organizationally, the choice came down to the U.N. or the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). At the urging of John Kornblum, who had served as Ambassador to the organization, the United States opted for the OSCE, which had been created to monitor the 1975 Helsinki Accords.

Known until 1994 as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the fifty-two-nation OSCE was the only regional "security" organization that included both the NATO nations and all the countries of the former Soviet bloc.* During the Cold War, it had been little more than an occasional forum for meetings, but it was part of our vision for European security to transform the OSCE into a significant component of what President Clinton called "an undivided Europe."

The European members of the Contact Group readily agreed to assign the OSCE responsibility for the elections. But they simultaneously proposed to limit its role simply to *monitoring* the elections. This view ran directly counter to that of President Clinton, who told me, just before Dayton, that "a credible election would be the most important single event" of the first year after Dayton. This would be possible only if the international community ran it; "monitoring," a vague and elusive concept, would result in a stalemate, and either no elections or disputed elections. While an international organization was no guarantee of a "free and fair" election, the larger its role, the better. With the President's words as our marching orders, we insisted that the OSCE *run* the elections. Otherwise, they would either never take place, or be worthless. Finally, after days of argument, we gained agreement at Dayton that the OSCE would "*supervise*, in a manner to be determined by the OSCE, . . . the preparation and *conduct* of elections [emphasis added]."

Although this was still not perfect, I felt this language was strong enough so that the OSCE could interpret it any way it wanted to. Thus the selection of an

* Even neutral countries like Switzerland and Malta, and tiny states like Andorra and Liechtenstein, were members. The chairmanship rotated annually, and in 1996 fell to the Swiss, who did an excellent job.

aggressive head for the OSCE mission in Bosnia would become important later.*

That morning, we learned that Muhamed Sacirbey had held a rather casual press conference the night before at the Holiday Inn outside the air base to announce his resignation as Foreign Minister, thus complying with the terms of the November 10 Federation agreement. He would be replaced by an ethnic Croat—Jadranko Prlic—as part of the agreement. This was a necessary step, but it had no effect on the proceedings at Dayton, or on Sacirbey's role.

Sarajevo Breakthrough. Milosevic continued to play with variations of the District of Columbia model, making a series of proposals that would have given the Serbs a voice equal to that of the Muslims in the city. Finally, early Saturday afternoon, I asked Milosevic to take a short walk around the inner compound. I complained bitterly that his behavior was going to cause a breakdown of the talks, and concentrated on Sarajevo. "Some issues can be set aside or fudged," I said, "but Sarajevo must be settled in Dayton." "Okay," he said with a laugh, "I won't eat today until we solve Sarajevo."

A short while later, while I was chatting with Hill and Clark, the door to my suite opened without warning, and Milosevic walked in. "I was in your neighborhood and did not want to pass your door without knocking," he said, smiling broadly. Clearly, he had something important to tell us.

"Okay, okay," he said as he sat down. "The hell with your D.C. model; it's too complicated, it won't work. I'll solve Sarajevo. But you must not discuss my proposal with anyone in the Serb delegation yet. I must work the 'technology' later, after everything else is settled.

"I tell you," he continued, "Izetbegovic has earned Sarajevo by not abandoning it. He's one tough guy. It's his."

These words were probably the most astonishing and unexpected of the conference. As he talked, Milosevic traced on a map with a pen the part of Sarajevo he was ready to give to the Muslims. Immediately Chris Hill objected: it was a huge concession, but it was not all of the city. Milosevic had retained for the Serbs Grbavica, a key area across the river from the center of town. Although a dramatic step forward, Milosevic's proposal did not quite unify Sarajevo.

When Hill pointed this out, Milosevic exploded. "I'm *giving* you Sarajevo," he almost shouted at Chris, "and you talk such bullshit!" We told Milosevic that while his proposal was "a big step in the right direction," it was likely Izetbegovic would reject it.

Hill and I went immediately to see the Bosnian President. Izetbegovic did not acknowledge the importance of the offer, but focused solely on its defects.

* This led to an argument with the French a month later. See chapter 19.

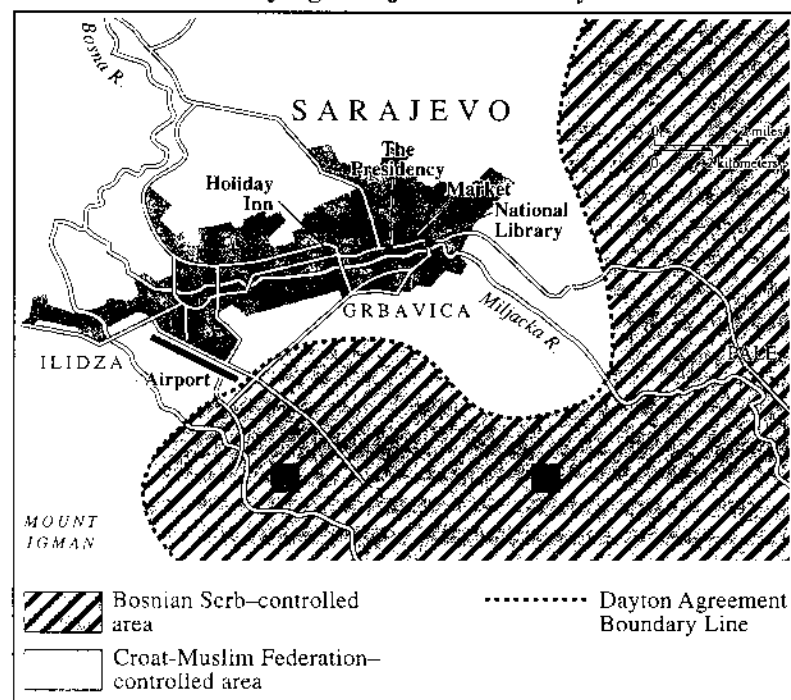
"Sarajevo without Grbavica cannot exist," he said with passion. The area that Milosevic wanted to retain for the Serbs jutted directly into the center of the city and was known to Western journalists as "Sniper Alley." Still, we all recognized that the negotiations over Sarajevo had entered a new phase.

Taking a detailed street map of Sarajevo, Hill, Clark, and I went back to Milosevic's suite. We began examining every road and every terrain feature. Milosevic seemed flexible; Hill predicted after the meeting that if we stuck to our position we would get all of Sarajevo the next day. Feeling suddenly encouraged, we adjourned with our hopes soaring.

