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**PROGRESS IN THE BALKANS: KOSOVO,
SERBIA, AND BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

A REPORT

BY

SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE



FEBRUARY 2001

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

February 9, 2001.

The Honorable JESSE HELMS,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: From January 9 to 15, I traveled to the Balkans to learn more about the progress of stabilization and democratization in Kosovo, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina and to reassess the proper role of the United States in those developments.

In traveling in the Balkans, I was accompanied by Dr. Michael Haltzel, Professional Staff Member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Alan Hoffman, my Chief of Staff, and Colonel Randy Hutcherson of the U.S. Marine Corps. Our group was given invaluable assistance by the Embassies of the United States in Belgrade and Sarajevo, and by the United States Office in Pristina.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, for several years there has been spirited debate about our Balkan policy. I return from this trip convinced that President Bush and Secretary of State Powell will have to take into consideration three fundamental facts as they craft U.S. foreign policy toward Southeastern Europe.

First, the Balkans are not a strategic side-show. Southeastern Europe remains central to security for the entire continent and, hence, for the United States.

Second, the kaleidoscope of Balkan peoples with their distinctive cultures and histories makes it inevitable that progress toward stable democracies and free-market economies will be uneven, varying considerably from country to country. Despite the frustration that many American leaders, with their penchant for instant solutions, may feel at the gradual pace of development, we must commit to being engaged for the long haul. This will require designing and implementing a comprehensive, activist policy for Southeastern Europe in coordination with our allies.

Third, such a regional development policy, and continued U.S. leadership of NATO, both depend upon an American military presence on the ground in the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) until the missions are successfully completed.

President Reagan often spoke of a "Europe whole and free" as one of his chief foreign policy goals. This should not be viewed as merely a slogan. It is simply untenable for Western Europe to proceed along the path of ever closer union and ever growing prosperity if Southeastern Europe languishes in perpetual poverty and ethnic hostility, which periodically erupts into internecine blood-letting. The massive refugee movements occasioned by the Balkan

wars of the 1990's are only a prelude to what will happen unless the zone of stability is extended eastward and southeastward on the continent.

Given the unparalleled web of political, economic, social, and military ties between the United States and Europe, acute danger of this spill-over effect is a question of the highest importance for this country. Critics of Balkan peacekeeping operations have constructed a false dichotomy between "humanitarian interventions" and Realpolitik. In actuality, the former are relatively low-cost preventative measures, which if done well, make full-scale military actions, incomparably more expensive in blood and treasure, unnecessary.

Much media attention has been accorded the ethnic tension and persistent problems of governance, corruption, and criminality in Bosnia and Kosovo, and to varying lesser degrees in other Balkan countries. Even in Kosovo and Bosnia, however, a new generation of leaders is emerging, which can overcome the legacy of war crimes, mass murder, and economic catastrophe.

In Pristina and Sarajevo, I met with politicians who understand that stoking the fires of hatred only mires their people in misery. They cannot forget the horrors of the 1990's, but they realize that inter-ethnic cooperation is the sole viable path to progress. We and our allies must make clear that our security umbrella and economic assistance will continue to support Bosnia and Kosovo, but only if they rapidly pick up the pace of their own domestic reform and, in the case of Bosnia, the country frees itself from the political and economic stranglehold of the three nationalist parties.

In formulating its approach to the region, the Bush Administration also should not neglect significant good news. The Croatian electorate has decisively repudiated the party of the late authoritarian President Franjo Tudjman. The new Mesic/Racan government in Zagreb is courageously confronting the country's checkered recent history and is attempting to prepare Croatia for joining democratic Europe.

Last fall the Serbian people rid themselves of the criminal tyrant Slobodan Milosevic. I met in Belgrade with Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica and Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. We did not agree on every short- or medium-term tactic that Yugoslavia should pursue, but I came away with the strong impression that the new government has definitively rejected the aggressive, xenophobic nationalism of Milosevic, which brought such ruin to the Serbian people and many of its neighbors.

My hope—as yet unrealized—is that these two leaders will begin to educate Serbs about crimes against humanity perpetrated in their name, an effort that includes cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

Mr. Chairman, I believe we should seize the moment to build upon the important openings in Zagreb and Belgrade by supporting the new governments with targeted democratization, technical, and economic assistance as part of, not in competition with, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, a joint development venture that is more than 95 percent funded by our Western European allies.

Just as we redouble our efforts in the region's lingering trouble spots, we should reward national success stories. The enlargement of NATO in 1999 to include Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary was a critical first step in the process of extending the zone of stability eastward in Europe. At its next summit meeting in 2002, NATO should continue the process by inviting democratic, prosperous Slovenia to become a member. The peoples of the Balkans must not believe that they are seen in the West as congenitally incapable of joining the trans-Atlantic community. If one of their number fulfills the alliance's stringent requirements for membership, as Slovenia manifestly has, then it should be welcomed forthwith as a full-fledged partner.

