

[From the New York Times]

PENTAGON REPORT PREDICTS BOSNIA WILL
FRAGMENT WITHOUT VAST AID
(By Philip Shenon)

WASHINGTON, March 19—The Pentagon has offered its grimmest assessment of the prospects for peace in Bosnia to date, warning that without an enormous international aid program to rebuild its economy and political institutions, the country will probably fragment after the withdrawal of NATO peace-keeping troops late this year.

The assessment for the Senate Intelligence Committee was prepared by the Pentagon's senior intelligence analyst, Lieut. Gen. Patrick M. Hughes, and it could signal an effort by the Defense Department to distance itself from blame if the civil war resumes shortly after the NATO withdrawal.

General Hughes, the director the Defense Intelligence Agency, offered reassuring words in his report for American troops stationed in Bosnia, suggesting that NATO forces face no organized military threat. If the war resumes, he said, it will not be until after the American peacekeepers and their NATO allies have pulled out.

But the report, dated Feb. 22, offered no similar solace for the people of Bosnia. General Hughes said that the "prospects for the existence of a viable, unitary Bosnia beyond the life" of the NATO deployment are "dim" without a large international program to revive Bosnia's war-shattered economy.

If his assessment is accurate, the peace effort in Bosnia could well be doomed, since the civilian reconstruction effort there is barely under way, its economy and physical infrastructure—roads, water and electricity lines, telephones—still in ruins. The last American soldiers are scheduled to withdraw from Bosnia in December.

General Hughes said that the strategic goals of the warring factions in the region "have not fundamentally changed" since the days of the civil war and that tensions among them would probably grow in the months leading up to the NATO pullout.

If that is true, the Clinton Administration might come under intense pressure from its NATO allies not to withdraw American troops by the end of December—a deadline that the Administration insists it will hold to.

The Pentagon assessment also implicitly questions basic elements of the American-brokered Dayton peace agreement, which laid out what critics in Congress called unrealistic deadlines for political and economic reconstruction in Bosnia and for the withdrawal of peace-keeping troops.

"There's only so much our soldiers can accomplish," said another senior Defense Department official, echoing the report's central findings. "The military forces agreed to keep the peace for a year, and that's what we're doing. But this peace will not hold without an effort to rebuild the country. That's not being done yet. And that's not our job."

The job of organizing the economic and political reconstruction of Bosnia has been left to a European delegation led by Carl Bildt, a former Swedish Prime Minister.

But Mr. Bildt has complained repeatedly in recent months that foreign governments have been slow to make available the billions of dollars needed for civilian reconstruction—everything from building bridges to printing election ballots—and that the political component of the peace effort is lagging far behind its military component. In a meeting this month with donor countries, he pleaded that the donors "do more to honor the pledges we have made."

While questioning whether Bosnia was about to dissolve once again into civil war,

General Hughes said in his report that "in the short term, we are optimistic" about the situation faced by the 18,400 American soldiers stationed there as part of the peace-keeping force.

"We believe that the former warring factions will continue to generally comply with the military aspects" of the peace accord, the report said. "We do not expect U.S. or allied forces to be confronted by organized military resistance."

The threat faced by the American forces would come instead from land mines "and from various forms of random, sporadic low-level violence," the report said. "This could include high-profile attacks by rogue elements or terrorists." So far only one American soldier has been killed in Bosnia, an Army sergeant who was killed in an explosion on Feb. 3 as he tried to defuse a land mine.

The report suggested that if the civil war resumes, it will flare up only after the NATO forces have pulled out, removing the buffer that has kept the factions at peace for most of the last four months.

"The overall strategic political goals of the former warring factions have not fundamentally changed," General Hughes said. "Without a concerted effort by the international community, including substantial progress in the civil sector to restore economic viability and to provide for conditions in which national (federation) political stability can be achieved, the prospects for the existence of a viable, unitary Bosnia beyond the life of IFOR are dim." The NATO forces in Bosnia are known as the Implementation Force, or IFOR.

General Hughes suggested that all of the fragile alliances created by the peace accord might collapse—with tensions between the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats threatening their federation, with the Bosnian Croats working toward "de facto integration" with Croatia, and with elections and the resettlement of refugees "delayed or stymied."

He said that the Bosnian Serbs were likely to consolidate their hold on their own territory, seeking "some form of political confederation" with Serbia.

Questions about whether any peace in Bosnia would outlast the presence of NATO troops—and whether American troops would be stuck there as a result—were at the heart of the debate in Congress that preceded votes to authorize the American military deployment. Senator Bob Dole, the front-runner for the Republican Presidential nomination, demanded and won an Administration pledge to play a role in arming and training the Bosnian Government's army.

The assessment by the Defense Intelligence Agency is only slightly more pessimistic than remarks heard elsewhere in the Pentagon. Senior Defense Department officials have long warned that the peace would fail without a huge effort to rebuild Bosnia and to give the people some hope of economic and political stability after years of slaughter.

"Ultimately I think the bigger problem is not the military implementation of the peace agreement," Gen. John Shalikavili, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the House National Security Committee this month. "We need to make sure we understand that it is equally important to the overall effort—and also the safety of the troops—that we get on with the civilian functions that need to be performed."

"And when I say 'we,' I don't mean the military, but the nations that are involved in this effort," he added.

"The elections have to go forward, the refugees have to begin to return, reconstruction has to start, the infrastructure has to be re-

built so that the people in the country can see an advantage to not fighting."

MEASURE PLACED ON
CALENDAR—H.R. 2337

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that H.R. 2337, which was just received from the House, be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL
18, 1996

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, on behalf of the leader, Senator DOLE, that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until the hour of 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, April 18; further, that immediately following the prayer, the Journal of the proceedings be deemed approved to date, no resolutions come over under the rule, the call of the calendar be dispensed with, the morning hour be deemed to have expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then begin consideration of S. 1028, the Health Insurance Reform Act of 1996.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator DOLE, for the information of all Senators, the Senate will begin the health insurance reform bill tomorrow morning. Amendments are expected to be offered to that legislation. Therefore, Senators can expect rollcall votes throughout the day, and a late session is anticipated. The Senate may be asked to turn to any other legislative items that can be cleared for action.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order following the conclusion of the remarks that I shall make as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I seek recognition to comment on a number of subjects. The Senate has been in session for the last 2 days continuously on the terrorism bill, and there are a number of subjects that I have sought recognition to speak about at this time.

As we say, the Senate is on "automatic pilot," so when I conclude my remarks, the Senate will be in adjournment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following remarks appear under a caption of "Foreign Travel, April 2 through April 5, 1996."