Joined by Christopher, we reassembled in my suite to assess what had happened. We had not expected this. We agreed to support Izetbegovic's claim to Grbavica and the hills above the city. Then we sat around debating the possible reasons for Milosevic's astonishing decision.

"Why did Milosevic do this?" I asked. "And can he actually make it happen? Has he decided to abandon the Bosnian Serbs? Can he really force the Bosnian Serbs to give up their parts of the city?"

Reunifying Sarajevo Under Dayton



We never fully understood why Milosevic decided to give Sarajevo to the Muslims. But in retrospect, the best explanation may be that he was fed up with the Bosnian Serbs and had decided to weaken their Pale base by giving away the Serb-controlled parts of Sarajevo. By giving the Federation all of Bosnia's capital, perhaps Milosevic wanted to weaken Karadzic and strengthen the Serbs in other parts of Bosnia, especially Banja Luka.

This explanation was consistent with one of Milosevic's main themes at Dayton: that the Bosnian Serb leadership had become an impediment, even though he had earlier made common cause with them. Milosevic had often talked of strengthening the "intellectuals" and businessmen of Banja Luka in order to weaken Pale; now he seemed to be putting this theory into action.

To further weaken Pale, I proposed that the Dayton agreement include a provision moving the Bosnian Serb capital to Banja Luka. Milosevic seemed interested in this proposal, but, to my surprise, Izetbegovic demurred. Even though he hated the leadership in Pale, he seemed to think he could work with them, especially his old associate from the Bosnian Assembly, Momcilo Krajisnik. Izetbegovic also saw value in keeping the capitals of the two entities close to each other so that Sarajevo remained the only important political center in Bosnia. He may also have feared that if the Bosnian Serb capital moved to Banja Luka, which is closer to Zagreb than Sarajevo, it would accelerate the permanent division of the country and strengthen Tudjman.

Whatever Izetbegovic's reasons for not wanting to close Pale, it was a mistake. The mountain town was solely a wartime capital, established by an indicted war criminal and his henchmen. It was the living symbol—and headquarters—of his organization. We should have pushed Izetbegovic harder to agree to establish the Serb capital at Banja Luka. It would have made a big difference in the effort to implement the Dayton agreements.

DAY NINETEEN: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

This would be our longest day. Twenty-two hours after it had begun, we would still be at it—without success.

A Bluff Fools No One. Christopher and I agreed to make an all-out effort to complete the talks Sunday. In an attempt to convince the parties we were serious about this deadline, I asked every member of the American delegation to pack his or her bags and place them in the parking lot where the other delegations could see them. After the bags lay outside for several hours, I asked the Air Force to put them on a truck and take them to the airstrip. Rosemarie began to try to collect the payment of bills from the parties—an effort in which she was entirely unsuccessful.

Of all the gambits we tried at Dayton, this proved to be the most pathetic. Everyone saw through our bluff; nobody else made the slightest effort to prepare for departure. Early in the evening, we gave up and brought the bags back to our rooms.

To bring the conference to an end, in fact, would require much more than a theatrical ruse. We needed to tie up the loose ends on a dozen secondary issues, resolve the question of refugee voting, and settle Sarajevo. But each time Christopher met with Izetbegovic, the Bosnian President pointedly brought up Broko, referring to the unrealistic 1994 Contact Group map with its railroad bridge and tiny underpass.

The Chart Fiasco. How could we convince Izetbegovic that he was now at the decisive moment? Knowing he was under conflicting pressures from his own delegation, we looked for ways to convince him to take the leap for peace. Through Neville-Jones and Blot, we asked Prime Minister Major and President Chirac to call Izetbegovic. Both men did so immediately, telling the Bosnian President that "if this moment is lost, the opportunity might not easily come again." Izetbegovic conceded to Major that they had made progress, but added that he needed more land to make up for the lost towns of Srebrenica and Zepa. In Ankara, Ambassador Grossman also arranged a call between Izetbegovic and Turkish president Suleyman Demirel, the foreign leader whom Izetbegovic probably respected most.

We asked Menzies to compile a list of everything the Bosnians had already achieved in the negotiations—and would lose if the talks did not succeed. Working with the graphics division of Wright-Patterson, Menzies produced two large posters, listing the "gains of Dayton." On Saturday afternoon—at the same time we were arguing over the Serb portions of Sarajevo—Christopher, Menzies, and I took these to Izetbegovic's suite. In large block letters, they listed everything that had been achieved in the negotiations. Reviewing the charts before we showed them to the Bosnians, Christopher laughed and said, "Well, *I'm* impressed, even if Izetbegovic is not," and added that he did not see how anyone could "responsibly walk away from these gains and allow his country to go back to war."

The posters contained one particularly sensitive item. Measuring the territorial concessions that Milosevic had already made, the Defense Mapping Agency team had determined that 55 percent of Bosnia was now conceded to the Federation. This was a negotiated increase of about 5 percent during the first eighteen days at Dayton over the battlefield situation—and left us with something halfway between an opportunity and a dilemma. The opportunity was obvious: a chance to gain more territory for the Federation. But so was the

dilemma: under the 1994 Contact Group plan, all five Contact Group Foreign Ministers and the leaders of all three countries had formally agreed to a 51–49 split of Bosnian territory between the Federation and the Bosnian Serbs.

Were we still bound by 51–49? Given that the Serbs had conquered so much territory through infamous methods, it would have been just for the Federation to control more than 51 percent of the land. Unexpectedly, we had gained 55 percent for Sarajevo. We decided to see if we could retain this higher percentage, since it would significantly strengthen the chance to create a viable country. But we knew that if Milosevic objected we would have little choice but to fall back to the 51–49 formula, given the prior commitments of the United States and the four other nations of the Contact Group. Tony Lake had reaffirmed this as a core American position during his August trip to the European capitals before the start of our shuttle, and it had been included in the September 9 Geneva agreement.

Menzies had placed the dramatic percentage figures in a prominent position on the first poster. We hoped the Bosnians would recognize what a significant achievement it was, and move rapidly to lock it in by finishing the rest of the negotiations. With Sarajevo close to solution, we felt this was possible within hours if we worked fast. But while the Bosnians were fascinated with our charts, they continued to argue over minor issues. Their delay, and what happened next, doomed any chance we might have had to get more than 51 percent for the Federation.

When the meeting was finished, Izetbegovic and Silajdzic asked to keep the charts. Menzies placed them beside the couch, partially concealed. A short time later, Milosevic unexpectedly called on Izetbegovic—in itself an unusual event—to discuss Sarajevo and the need to finish the conference quickly. As the two men talked, Milosevic noticed the top of one of our charts peeking out from behind the couch. On it was written, in bold capital letters: "FEDERATION TERRITORY INCREASED FROM 50% TO 55% DURING DAYTON TALKS."