The southern and eastern Balkans present a different challenge. Romania, the most strategically important country in the region, is emerging from last fall's traumatic presidential choice between a neo-fascist and an ex-communist. It is in our national interest vigorously to help the Iliescu/Nastase government in Bucharest reverse the corrupt and anti-reformist record it compiled in the early 1990's. Under President Petar Stoyanov and Prime Minister Ivan Kostov, neighboring Bulgaria has made encouraging political, economic, and social progress, and it should similarly be assisted in accelerating this trend. We must also continue to support the impoverished, struggling democracies in Albania and Macedonia.

None of these measures is possible without the continued presence of American troops on the ground in SFOR in Bosnia and KFOR in Kosovo. They are seen by the people in the region as a litmus test of our genuine commitment to progress in the Balkans. The two missions together account for little more than one percent of our defense budget. Moreover, troops of our European allies already make up approximately four-fifths of both forces. For our less than one-fifth contribution, we retain control of both SFOR and KFOR in the person of U.S. Air Force General Joseph Ralston, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR)—burden-sharing that is highly advantageous to the United States.

Moreover, at a time when some on the continent are clamoring to develop the European Union's security and defense policy independent of NATO, I believe that it would be the height of folly unilaterally to withdraw our ground troops from Bosnia or Kosovo. The leading country of NATO cannot just declare a smorgasbord principle of involvement in alliance missions already well underway.

Dealing with the Balkans has always been difficult, but the stakes are too high for us to shy away from the challenge. If the Bush Administration recognizes the need for continued engagement in Southeastern Europe, it can expect my support and the support of many other Members of both parties on Capitol Hill.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.,
Ranking Member.

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I. Principal Conclusions

GENERAL

1. The Balkans remain central to the security of all of Europe and, hence, of the United States.

2. Progress toward stable democracies and free-market economies in the Balkans will be uneven, varying from country to country. Time is on our side. Within the past year voters in both Croatia and Serbia have thrown out the parties of their former authoritarian rulers Franjo Tudjman and Slobodan Milosevic, democratic and prosperous Slovenia is poised to enter both NATO and the European Union, and democratic governments elsewhere in the Balkans have charted reform courses, which they are trying to carry out.

3. The United States, together with our Western European allies, must speedily implement the Stability Pact, a comprehensive development program for Southeastern Europe.

4. This regional development policy, and continued U.S. leadership of NATO, both depend upon an American military presence on the ground in the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) until the missions are successfully completed.

Kosovo

5. KFOR has done an excellent job at pacifying the province. Some violence continues, but at a much lower level than in 1999 and early 2000.

6. It would be a disaster if the U.S. were unilaterally to pull its troops out of Kosovo or Bosnia. The local populations, in general, have confidence only in the Americans. Of the Balkan leaders, only Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica seems to really trust the West Europeans, and even he is waiting to see what the U.S. is going to do before he finalizes his policies.

7. The three leading Albanian Kosovar political figures—Ibrahim Rugova, Hashim Thaci, and Ramush Haradinaj—have all called for an end to violence against Kosovo Serbs. Although they do not have complete control over their people, inter-ethnic violence has abated.

8. Cooperation between KFOR and UNMIK in Kosovo is far better than between SFOR and the U.N. Mission in Bosnia.

9. The number of Kosovar police is inadequate. The target should be closer to 10,000 than to 5,000.

10. There is near-unanimity among Albanian Kosovars that they want independence, but a decision on the final status of Kosovo should be postponed until considerably more political and economic progress is achieved.

11. The Albanian Kosovars are eager for elections at the provincial level as a chance for them to show that they can exercise responsibility in government. The elections will probably be held this fall. The exact timetable may be decided by Hans Haekkerup, the new Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary General in Kosovo, who plans to carry out a detailed process of drafting framework laws as a prerequisite for holding elections.

SERBIA

12. Serbia is currently more concerned with the situation in Montenegro than with Kosovo. Stopping the "territorial dissolution" of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) is Belgrade's primary goal at the moment.

13. While Serbia's positions on Montenegro and Kosovo do not coincide with ours, the Serbian and Yugoslav leaders (Yugoslav President Kostunica, Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic) ruled out any use of force to attain their goals.

14. There is a spectrum of views on Kosovo, roughly ranging from "Kosovo will remain a part of the FRY" to "Kosovo will remain a de jure part of the FRY, but Belgrade will be unable—and would not want—to exercise effective control over it."

