

dependence in 1992. Its predominantly Muslim government, headed by Izetbegovic, contained some Croats and Serbs, but it had control only over the Muslim part of Sarajevo and the area around Tuzla. Other Muslim areas, such as Bihac and Goradze, were, for all practical purposes, autonomous. The Croat part of Bosnia was run separately out of Mostar by a group of Bosnian Croats whom we considered crooks; they were the people who had waged the terrible war-within-a-war that had torn Mostar and several other mixed Croat-Muslim towns apart in 1993-94. To stop this war and create a common front against the Serbs, the United States, under the leadership of Charles Redman, had created the Federation in early 1994. But we had not followed up. Until the fall of 1994, when I appointed Dan Serwer, no American official was assigned to work on the Federation. His thankless task was to hold the fragile, virtually nonexistent coalition together.

Out of makeshift wartime structures, we sought to create two functioning levels of government: a central government, with its capital in Sarajevo; and two regional entities, one a functioning Croat-Muslim Federation, the other a Bosnian Serb entity with no claims to sovereignty. Steiner and Serwer wanted the Federation to turn responsibility for certain functions, such as foreign affairs and finance, over to the new central government, which would include Muslims, Serbs, and Croats. In turn, local matters such as police, education, and internal security would be assigned to each of the entities—the Federation and the Republika Srpska. The para-state that the Croats called the “Republic of Herzog-Bosnia” was supposed to disappear, turning over its functions to the Federation.

For the first week, Steiner, Serwer, and Hill would struggle with Tudjman, Izetbegovic, and Kresimir Zubak, the President of the Federation, while I worked on other issues.

DAY THREE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3

The Contact Group was already restive. We had agreed to meet each morning at 9:00 A.M. The first two meetings were a mess, and we wasted almost two hours on trivial matters. This was not why we had come to Dayton. The Europeans had a great deal to contribute, and would be essential for success. But they seemed addicted to interminable meetings focused mainly on procedure, while the three Balkan Presidents waited a few hundred feet away.

We could not afford to waste so much time, yet we had to keep the Europeans involved. After three days, we dissolved the large daily Contact Group meeting and replaced it with a smaller meeting restricted to the six senior representatives at Dayton: Carl Bildt, Pauline Neville-Jones, Wolfgang Ischinger, Jacques Blot, Igor Ivanov, and myself. For symbolic reasons, I suggested we meet in Bildt's room each morning.