For the first time, Milosevic realized how far his territorial concessions had gone. Ending the meeting quickly, he walked directly to my room, and entered without warning. I was sitting with Warren Christopher and several of our team. When Milosevic entered, everyone left except Christopher.

"You tricked me," he said angrily. "You didn't tell me that the percentage was no longer 51–49. I asked you but you didn't reply. I saw your charts. How can I trust you?"

At first we could not understand what had happened. Had the Bosnians boasted to Milosevic about the percentage in order to goad him? We had no idea. The truth—that the Bosnians had left the charts partially in view when Milosevic visited them—did not occur to us, and we did not know if it was a deliberate provocation or simply a stupid oversight. (Later, Silajdzic told me

that it was just bad luck that Milosevic showed up without warning and saw the charts.)*

"I can do many things," Milosevic said, "but I cannot give you more than fifty-one percent. This is my bottom line with Republika Srpska. We agreed to this before Dayton."

We pointed out that Milosevic had already accepted territorial changes that exceeded 51 percent. "I didn't know what the percentage was," he replied, "and I can't force Pale to accept a deal for less than forty-nine percent. Please believe me. This is the end of the matter."

Christopher and I glanced at each other. The Secretary of State could not renege on a public commitment if any of the parties insisted on sticking to it. Other parts of the original Contact Group map had been changed "by mutual consent," as called for in the plan, but 51-49 had taken on an almost theological force.

Milosevic had a suggestion as to how to return to 51-49—and it was unacceptable. He asked for a widening of the Posavina Corridor from three miles to ten miles. This was, of course, the same corridor that Izetbegovic continually insisted be reduced to a thirty-meter-wide underpass beneath the railroad bridge to the adjoining city of Brcko. The existing corridor, connecting the Serbs of western Bosnia with Serbia itself, hung like a noose around the Serb neck.

Having repeatedly told Izetbegovic that we could not reduce the width of the corridor, we now rejected Milosevic's demand to widen it. But the issue of the Posavina Corridor and Brcko were still not settled, and would, as we had expected, prove to be the toughest of all issues at Dayton.

The day continued with endless meetings over maps. Clark and the military map experts looked for ways to change the percentage from 55-45 to 51-49 without asking the Federation to give up any "important" land. Since a significant portion of the terrain in Bosnia consisted of sparsely inhabited mountain areas ("worthless land," in Silajdzic's dismissive phrase), there was room for some compromise, but not much. Using their computers, the mapping team could measure the land to one one-hundredth of 1 percent (.01 percent!), an absurdly false precision; the thickness of the map lines themselves amounted to at least 1 percent of the land. But, with both sides now obsessed with this issue, the precise percentage of land each controlled was central.

* In *The Death of Yugoslavia*, Brian Lapping and Laura Silber's superb six-part documentary for the BBC, Silajdzic recounts this incident in detail. He describes it as an accident, and laughs as he recalls how upset both Milosevic and the Americans were. To those involved in it at the time, however, it was no laughing matter.

The most disturbing aspect of this obsession with 51-49 was that it revealed how little each side trusted the political aspects of the Dayton agreements to which they had both agreed. As Izetbegovic once said, a "mountain of corpses" between the two sides prevented trust. The argument over the land was, in effect, a continuation of the war in Dayton, while the political discussions were a tentative effort to build a political framework for a joint future. We were all too aware of the internal contradiction, but there was nothing that could be done about it.

Milosevic and Silajdzic. The long day dragged on. Milosevic, still fuming over our "clever trick" with the percentages, refused to make any further concessions on Sarajevo or settle the final details on Gorazde. After several hours, he gradually regained his composure, and the talks inched forward again. But Milosevic still held out on the land south of the Drina near Gorazde, on the hills to the southwest of Sarajevo, and, most important, on the Grbavica portion of Sarajevo. Shortly before 8:00 P.M., while Milosevic argued with Hill and me, we looked out the window and noticed Silajdzic walking toward Packy's. The two sides had not met face-to-face since Milosevic had walked out of Izetbegovic's suite after seeing the offending poster hours earlier. Running into the parking lot, I grabbed Haris. "You might get what you want on Sarajevo if you meet Milosevic right now," I said, and pulled him into my rooms. Asking the two men to negotiate face-to-face, I left them alone with Chris Hill, our "language officer."

For hours the three men argued, while Christopher, Donilon, Jim Steinberg, and I waited in another room down the hall. Periodically Hill would appear to give us a progress report or get new maps. A careful man not given to overoptimism about the Balkans, which he knew so well, Hill was now relatively upbeat. As we ate sandwiches in Christopher's room, we thought the end might be in sight. Donilon and Burns began discussing with Washington how to arrange the initialing ceremony.

At 10:00 P.M., Tudjman returned from Zagreb to join the final push. Christopher and I met him at the airport and told him that he had to exert direct pressure on both Izetbegovic and Milosevic. He said he would do whatever he could the next morning, but preferred to stay away from the Milosevic-Silajdzic marathon, already in its third hour.

Under Hill's insistent pressure, Milosevic finally gave more ground near Gorazde. At one point, Silajdzic asked for Ustkolina, a small town near Gorazde, primarily because it held the oldest mosque built in Bosnia. Milosevic laughed sardonically. "Oh, Haris," he said. "don't you know that those idiots"—he meant the Bosnian Serbs—"blew it up?"

"But the location is sacred," Silajdzic replied.

"Haris," Milosevic said, "now you sound like Karadzic." But he yielded, and Ustkolina was Muslim again.

Shortly thereafter, Milosevic agreed to give the Federation a symbolically important strip of land on the southern bank of the Drina. Four days after the napkin diplomacy at the Officers' Club shuttle, Gorazde was settled. We had come a long way from the original U.S. position in July that Gorazde was indefensible and might have to be sacrificed in a negotiation. Gorazde was saved.

The three men shifted back to Sarajevo, drawing lines on the map. Milosevic's lines did not include Grbavica. Silajdzic said that without it, there was no deal; it was an integral part of the capital. Hill drew a line that included Grbavica and said, "This is *our* line, the American line." Suddenly, Milosevic did not object.

Silajdzic demanded land that overlooked the city so that it could never again be used for artillery and mortar attacks on Sarajevo. Part of it contained a Serb cemetery. "Now you want our dead too!" Milosevic exclaimed. But again he relented. Almost without realizing it, the two men had won an undivided Sarajevo.