15. On the United States, views range from "we don't like the U.S. and prefer to deal with Europe, which is prepared to give us more assistance" to "we don't like the U.S. but we're prepared to work with it" to "we are ready to work with the U.S. and, in particular, we urge Washington to give Kosovo economic assistance."

16. The ethnic Albanian guerillas (UCPMB) in the Ground Security Zone (GSZ) in the Presevo Valley are a serious irritant, but not a grave military danger to Serbia. The guerillas are composed of three distinct groups that do not coordinate policies. Although the groups do receive some material assistance from within Kosovo, they are not being directed by elements of the former Kosovo Liberation Army.

17. The practice of Serbian special police of evicting locals from their houses is alienating the local population in the Presevo Valley. A political situation there is essential. The Serbian government is in quiet negotiations with KFOR, and a compromise may well be possible, which would put heavy pressure on the UCPMB to come to terms with Belgrade.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

18. Contrary to the initial analysis, last fall's elections have led to a breakthrough opportunity for democracy. For the first time, a non-nationalist coalition of ten parties led by moderate Bosniak socialist Zlatko Lagumdzija now controls the lower house of the Federation Parliament.

19. In the Republika Srpska (RS), newly elected Prime Minister Ivanic is attempting to put together an apolitical "government of experts" with no cabinet portfolio to be given to a member of the SDS, the party of Radovan Karadzic, a move that would cause the U.S. to end most of its assistance to the RS.

20. There is even a chance that a non-nationalist majority can be formed in the Bosnia and Herzegovina parliament.

21. The three nationalist parties—the Muslim SDA, the Croat HDZ, and the Serb SDS—still control many of the political and economic levers of power. The parliamentary changes, however, reflect a slow, but steady trend in every Bosnian election since 1996 in favor of the non-nationalist parties.

22. If the perception grows that Kosovo will attain independence, it would put huge pressure on moderate Bosnian Serbs like Republika Srpska Prime Minister Ivanic to cease helping to create a unified, multinational Bosnia and Herzegovina and to yield to nationalist calls to join the RS to Serbia.

23. Corruption remains the single biggest barrier to both political and economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly to direct foreign investment. With non-nationalist coalitions now in control of both the Federation and the Republika Srpska, for the first time there is hope that the corruption issue will be effectively addressed.

II. Observations

Kosovo

The indispensable factors in creating the conditions for the development of free-market democracies in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the Stabilization Force (SFOR). Both forces are led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), whose Supreme Commander Europe (SACEUR) is General Joseph Ralston USAF.

In Kosovo, I stayed at Camp Bondsteel, the sprawling U.S. military base in the heart of the U.S. Sector, just north of the border with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). At Bondsteel, I had the opportunity for extensive meetings with officers and enlisted men and women. I also helicoptered to an Italian KFOR base in Decan in extreme western Kosovo near the border of Albania. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, I had meetings at SFOR headquarters near Sarajevo.

My impression is that both missions are going extremely well and that U.S. military personnel are performing their duties magnificently.

At the time of my visit Task Force Falcon, which operates the Multi-National Brigade (East) Area of Responsibility in southeastern Kosovo, had a total of 8,495 soldiers, including 5,466 U.S. soldiers in Kosovo, another 364 U.S. soldiers in FYROM, and 2,665 international soldiers in Kosovo. Its mission is, first, to create a safe and secure environment; second, to support the U.N. Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK); third, to enforce the Statement of Principles and the Military Technical Agreement, which ended the air war in June 1999; and fourth, to assist the transition authority to a civilian government in Kosovo.

Largely because of KFOR, the environment in Kosovo has definitely become safer and more secure. More than one million individuals have returned to their homes since the end of the war. The demining of known sites is complete. Although violence persists in

some parts of the province, its incidence is down considerably, particularly inter-ethnic violence. The Kosovo Protection Corps is being cooperative, and the new UNMIK police have proven to be effective. A Kosovo Police Service is going into the field. No one would assert that Kosovo has returned to normalcy. The northern town of Mitrovica remains a hotbed of Serb separatism, and in many other areas of the province Serbs lead isolated, furtive lives. The trend-lines, however, are in the right direction.

Cooperation between KFOR and the U.N. appears to be much smoother than it was for years in Bosnia between IFOR/SFOR and the U.N. Last fall KFOR assisted in a successful carrying out of local elections and is involved in ongoing assistance to UNMIK and to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in providing support to the needy. Plans call for KFOR to support UNMIK in carrying out provincial elections, in facilitating the return of ethnic Serbs, in setting up an ethnically integrated health care system, and in completing the rehabilitation of schools.

An increasing percentage of Task Force Falcon's efforts is being devoted to interdicting personnel and supplies flowing from Kosovo to ethnic Albanian rebels, the so-called Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda, and Bujanovac (UCPMB) in the buffer zone in Serbia's Presevo Valley. American officers report significant success in the interdiction, although the rugged terrain makes it impossible to close the border completely. Especially noteworthy in the Presevo Valley effort is a variety of joint U.S.-Russian operations. These have involved combined training, including arms exercises, air assault operations, and a multinational airborne jump; combined peace support operations; and joint liaison teams.

The morale of the American men and women in uniform in Kosovo is extraordinarily high. The ones with whom I spoke all understood their mission, believed in it, and took pride in the tangible achievements they could point to. Officers were unanimous in their belief that the wide variety of tasks the soldiers carry out, and the opportunities for developing leadership skills in a field environment made duty in Kosovo and Bosnia extremely valuable to the U.S. Army. Inevitably some skills in high intensity conflict may get rusty during peacekeeping duty, but the army has a detailed plan for quickly restoring those skills after reassignment. It is no surprise, then, that the re-enlistment rate in Kosovo and Bosnia is the highest in the U.S. Army. Last year, for example, Task Force Falcon achieved 142 percent of its target re-enlistments.

Political life in Kosovo has revived since the war. I met in Pristina with the three leading Kosovar Albanian figures: Ibrahim Rugova, President of the LDK; Hashim Thaci, President of the PDK; and Ramush Haradinaj, President of the AAK. Despite differences among them, all three are fervent supporters of a democratic, independent Kosovo. All saw a popularly elected provincial central government as the precondition for the development of democratic institutions.

I expressed the fear that a newly elected Kosovo assembly might issue a unilateral declaration of independence and explained that this could set off a dangerous chain of events, beginning with an attempt by the Republika Srpska to secede from Bosnia and join Serbia. Moreover, a unilateral declaration of independence would

weaken further the already shaky Western European support for the Kosovar Albanians. All three leaders disclaimed any intention of issuing a unilateral declaration, even after a province-wide assembly is elected. Rugova said that although he favors formal international recognition for Kosovo at the earliest possible date, he does not want Kosovars to take actions that might block the establishment of democratic and economic institutions by the West.

Rugova expressed disappointment that Vojislav Kostunica, the new President of Yugoslavia, had not come up with any new ideas regarding Kosovo. He added that most Serbs no longer care much about Kosovo's fate and that it had essentially become a concern only of Belgrade intellectuals. Kostunica, Rugova emphasized, was much more concerned at the moment with Montenegro (an analysis validated by my meeting in Belgrade with Kostunica).

Haradinaj, generally seen as the most radical of the three Kosovar leaders and the only one with a fluent command of English, went to great pains to emphasize his willingness to work with Kosovo Serbs as long as they are elected democratically. Of course, this would mean that the Kosovo Serbs would have to "recognize the new reality" and participate in Kosovo's political life, something which most of them as yet have refused to do. Haradinaj echoed Rugova's assurance that he would not jeopardize international support for Kosovo's eventual independence by any risky unilateral steps. He pointed out, though, that Kosovars still lack the basic symbols connecting them to their own society such as identification cards or drivers' licenses. Finally, Haradinaj expressed the opinion that UNMIK should increase the number of local police officers in the Kosovo Police Service from the current 2,800 to about 8,000.

Thaci, the former commander of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), also voiced disappointment with Yugoslav President Kostunica's initial actions toward Kosovo. He was dismayed that Kostunica has not released all ethnic Albanian political prisoners, numbering well over 1,000. A highly advertised amnesty law currently under consideration, he said, would only release 200 individuals, none of them being held for alleged political offenses. Thaci also said he had hoped Kostunica would do more to ease tensions in Mitrovica and in the Presevo Valley.

The U.S. Mission in Pristina and Hans Haekkerup, the new Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary General, agreed that through a province-wide election Kosovo's population should be given a share of the responsibility for their own development at an early date. He did share my concern about moving too quickly to elections but drew my attention to a lengthy process of drafting framework laws, which he envisions as a prerequisite for elections.

A judicial and legal affairs roundtable with international officials in which I participated in Pristina graphically illustrated the long and arduous democracy-building process ahead in Kosovo. Only a small percentage of the 400 Kosovar Albanian judges and prosecutors appointed since January 1999 is effective. The only experience many local judges had was under an authoritarian communist regime, so they have no familiarity with the powers of an independent judiciary and, hence, are often uncomfortable with making decisions. Inadequate pay, job insecurity, and ethnic bias are typ-

ical. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is providing basic training for local judges in Kosovo, and UNMIK is developing a Judicial Inspection Unit to identify and remove judges who engage in misconduct. Given this rather bleak short-term local picture, UNMIK has also reacted by appointing fifteen international judges and prosecutors and wants to appoint more. UNMIK has an ombudsman whose office is entrusted with investigating complaints by Kosovo residents. Unfortunately, the ombudsman has only six local lawyers on his staff, and none has the requisite training or experience to do the job effectively.