But, Milosevic said, all his other agreements were contingent on returning to 51-49. Pulling Silajdzic out of his session with Milosevic, Christopher and I told him that we could not hold to the percentages of the posters any longer. This did not surprise Silajdzic, who had always maintained that the quality of the land was more important than its quantity. He agreed to negotiate land readjustments that would get the map back to 51-49.

Shortly after midnight, the three men broke off their talks. Silajdzic, feeling extremely good, went back to his building to consult Izetbegovic and his own map expert.

In the American building, members of our team crowded in the hallway and the small conference room. Stale air and the smell of pizza filled the corridor. In the workrooms, Tom Malinowski, one of Warren Christopher's best speechwriters, worked on two public statements—one for success, the other for failure. I looked at the failure statement, which tried to put a positive face on events, and tossed it into the air. I wrote a new draft that presented failure, if it came, honestly, bluntly, and unapologetically. "To put it simply," the draft ended,

we gave it our best shot. By their failure to agree, the parties have made it very clear that further U.S. efforts to negotiate a settlement would be fruitless. Accordingly, today marks the end of this initiative. . . . The special role we have played in recent months is over. The leaders here today must live with the consequences of their failure.

"The Thirty-seven-Minute Peace." The evening was far from over. Milosevic did not leave our building, but instead moved from my suite to the conference room, where he waited, with Christopher, Hill, Clark, and myself, for Silajdzic to return. Shortly after 2:00 A.M., Silajdzic returned with his map expert. Huge maps had been set up by Clark.

For two more hours Milosevic and Silajdzic argued, yelled, and drew wide, sweeping lines on the maps. Translation was almost unnecessary—the body language, the hand gestures, the emotions told the story. Silajdzic—on the attack, demanding one concession after another from Milosevic, a railroad station here, a hilltop there—was picking up more territory. At one point the Bosnian map expert pointed out that the water reservoir at Faletici northeast of Sarajevo had been left outside the line of Federation control. When Silajdzic raised this, Milosevic said, "I am not a louse," and yielded immediately. It was clear: Milosevic wanted an agreement then and there. But he insisted, at all times, to 51-49.

This was not easy, given the concessions Milosevic had already made. More than minor "shaving" of lesser Federation-controlled areas would be necessary. Well after 3:30 A.M., Silajdzic hit upon a solution that retained for the Federation all the key gains of Dayton but returned to the sacred percentage. He outlined a large egg-shaped area on the map south of Highway 5 in western Bosnia, and offered the land to Republika Srpska. This was a mountainous, lightly populated Serb region south of the town of Kljuc that had been taken during the recent Croat offensive—precisely what Silajdzic had meant when he talked of "worthless land." Because of its shape, Hill dubbed it "the egg," while Milosevic, thinking it resembled Spain, called it "the Iberian peninsula." Both men agreed to calibrate its exact size so as to reach 51-49 for the whole country.

Suddenly Milosevic stuck out his hand. Slightly surprised, Silajdzic took it. Except for some details, the deal was done. It was 4:00 A.M. For a moment, we sat silent, too stunned to react. They talked with sudden ease, and, for the first time, joked. Silajdzic seemed euphoric at his negotiating triumph, Milosevic relieved that it was over. Christopher went outside and asked Bob Bradtke, his faithful executive assistant, to fetch a bottle of his favorite California Chardonnay from the supply with which he always traveled. Out of plastic cups, we drank to peace. (Silajdzic, a practicing Muslim, drank a Coke.) An Air Force photographer came in to record the triumphant scene.

After a drink or two Silajdzic went off to get Izetbegovic, who appeared wearing an overcoat over pajamas and looking sleepy and annoyed. He refused a drink, even a soft drink, while he stared at the map without comment.

As we drank, I had been studying the map, puzzled. Something was wrong, but at first, I was too tired to see what was it was. Then it struck me: all of

Silajdzic's "givebacks" were from Croat-controlled territory—and no Croatians were present. I whispered to Hill to get Tudjman.

Ten minutes later, Hill appeared with Mate Granic. Although it was now after 4:00 A.M., the Croatian Foreign Minister was dressed impeccably and looked as if he had just stepped out of his office on a relaxed day. Sitting down, he politely shared a drink with us and listened to the explanation of the deal. Then, quite calmly, Granic asked to see the map, which was leaning against the wall. As he studied it, an extraordinary transformation came over him. When I thought about it later, it reminded me of the way Zero Mostel had turned himself into a rhinoceros in Ionesco's play. Turning red and barely able to speak at first, Granic slammed his fist into the map. "Impossible! Impossible!" he finally said, walking rapidly around the small room. "Impossible. Zero point zero zero chance that my President will accept this!" He stormed out, almost tripping over Jim O'Brien, who was sitting on the floor in the corridor drinking a beer and chatting with Jim Steinberg.

Within minutes, Granic returned with Defense Minister Susak, who took one look at the map and turned on Silajdzic. "You have given away the territory we conquered with Croatian blood!" he yelled, in English, at Silajdzic, who sat motionless at the table. Milosevic said nothing. Izetbegovic was leaning forward now, listening carefully. This, his body language seemed to say, was getting interesting.

There was still a chance to salvage the evening's gains. If the problem was simply that Haris had given away too much Croat land, perhaps we could redistribute the "givebacks" more equitably between the Croats and the Muslims. I suggested that we try to do just this, "shaving a bit here and bit there."

Izetbegovic still had not said a word. I turned to him, fearing his response, "What do you think, Mr. President? Can we finish the negotiation right now?"

His answer sealed the long day. "I cannot accept this agreement," he said in a low voice, in English.

"What did you say?" Christopher asked, in astonishment.

More loudly: "I cannot accept this agreement."

We sat absolutely silent for a moment. Suddenly Silajdzic took the papers in front of him, slammed them down on the table with great force, and shouted, "I can't take this anymore." Then he stormed out into the cold Dayton night, leaving the rest of us behind.

"Let's deal with this in the morning," I said, and Izetbegovic, suddenly quite animated, walked out, followed by Granic and Susak. We were left alone with Milosevic, who had said nothing during the entire scene.

The "peace" had lasted thirty-seven minutes. We sat with Milosevic for another half hour, utterly spent. The twenty-two-hour day had ended in disaster. Nothing since the Mount Igman tragedy had hit us as hard. Finally, shortly

after 5:00 A.M., we parted to get short naps before resuming. We were too exhausted to imagine a way out.