In addition, the American Bar Association-Central and East European Law Initiative (ABA-CEELI) is assisting in drafting a criminal code and code of criminal procedure and in establishing a resource center for defense attorneys.

The Kosovo Police Service (KPS) School now conducts a 26-week program of classroom and field training for local police recruits. The school intends to train 9,000 officers. Until the force reaches that level, UNMIK is relying on an international civilian police force, which includes 500 Americans, to maintain order and provide the field training for the KPS students. Already, in several areas KFOR has transferred to the KPS the responsibility for protecting minorities and controlling the province's border.

I believe that international judicial and legal assistance is fundamental to the building of a civil society in Kosovo, and the effort should continue until this is achieved. I encouraged international NGOs like ABA-CEELI to provide defense attorneys and other resources, even as they train local lawyers to fill these positions. Perhaps could appropriate additional funds for USAID to disburse to NGOs whose proposals are deemed worthy.

Although more than ninety-five percent of Kosovo's current population is ethnic Albanian, I remain hopeful that the province can regain some of its ethnic heterogeneity. With that in mind, I met with Serbian Orthodox Father Sava Janjic at the magnificent fourteenth-century Visoki Decani Monastery in the shadow of the Albanian Alps. During the 1999 war the monks offered refuge to both their Albanian and Serbian neighbors. Nonetheless, they live under constant threat from radical ethnic Albanians and is spared damage only by the presence of Italian KFOR troops who are stationed just outside the monastery's gates. In the 1990's, Father Sava won international notoriety as the "cyberpriest" for his anti-Milosevic website. The West must do all it can to support Kosovo Serbs who desire to return and to safeguard all Serbian Orthodox religious sites.

SERBIA

Last fall's popular ouster of Slobodan Milosevic as President of Yugoslavia after his defeat in the first round of the elections by Vojislav Kostunica was the single most important change in the Balkan region in years. In Belgrade, I met with most of the top officials of the new Yugoslav and Serbian governments, among them President Kostunica, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic, Yugoslav Interior Minister Zoran Zivkovic, Yugoslav Ambassador-designate to the United States Milan Protic, Serbian Prime Minister-designate (since then confirmed) Zoran Djindjic, Serbian Dep-

uty Prime Minister Nebojsa Covic, Serbian Interior Minister Bozo Prelevic, and Yugoslav Minister for National and Ethnic Communities Rasim Ljajic.

The one constant theme in all our discussions was a fervent desire to maintain what is left of Yugoslavia, or, as several of my interlocutors put it, to "halt the further disintegration in the region." President Kostunica, Prime Minister Djindjic, and Foreign Minister Svilanovic all stressed that their country's future "lies in Europe." Djindjic set as a goal Yugoslavia's membership in the European Union within ten years.

Djindjic and Svilanovic both posited an intimate connection between this foreign policy goal and domestic conditions. Djindjic was quick to admit a host of serious domestic deficiencies that have to be remedied such as corrupt courts, police, and security police. Fortunately, he added, independent media already exist. Svilanovic added to the list of challenges the need to guarantee human rights and the rights of minorities, a privatization of the state-dominated economy, attracting direct foreign investment, and destroying the links between organized crime and the old political structures.

The Yugoslav people, Djindjic explained, have high expectations for the post-Milosevic government, and the fundamental transition must be organized without social discord. Secessionist movements in the Presevo Valley, Montenegro, and Kosovo can only sap energy from the desperate need for rapid domestic reform. Svilanovic pleaded for international support to stabilize the borders of Yugoslavia so that the necessary domestic reforms can proceed. He did, however, say that he could live with a Montenegrin decision for independence if its is taken democratically. President Kostunica, on the other hand, declared a bit disingenuously that until recently (when calls for Montenegro's independence increased) he had thought that he was living in one country. The Yugoslav President disparagingly remarked that cigarette smuggling would flourish even more if Montenegro were independent and thus free from Belgrade's supervision. Nonetheless, Kostunica, as did all other officials in Belgrade, ruled out using threats or violence against Montenegro.

Regarding Kosovo, Svilanovic, himself a Kosovo Serb from Gnjilane in the current U.S. Sector, urged Washington to provide economic assistance to the province, especially through NGOs. While he declared a need to discuss links between Kosovo and Belgrade, Svilanovic said that he was not in favor of direct control from the Serbian capital. For now he advocated lower-level dialog and a postponement of a decision on final status. In the coming months U.S. diplomacy should attempt to combine Svilanovic's low-key approach with the recognition of realism shown me by Rugova, Thaci, and Haradinaj in Pristina in order, at the very least, to buy time to stabilize the situation further.

With respect to the Presevo secessionist movement, Djindjic stressed the need to eliminate the causes of the violence and but wondered whether the risk was not too high of integrating the moderate Albanians and isolating the extremists. For the moment, he concluded, this tactic is working. Interior Minister Zivkovic, however, seemed to disagree somewhat, bemoaning the fact that Albanians in the Presevo Valley have refused to join the local po-

lice. Kostunica's chief foreign policy advisor reiterated this, but added that ethnic Albanians do have a majority in the Presevo municipal assembly.

Deputy Prime Minister Covic, who has been entrusted with the principal role in dealing with the Presevo insurgency, evinced a sincere desire to put an end to Serbian abuse of ethnic Albanians there. Nonetheless, he and his deputies seemed oblivious to the causal relationship between the forcible occupation by Serbian police of nearly half the Albanian houses in a Presevo Valley village and the villagers' hostility toward, and unwillingness to cooperate with, the police. I explained similar feelings of Americans two hundred twenty-five years ago against British troops who insisted upon being quartered in their homes. None of the Yugoslav leaders considered the UCPMB insurgency a military threat, but all underscored the grave political damage it would do to the Kostunica/Djindjic governments if left unchecked. Kostunica remarked wryly that if control is not reasserted, many people would say, "one way or another Milosevic had this situation under control, but this government doesn't."

The question of Serbia's coming to terms with its recent history was a prominent topic of our discussions. Somewhat to my surprise, Djindjic, known as a Serbian nationalist, declared that "Serbian messianism is a hundred-year-old illness." He saw Milosevic as but the latest political leader to peddle this vision of a Greater Serbia. Although Djindjic averred that he wants a thorough airing of this issue and of the resulting carnage of the 1990s, he said that because Serbs do not feel defeated in war, a Nuremberg-style Tribunal for Serbs accused of war crimes is impossible. Djindjic felt that while the Serbian elite shares American values on humane and equal treatment of minorities, there is a need to convince the Serbian populace of this necessity.

Svilanovic stressed that Yugoslavia intended to allow the Hague Tribunal to open a "technical office" in Belgrade, although negotiations were temporarily stalled. He was attracted to the idea of a Truth Commission as an introduction to war-crimes proceedings. Despite the fact that the news media under Milosevic were not under total government control, most people remained unaware of Serbian war crimes, Svilanovic asserted, and after the NATO bombing campaign they simply don't believe, or don't want to believe, that they actually occurred.

Kostunica expressed similar sentiments, though with somewhat more distance and less self-criticism. He advocated "collecting data on the wars in the former Yugoslavia, which would be of use to all." Kostunica saw this exercise, which he said had actually begun in the early 1990s, as "enlightening the public" and "motivating the people to tell the truth." He added that a certain anti-Western attitude exists in some circles in Serbia. Djindjic was less circumspect on this point, asserting that the American "combination of moralizing and practicality cause the United States image problems in the Balkans."

At times my conversations in Belgrade seemed to take on an air of shadow-boxing with articulate and clever interlocutors. The new Yugoslav and Serbian leaders obviously knew the issues important to Americans and tailored many of their comments to those con-

cerns, all the while pushing the envelope on their own agendas. It is important, however, to put the discussions in perspective. Whatever problems I had with some of the statements my hosts made, they paled in comparison to the deception and outright lies made by Slobodan Milosevic in my discussions with him in Belgrade in 1993. The Kostunica/Djindjic regime may not be an ideal one for many Americans, but it is democratic and it eschews the rabid ultra-nationalism of Milosevic. Despite the current chilly atmosphere in relations between Washington and Belgrade, I believe that we can do business with the new Yugoslav and Serbian governments.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina in some ways was the most frustrating of the three locations I visited. It is the land of the classical "yes, but." Yes, the country is in far better physical, and even psychological shape than it was at the cessation of hostilities in the fall of 1995. But the most sympathetically inclined observer must admit to a sense of frustration at the glacial speed of progress in many areas, and the apparent intractability of some problems.

As in Kosovo, the precondition for any movement forward has been, and for some time will continue to be the NATO-led peace-keeping troops on the ground. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) is obviously so superior, either to the armies of the Federation or of the Republika Srpska, or to potential freelance terrorists, that it has remained essentially unchallenged. Bosnia and Herzegovina today is peaceful, with ethnic violence and common crime at manageable levels. Thanks to the introduction of unified automobile license plates by the international community's High Representative, travel between the two entities has become commonplace.