DAY TWENTY: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20

We rose again after one hour of sleep. (Christopher told me later that he had not slept at all.) The conference was now stalled within sight of its goal, and after the drama of the previous night, emotions were raw in all three delegations. Christopher, Donilon, Steinberg, and I met early in the morning, and agreed that it was time to bring in the heaviest weapon we had: President Clinton.

Intervention (but not a visit) by the President had always been part of our operating assumptions for Dayton, but the questions were when and how. It was important not to weaken the President. The presidential coin is precious, and should not be devalued. The rest of us could rise or fall, succeed or fail, be replaced or repudiated if necessary. But the President represents the nation. There is no higher authority, and his failure or error can hurt the national interest. Thus any involvement of the nation's chief executive is something that White House staffers debate strenuously.

We called Tony Lake, and asked him to arrange two calls—one to Tudjman, the other to Izetbegovic. (No call to Milosevic was needed or desirable.) We recommended a simple presidential message: You are very close to success, and I am asking you, in the name of peace, to work out your differences.

Lake said he wanted to delay any presidential calls until the afternoon, while we made another try to reach agreement. More important, Lake opposed any call to Izetbegovic, on the grounds that the President should not appear to be pressuring the Muslims. Christopher and I felt differently. Both calls, we said, were essential.

Lake was adamant. He would oppose a call to Izetbegovic, he said, even though Christopher and I said that without it the risks of failure increased substantially. When we argued that the call could be couched in a manner that would not be construed as pressure, he still objected.

The core team at Dayton was not happy. Kerrick, using his direct channels to the NSC, tried again, but with no success. Then he wrote the first draft of the "talking points" that the President would use with Tudjman. I suggested that Christopher call the President directly to get him involved immediately and more deeply. But the Secretary was reluctant to get in an argument with Tony over whether the President should call Izetbegovic.

We called on Tudjman, who told us that his ministers had acted with his full support in killing the Milosevic-Silajdzic agreement the previous evening.

"We cannot be the only ones who give up land," Tudjman said. "The Muslims must give up something too."

We saw Bildt at 9:15 A.M. and asked him to meet separately with each of the three Presidents, starting with Tudjman. After calling Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana in Brussels, Carl went to each delegation with a simple, but important, message: "Don't hold out for a better deal in Europe. Make it here."

Tudjman walked across the parking lot to see Izetbegovic to see if together they could force Milosevic to accept less than 49 percent of the land. They concluded, as we had, that it would be impossible.

At 11:00 A.M., Bildt came to my room to ask how we were doing. "We are deeply concerned," I said, "that even if Milosevic makes more concessions, the Bosnians will simply raise the ante."

"Do you think Izetbegovic even wants a deal?" Carl asked. It was a question that Warren Christopher had also been asking. "I'm never quite sure," I replied. "Sometimes he seems to want revenge more than peace—but he can't have both." Chris Hill, normally highly supportive of the Bosnians, exploded in momentary anger and frustration. "These people are impossible to help," he said. It was a telling statement from a man who had devoted years of his life to the search for ways to help create a Bosnian state.

It was a beautiful sunny day, clear and crisp, not too cold. People walked around outside to relieve the tension. A sort of "parking-lot diplomacy" took place as people ran into each other and discussed the situation. At one point Bildt ran into Milosevic in the barren asphalt between our buildings, and found him "desperate." "Give me anything," he said, "rocks, swamps, hills—anything, as long as it gets us to 49–51."

At about three in the afternoon, President Clinton made the call to Tudjman. "I am impressed with how much has been achieved in the overall agreement, and with the benefits that will come to all the parties," he said. "A very difficult trade-off will have to be made to resolve the map. I'm calling to ask you to give back a small percentage of nontraditional Croatian territory in western Bosnia in order to bring the map back in line with the basic 51–49 territorial concept of the Contact Group plan."

Tudjman's reply baffled the President and his advisors in Washington, listening in and taking notes. "We have already made such a proposal," Tudjman said, adding that we were only two or three hours from a final agreement. This brought the short conversation to an end.

As soon as Sandy Vershbow, who had listened to the conversation, briefed us on it, Christopher and I went to see Tudjman. Contrary to what he had told

the President, Tudjman had made no proposal prior to the call—but he knew that he would have to do so now. "In response to President Clinton's request," he said, "I will instruct my negotiators to give up seventy-five percent of the land needed to reach 49–51." This was good news. But then came two important conditions: "The Muslims must give some of their land up—and I must get back at least part of the Posavina pocket."

President Clinton's call had given us a new lease on life. We returned to Izetbegovic's suite immediately, hopeful that reason would prevail once again. We told him and Silajdzic that, with the President's personal intervention, we had gained agreement from Tudjman that he would "contribute" 75 percent of the land required to reach 51–49. The remainder—just 1 percent of the land—would have to come from them. This would not be difficult to accomplish, we said, especially since the Bosnians would not have to give back any land they currently controlled, only land that they had been given in the last few days by Milosevic—"theoretical land," as we called it.

To our consternation, Izetbegovic refused to budge. While Silajdzic sat silent, Sacirbey argued that the Croat position was still unfair. And, to Christopher's amazement, Izetbegovic began talking again about Brcko, Srebrenica, and Zepa. We returned to my rooms, where Christopher expressed himself in unusually vivid terms on the performance we had just witnessed.

Our next call was on Milosevic. We told him that we could achieve 51–49—but only if he gave back part of the Posavina pocket. Although this request momentarily stunned Milosevic, he understood its importance to Tudjman. Working with detailed maps, Milosevic, Hill, and I started a protracted subnegotiation that went on intermittently for the next six hours. Milosevic finally agreed to return to the Federation a sliver of the Posavina pocket that contained the town of Orasje, which had been the scene of ethnic cleansing of Croats early in the war, and the town of Samac, which lay on the Sava River. A deadlock developed over the exact boundary of Samac. Thinking of Harold Nicolson's negotiators at Versailles, who drew lines on maps with almost no understanding of what they were doing,* I drew a line on the map that ran down the middle of the Sava River, directly on the international border, and then curved around the town's boundaries.

Tudjman accepted this last-minute return of Bosnian Croat land with pleasure. In addition to eastern Slavonia, Tudjman could now show the Croatian people that he had regained some Croat land in Bosnia. And since it was near the home area of Federation President Zubak, it had special value.

By 9:00 P.M., Tudjman had given us enough land in return so that the map stood at 52–48. A shift of only 1 percent, and the deal was done. Yet the

* See opening quotation, chapter 17.