At the end of the war there were approximately 2.3 million persons displaced. Now the total is down to one million, of which 750,000 are internally displaced within Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 250,000 are refugees, most of them in Yugoslavia and Croatia. The number of persons returning to their homes where they are in an ethnic minority (so-called "minority returns") increased 50 percent from 1998 to 1999, and another 75 percent from 1999 to 2000. Forecasts for 2001 call for 60,000 more minority returns. This summer when more people try to return there will definitely be a need for an SFOR presence because of the persistent resort to violence by ultra-nationalists. The plan calls for maximizing the use of the so-called "multinational specialized units" (MSUs) or gendarmes under SFOR control to lay the groundwork for the returns or to react if there is trouble. Unfortunately, three Argentine MSU platoons have just left the country, and the total strength is down to approximately 380 men, 95 percent of them carabinieri from Italy. Their number must quickly be supplemented.

One glaring omission in the generally positive security situation is the continued freedom of several individuals indicted by the Hague Tribunal for alleged war crimes, above all former Bosnian Serb leader Dr. Radovan Karadzic and former Bosnian Serb army commander General Ratko Mladic. Until these fugitives are apprehended and brought to justice there can be no real stability in the country.

The biggest challenge in Bosnia and Herzegovina is illegal immigration and organized crime. In 2000, according to statistics of the State Border Service, a total of 35,793 illegal immigrants entered the country, with 24,285 remaining unaccounted for by January 2001. Not only is their presence a destabilizing domestic factor, but Bosnia is gaining a bad name internationally as a primary springboard for illegal migration into Western Europe. Bosnia and Herzegovina has an external border approximately one thousand miles long with about 400 crossing points, forty of them major ones. The Border Service is seriously underfunded.

Another domestic problem is the growing influence of Islamic fundamentalist groups, which are a threat to liberal values. Former mujaheddin living in Central Bosnia have been engaged in some violent activities.

The economic picture in Bosnia is mixed. To the visitor returning after little more than a year, Sarajevo looks brighter and livelier, with much new construction and many other buildings refurbished. Vehicular traffic is approaching the level of a Western city, and small businesses of all sorts seem to be thriving. Unfortunately, however, at the macro level the picture is not as rosy. Starting from a devastatingly low level after the war, the annual growth of gross domestic product averaged about 40 percent. But this figure is deceptively high, since it was largely based upon foreign assistance, which is now ending. In May 2000 international donors pledged the last tranche of a \$5.1 billion reconstruction program for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Large-scale economic development has been prevented by the tight control of the three main nationalist political parties—the Bosniak Muslim SDA, the radical Bosnian Serb SDS, and the hard-line Bosnian Croat branch of the HDZ. The economy was governed by so-called payments bureaus, a clearing system which charged a fee on every transaction. The individual payments bureaus were controlled by the three nationalist parties, which skimmed off a portion of the collected fees. Tired of this corruption, the International Monetary Fund made further loans contingent on the closure of the payments bureaus, which was accomplished early in January 2001. In their place is a system of banks, which will be connected to cantonal treasuries in the Federation and an entity treasury in the Republika Srpska. Supposedly the three nationalist parties have divested their extensive economic holdings, although seasoned observers are skeptical that this has actually occurred.

Bosnia desperately needs direct foreign investment, but until now it has been nearly non-existent. Because of government red-tape and corruption, investors view the country as a high risk without the long-term resource upside of, for example, a Russia. Setting up an honest, efficient legal and judicial system is a task of the highest priority.

The most encouraging recent development in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been the slow but steady growth in popularity of the non-nationalist parties. The November 2000 elections produced some setbacks such as the triumph of a nationalist in the Republika Srpska presidential race. But contrary to the conventional wisdom of the international press and some NGOs, the elections also resulted in democratic breakthrough developments. For

the first time a non-nationalist coalition led by moderate Bosniak socialist Zlatko Lagumdžija commands a majority in the Federation House of Representatives and has excluded the SDA, SDS, and HDZ from the government. In the Republika Srpska, Mladen Ivanic, the leader of the moderate Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) is forming a government of experts and similarly is trying to exclude the three nationalist parties. I had met with Lagumdžija and Ivanic on earlier visits to Bosnia when they were in the opposition, and I saw them again on this trip. Both are dedicated, well-educated, worldly democrats who are superbly equipped to lead their entities.

At the time of my visit a new government had not yet been formed at the national level. I had discussions with then-Prime Minister Martin Raguz and Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic, both of whom are Bosnian Croats. Prlic told me, “the right discussion is not about the possible withdrawal of the United States from the Balkans. The right topic is how to integrate Bosnia and Herzegovina into Europe.” He added that perception in Bosnia is more important than reality. Although the number of American troops has been reduced from 20,000 to about 4,200 the salient fact is that the populace knows that the U.S. is present.

Prlic and Raguz both felt that last fall’s elections had at the very least created the conditions for a political breakthrough—definitely at the entity and cantonal levels, and perhaps at the national level. Despite the heavy Bosnian Croat vote for the nationalist HDZ, Prime Minister Raguz declared that “for a majority of Bosnian Croats, Bosnia and Herzegovina is the state within which their problems can be solved.” Important in this context, he said, was the recent decision of the Constitutional Court that Bosnia’s three constituent peoples must have equal collective and individual rights throughout the country. Prlic added an international dimension by noting that it is important to keep Kosovo within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as long as possible, because its formal secession would destabilize Bosnia through the Republika Srpska.

Several of my interlocutors in Bosnia praised the Dayton Accord as an undeniable success, but called for amending certain sections of it. With only one exception, however, no one wanted to reopen the entire treaty or to scrap it entirely in favor of another document to be worked out by an international conference. Reform, they believed, could be effected within Bosnia from the bottom up.

In Sarajevo, I was present at a dinner meeting of moderate leaders of non-nationalist parties. All three major communities were represented—Bosniak, Serb, and Croat. Undoubtedly all the individuals had indescribably bitter memories of the war, and their approaches to specific problems varied widely. But a willingness to cooperate, even to compromise, was palpable. Bosnia is far from having a Westminster-style parliament, but the progress is noteworthy, and for the first time there is hope in the air.

III. Roster of Meetings in Kosovo, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

(TITLES AS OF JANUARY 9–15, 2001)

Camp Bondsteel, Decan, and Pristina, Kosovo

Major General George W. Casey, Jr. USA, Commander, 1st Armored Division

Brigadier General Kenneth J. Quinlan, Jr. USA, Assistant Commander, 1st Armored Division

Officers and Enlisted Men and Women of the U.S. Army, Camp Bondsteel

Lieutenant General Carlo Cabigiosu, Italian Army, Commander, KFOR

Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, President, Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)

Hashim Thaci, President, Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK)

Ramush Haradinaj, President, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK)

Father Sava Janjic, Visoki Decani Serbian Orthodox Monastery

Hans Haekkerup, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General and Head, United Nations Interim Administration for Kosovo (UNMIK)

Jock Covey, Principal Deputy Special Representative, UNMIK

Daan Everts, Deputy Special Representative, Institution-building, UNMIK

Andy Bearpark, Deputy Special Representative, Reconstruction and Development

Eric Morris, Special Representative, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Marie Francoise Verdun, Director, Judicial Training Institute

Colette Rausch, Head, OSCE Rule of Law Program

Edwin Vilmoare, Director, American Bar Association/Central and East European Law Initiative Kosovo Program

Marek Nowicki, UNMIK Ombudsman

Jack Winn, Program Officer, USAID Kosovo Mission

Steven Bennett, Director, Kosovo Police School

Sylvie Pantz, Co-Head, UNMIK Department of Judicial Affairs

Christopher W. Dell, Chief of Mission, U.S. Office Pristina

Theresa Grecnik, Political Officer, U.S. Office Pristina

Belgrade, Serbia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Vojislav Kostunica, President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Goran Svilanovic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Zoran Zivkovic, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Rasim Ljajic, Minister of National and Ethnic Communities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Milan Protic, Ambassador-designate to the United States of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Zoran Djindjic, Prime Minister-designate of the Republic of Serbia
 Nebojsa Covic, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia
 Boza Prelevic, Minister for Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia
 William Montgomery, U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
 Bertram Braun, Political Officer, U.S. Embassy Belgrade
Sarajevo and Butmir, Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Martin Raguz, Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Jadranko Prlic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Zlatko Lagumdzija, Member of Federation House of Representatives and President, Social Democratic Party
 Mladen Ivanic, Prime Minister of the Republika Srpska and President, Party of Democratic Progress
 Milorad Dodik, President, Union of Independent Social Democrats and former Prime Minister of the Republika Srpska
 Kresimir Zubak, President, New Croat Initiative
 Haris Silajdzic, former Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina and President, Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Lieutenant General Michael L. Dodson USA, Commander, SFOR
 Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Ambassador Robert Barry, Head, OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Ambassador Jacques Klein, Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary General for Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Thomas Miller, U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Velia DePirro, Political Officer, U.S. Embassy Sarajevo