Bosnians still refused to share this tiny amount of land. We met in Christopher's room to discuss the situation—Christopher, Donilon, Steinberg, Kornblum, Hill, Burns, and myself. We were depressed and tired. "The land the Bosnians have to give up is only theoretical," I said again. "We are not asking them to give up one inch of land they actually control."

"It's truly unbelievable," Christopher said. "The Bosnian position is irrational. A great agreement is within their grasp, and they don't seem able to accept it."

"What more can we do?" Christopher continued, almost rhetorically. "We have gotten them everything they asked for."

"Chris," I said, "this game has gone on long enough. We must give everyone a drop-dead time limit." I then recommended that we tell Izetbegovic that he had one hour to decide, after which we would close down the conference. "And I really mean close Dayton down," I added. "This should not be a bluff."

It was a huge decision, foreshadowed days earlier in my "Closure or Closedown" memorandum. A heated debate broke out in the room between those who wanted to keep trying and those who thought that our best chance for success was to force everyone to confront failure. The argument went on for close to an hour. Would we resume the shuttle if we closed Dayton down? Would we let the conference continue in Europe under Bildt's chairmanship? It was a gamble. Some people shifted sides, but Kornblum and I held firm for absolute closedown, without resuming the shuttle. Finally, after protracted debate, Christopher agreed that we had to give the Bosnians an ultimatum. We suggested a flat midnight time limit.

"I'd better get the President on board," Christopher said. Over a secure phone line, Christopher told the President what we proposed to do, listened for a moment, and said, "Thank you for your confidence, Mr. President." Then, turning to us, he said, "The President is comfortable with this approach. He will give us complete support."

Kornblum alerted the Bosnians that we wanted to see them immediately, and told Bildt that we were going to deliver an ultimatum. At 10:30 in the evening, Christopher and I walked slowly to the Bosnian President's suite.

Izetbegovic, Silajdzic, and Sacirbey sat in the room waiting for us. Christopher and I took up our usual places next to each other on the couch, and Christopher began.

"Mr. President, we have come a long way in Dayton, and we are very close to a successful conclusion. If you will reduce by one percent the amount of land you claim, we can make a final deal. You do not have to give up any land that you currently control. It's a very good deal, Mr. President. We have obtained almost everything you asked for."

Izetbegovic was visibly uncomfortable. He began to review his grievances—a familiar litany. We tried to reason with him, but he became increasingly obdurate. He mentioned the city of Brcko several times. He felt that he had become the object of all the pressure at Dayton, and he hated pressure. He was tired and beleaguered, and his delegation was about to explode. His eyes narrowing almost to the vanishing point, he looked away from us and mumbled something to his colleagues.

Christopher's famous politeness and patience finally ran out, and he delivered the ultimatum in a tone that conveyed genuine anger. "Mr. President, I am truly disappointed," he said, "at the fuzzy, unrealistic, and sloppy manner in which you and your delegation have approached this negotiation. You can have a successful outcome or not, as you wish. But we must have your answer in one hour. If you say no, we will announce in the morning that the Dayton peace talks have been closed down." We rose to leave, and I added, "Not suspended—closed down. In one hour."

Exhausted, Christopher went directly back to the Hope Center to sleep—his first in three days. I promised we would call as soon as we heard from the Bosnians. Less than a minute after Christopher had left, the door to my room burst open and Haris Silajdzic entered, in a towering rage. "You and Christopher have ruined everything!" he screamed. "How could you let this happen? Don't you know that we can never give in to an American ultimatum—never!"

"You are the ones who have ruined it," I said. "You have at least ninety-five percent of what you wanted, and now you are about to piss it all away, because you can't get your own act together." Silajdzic continued to argue, and I asked him to leave. "Use the next hour to get your President to accept this offer and the war will be over. You will not regret it."

At precisely 11:30 P.M., John Kornblum went to the Bosnians' building to receive their reply. Sacirbey stopped Kornblum in the hall. The Bosnians, he announced, would agree to shave the necessary 1 percent of the land in order to get to 51-49, but they wanted something in return—Brcko.

"You have added a new condition," John said. "You know that we cannot agree." John gave Sacirbey the draft failure statement, and told him it would be issued at 10:00 A.M. the next day.

I called Christopher with the news. "It's over—but maybe it's not over," I told him. "Perhaps confronting the abyss will clear some heads overnight. Please get some sleep, because we are going to have a tough day tomorrow."

Hill delivered the failure statement to Tudjman, who was playing cards with his aides. As befitted a man who already had most of what he wanted, Tudj-

man laughed, and asked Hill if the United States was really ready to blame the Bosnians publicly for failure. He urged us not to quit.

I sent Kerrick and Hill to deliver the failure statement to Milosevic. Clark, Pardew, Kornblum, and Perina joined the meeting as it went on. Before they left, I told them to make clear that we really were going to close down in the morning—unless Milosevic could save the negotiation. I deliberately stayed away in order to avoid another negotiating session.

It had been, without question, the most depressing day of my professional life. It was hard to believe that the Bosnians would let the agreement slip away over so little, but they seemed ready to do so. I fell asleep quickly, without awaiting the news of the meeting still going on with Milosevic.

Kornblum described the meeting to me later: Milosevic began in a jovial mood, and offered everyone scotch. But when he realized that we would really close the conference the next morning, he reacted strongly. "You can't do that," he said, his voice showing the strain. He became emotional. "We've got this agreement almost done, you can't let this happen. You're the United States. You can't let the Bosnians push you around this way. Just tell them what to do." When the Americans replied that the United States had done a great deal already, but we could not dictate the terms of peace to any party, Milosevic pleaded: "Try some more, don't give up."

Distraught, Milosevic said he would see "Franjo" right away, and propose that the two men sign the Dayton agreements with or without Izetbegovic. Milosevic sent faithful Goran to set up a meeting, but the Croatian President was asleep. Milosevic said he would see Tudjman in the morning. At about 2:00 A.M., the Americans departed, leaving behind a deeply concerned, perhaps even confused Milosevic, who could not believe that we would not be able to force the Bosnians to sign. "Mr. President," Kornblum said as he left, "it's up to you. We've done everything we can."

At 6:30 A.M., the phone rang in our room. It was David Martin, the CBS Pentagon correspondent. It was the first time a journalist had managed to get past the Air Force switchboard since the talks began. "I'm going on the air in a few minutes," Martin said, "and I need you to confirm something. Sacirbey has been at the Holiday Inn all night long, telling everyone that you gave them an ultimatum, they refused, and you are calling off the talks."

Suddenly I was wide awake. "David," I said, "I don't know what Sacirbey said to you, but you can say that we are at a moment of absolute crisis."

"Thanks, that's all I need." A few minutes later, I watched Martin say on television that we had reached "a moment of absolute crisis." It was, indeed. As I showered and dressed, I mentally composed a personal statement to ac-

company the formal announcement that Dayton was closing down. I would thank everyone for their support, and state that I was withdrawing from the effort, since it was clear that I could accomplish nothing further.

The television was now filled with reports similar to David Martin's. Donilon and Kerrick had briefed the White House, and even as we held our final staff meeting in Dayton the President gathered with his senior advisors. One of the people in the Oval Office that morning—a domestic advisor—later described the scene to me:

We all woke that morning to hear television reports from Dayton that you had failed. When we gathered in the Oval Office to discuss the situation, there were mixed emotions. Some people, primarily on the domestic side, were relieved, because they knew that if you got an agreement the President would have to make the single most difficult decision of his presidency—to send troops to Bosnia—and then defend it during the 1996 elections. Our polls showed the public overwhelmingly opposed to sending American troops to Bosnia. Yet everyone knew what an enormous amount of prestige we had invested in the effort. The President did not express his own views, but followed the discussion carefully.

I would summarize the general attitude as follows: if Dayton failed, there would be a combination of relief and disappointment. If you succeeded, there would be a combination of pride and apprehension.

Through Tom Donilon, we were aware of Washington's ambivalence about our efforts. Lake had also told us the previous day that "not everyone in Washington wants you to succeed." This neither surprised nor alarmed me; every Administration contains different points of view. The responsibility for failure or success rested with us, and this was no time to worry about Washington's ambivalence.

As I dressed for the 8:00 A.M. staff meeting there was an insistent knock on the door, and Chris Hill came in. "Something's up," he said, excitedly. "Milosevic has just gone to see Tudjman. I think Sloba is going to suggest that the two of them sign the agreement even if Izetbegovic does not."

This did not constitute a breakthrough, but at least they were still talking. After the terrible feeling of failure and exhaustion, I was suddenly, perhaps irrationally, optimistic. As Christopher arrived from the Hope Center for the staff meeting, I pulled him aside and whispered, "We're going to get an agreement!" He looked at me as if I had lost my mind.

The staff meeting was a gloomy affair. Twenty tired people crowded into every corner of the small, messy room. With no more business to conduct, I said this was our last staff meeting, our "shutdown meeting," and started a final statement of appreciation. "The Secretary and I would like to thank

everyone for their magnificent efforts. We gave it everything we had, and, no matter what happens today, we should not feel that we have failed, but—"

Suddenly Kati burst into the room. "Milosevic is standing out in the snow in the parking lot waiting to talk to you," she said. For the first time I noticed that it was snowing. She ran back out and pulled him into my room, where Christopher and I met him. He looked as if he had not slept all night.

"Something has to be done to prevent failure," he said wearily. "I suggest that Tudjman and I sign the agreement, and we leave it open for Izetbegovic to sign later."

"That's quite impossible," Christopher said firmly. "We cannot have an agreement that is not signed by everyone. It is not a viable contract."

"Okay, okay," Milosevic said. "Then I will walk the final mile for peace. I will agree to arbitration for Brcko one year from now, and you can make the decision yourself, Mr. Christopher."

Christopher said that he could not personally be the arbitrator. I said we would choose Roberts Owen for the task if we completed the rest of the agreement. I said we had to see Tudjman and Izetbegovic immediately to see if we had an agreement. We ended the brief meeting, and raced to Tudjman's suite.

Tudjman listened intently as I outlined Milosevic's offer. When I finished, he slammed his hands on his knees twice, and, leaning as close to Christopher's face as he could get, said, in English, "Get peace. Get peace now! Make Izetbegovic agree. You must do it now!" Shaking with emotion, he got up, almost pushing us out of his room.

Christopher and I walked back to my suite. I locked the doors so that we could be alone. As we talked, other staff members stood outside, banging on the door, but we ignored them. It was essential to have a single focus for the next meeting, and not a cacophony of voices. This was not a time to consult anyone.

"Chris," I said, "the next meeting may be the most important of your entire tenure as Secretary. We can get this agreement—or we can lose it. Forget Washington. It's entirely in our hands. We must go into the meeting with an absolute determination to succeed."

Christopher listened silently, then nodded. Without stopping to talk to anyone else, we walked directly to Izetbegovic's rooms, where the three Bosnians waited for us. We outlined the offer from Milosevic. Silence. I repeated it, slowly and carefully. There were seven hundred journalists waiting outside the base, I said. They had been told by Sacirbey that the talks were over, and, in fact, we would make such an announcement at 10:00 A.M. unless the offer to put Brcko under arbitration was accepted. Time had run out, and we needed an answer immediately.

There was a long, agonizing pause. We watched Izetbegovic carefully. No one spoke. Finally, speaking slowly, Izetbegovic said, "It is not a just peace." He paused for what seemed like a minute, but was probably only three seconds. "But my people need peace."

Remembering how often things had unraveled with the Bosnians in the past, I did not want to discuss anything else. Leaning over to Christopher, I whispered, "Let's get out of here fast," and rose. Christopher shook Izetbegovic's hand and turned rapidly away. As we reached the door, I said to Sacirbey, "Why don't you come with us and work out with General Clark the final details of 51-49 right now." He said he would be over in a minute, and we left.

Christopher and I called President Clinton from my room, as our team crowded around, excited and relieved. The President offered to fly to Dayton for the announcement. "Mr. President," I said, "you don't want to be anywhere near these people today. They are wild, and they don't deserve a presidential visit." Instead, we suggested that the President make the initial announcement as quickly as possible from the White House, and we rescheduled the ceremony for 3:00 P.M. We also suggested that Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili fly out to symbolize the Pentagon's support of the agreement.

When he heard that Izetbegovic had accepted his offer, Milosevic came to our rooms. He was in a highly emotional state. As he entered the room, he hugged Don Kerrick, and we saw tears in his eyes. He shook everyone's hand.

There was plenty of unfinished business in Dayton. Focused on the problems that still remained, we could not relax or celebrate yet. A re-energized negotiating team went into action across many fronts at once. Clark and Sacirbey began the tricky process of shaving the map by 1 percent. Kornblum, Owen, and Miriam Sapiro convened the three Foreign Ministers to work out several details of the political annexes. The refugee voting issue was settled by a compromise that permitted people to vote in the area where they had lived in 1991, as the Bosnians wanted, but allowed them to apply to an electoral commission for the right to vote elsewhere, as the Serbs wanted. Two years later this provision would be important, enabling Muslims to elect eighteen members of the eighty-four seat Republika Srpska Assembly.

President Clinton made the announcement from the Rose Garden at 11:40 that morning. "After nearly four years, two hundred and fifty thousand people killed, two million refugees, and atrocities that have appalled people all over the world, the people of Bosnia finally have a chance to turn from the horror of war to the promise of peace," he said. He called on the American people—

and especially Congress—to support the agreement with American troops. “Now that a detailed settlement has been reached, NATO will rapidly complete its planning for IFOR. American leadership, together with our allies, is needed to make this peace real and enduring. Our values, our interests, and our leadership all over the world are at stake.”

We briefed the Contact Group, and then brought the three Presidents to Christopher's suite at the Hope Center for lunch and discussion of the remaining details. In order to strengthen our case with Congress, I drafted a letter to President Clinton, which I insisted that all three Presidents sign, in which each man personally guaranteed the safety of the NATO/IFOR troops.

By prearrangement, President Clinton called Christopher's suite during the lunch. The three men huddled around the speakerphone, leaning closer and closer to one another as they strained to listen to President Clinton as he congratulated them. Christopher and I glanced at each other, half amused, half astonished at the sight of Izetbegovic, Tudjman, and Milosevic with their heads almost touching.

Meanwhile, Hill and Kerrick had made an alarming discovery. In conversation with Foreign Minister Milutinovic, they learned that no Bosnian Serb would initial the agreement. In fact, Milutinovic told them, the Bosnian Serb delegation had seen the map for the first time just before lunch. “They went completely crazy,” Milutinovic said with a laugh. Milosevic had decided that Milutinovic would initial for the Republika Srpska.

This was unacceptable. What good would the agreement be if the Bosnian Serbs refused to initial? And why would the signature of the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia be valid for Pale? I asked Hill and Kerrick to find Milosevic and tell him that we would delay the initialing ceremony until he got the Bosnian Serb signatures.

Milosevic professed amazement at our attitude. “Why are you making such a big thing of such bullshit?” he asked. “I’ll get the Republika Srpska signatures as soon as I return.”

“Why can’t Krajisnik initial now?” they demanded. Milosevic laughed. “Because he is in a coma after seeing the map.”

After further discussion, we decided to accept Milosevic's initials—though not those of his Foreign Minister—in place of Republika Srpska, but on one condition: that Milosevic sign a separate letter, addressed to Christopher, promising that he would deliver the Pale signatures within ten days. He mocked this letter as completely unnecessary. “I guarantee you that I will have the signatures within twenty-four hours of my return to Belgrade,” he said. (And he was right; the Bosnian Serbs, including Karadzic, signed the agreement the day after Milosevic returned to Belgrade.)

The ceremony that we had not even dared dream about—“a day that many believed would never come,” as Warren Christopher put it—began at 3:00 P.M. in the same room at the Hope Center where it had all begun twenty-one days earlier. Facing the press and our colleagues, I could see in the front row Katharina Frasure, Gail Kruzel, and Sandy Drew—proud, silent witnesses to the price we had paid for the agreement. Around them were the members of the Contact Group, our negotiating team, and General Shalikashvili and Deputy Secretary of Defense John White, filling in for Perry.

Christopher began the ceremonies by outlining the positive features of the agreement, but cautioned that the road to full implementation would not be easy. Carl Bildt followed with a short and generous statement of praise for the Americans, with special thanks to the staff of Packy's Ail-Sports Bar. Knowing that he would now be the senior civilian responsible for implementation, Bildt talked of the “massive effort by the international community” that would be required.

As the third co-chairman of the conference, Igor Ivanov had not played a major role, but he spoke next. To our surprise, he announced that his government would “reserve its position in regard to the military and arms-control annexes.” It was a minor hiccup on a day of great achievement, and was soon ironed out. More importantly, President Yeltsin had spoken to the Russian people about his country's support for the basic agreement at Dayton immediately after President Clinton's first announcement, and pledged his country's participation in the effort.

Milosevic was next, his first public words since arriving. He spoke optimistically about the future, calling November 21, 1995, the day that “will enter history as the date of the end of the war.” All sides, Milosevic said, had made “painful concessions,” but now “the war in Bosnia should be left to the past.”

Washington was most concerned about what Izetbegovic would say. Jim Steinberg worried that Izetbegovic would repeat publicly his private comment that the agreement was an “unjust peace,” and asked Menzies to try to talk the Bosnians into a positive statement. But Izetbegovic's real audience was in Bosnia, and he was not ready to give unequivocal praise to an agreement that troubled him and that he was not sure the Serbs would respect. After calling this “a historic day for Bosnia and for the rest of the world because the war, we hope, will be replaced by peace,” Izetbegovic began the delicate process of gaining support for the agreement at home:

And to my people, I say, this may not be a just peace, but it is more just than a continuation of war. In the situation as it is and in the world as it is, a better peace could not have been achieved. God is our witness that we have done everything

in our power so that the extent of injustice for our people and our country would be decreased.

In the crush of last-minute problems and details, I had not thought about my own remarks until after the ceremony was already under way. I therefore had to write my statement while half-listening to the previous speakers. My mood was more one of relief than exhilaration, more weariness rather than euphoria. I could not find a way to share in the joy that some of the participants showed, even though I wanted to. After the behavior we had seen from some of the participants at Dayton, I was more worried than ever about implementing the agreement. As several reporters pointed out the next day, my remarks were notable for their cautionary tone, far more so than that of any of the other speakers that day. They began with a tribute to Bob Frasure, Joe Kruzel, and Nelson Drew, and continued:

The agreements and territorial arrangements initialed here today are a huge step forward, the biggest by far since the war began. But ahead lies an equally daunting task: implementation. On every page of the many complicated documents and annexes initialed here today lie challenges to both sides to set aside their enmities, their differences, which are still raw with open wounds. On paper, we have peace. To make it work is our next and greatest challenge. . . .

It's been a long and winding road for all of us, and it's not over yet—far from it. The immense difficulties and the roller-coaster ride we have lived through in Dayton over the last twenty-one days, and especially in the last few days, only serve to remind us how much work lies ahead. Let us pledge, therefore, that this day in Dayton be long remembered as the day on which Bosnia and its neighbors turned from war to peace.

B O O K F O U R

IMPLEMENTATION

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow.

—T. S. ELIOT