

Clinton's economic package to be put on fast track

WASHINGTON — President Clinton and Democratic congressional leaders have agreed to a process that will speed consideration of Clinton's economic package by putting it on a "fast track," the White House announced Tuesday.



President Bill Clinton

The maneuver is designed to result in nearly simultaneous votes, perhaps in April, on two measures: Clinton's \$16 billion package of short-term spending in-

creases on roads and other projects, and a separate budget resolution laying out unpopular tax increases and spending cuts.

White House spokesman George Stephanopoulos announced Tuesday evening that Clinton had talked to House Speaker Thomas Foley and Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell on the plan.

Democratic leaders had pressed for the early votes on Clinton's budget-cutting proposals to improve their credibility on deficit reduction. They have been facing mounting defections in their own conservative wing. Lawmakers had planned to approve the emergency spending increases in March, with the budget following a month or so

later. Holding the votes at the same time will let lawmakers show voters that they are as intent on distasteful budget-cutting as they are on the easier moves to increase spending.

Stephanopoulos said that in phone calls to Mitchell, Foley and House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., Clinton "asked them to put the budget resolution on a fast track so we could lock in the spending cuts as soon as possible and they have agreed."

"So we will be moving the budget resolution as the first part of the president's economic package...to make sure the president's blueprint for economic change is approved

as soon as possible," Stephanopoulos said.

The spokesman said that the new procedure will mean a slight delay in action on Clinton's stimulus plan, but that it was hopeful it would mean quicker action on the overall package.

He said he hoped that Congress could move on the measure over the next few weeks — possibly even before Clinton formally submits his budget to Congress on March 23.

House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., when asked if the deficit-reduction vote could occur before August, told reporters, "I think it can happen before then."

U.S. planes to coordinate Bosnian relief airdrops

President Clinton consulted Tuesday with the U.N. secretary-general on launching "purely humanitarian" Bosnian relief airdrops that he said would carry no danger of drawing America into a deeper engagement.

"There's no combat implications whatever," Clinton said at the start of an hour-long session with Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

The U.N. leader said after the meeting, "We agreed there is no problem. This would be done in complete coordination between the United Nations and the operation."

A senior administration official said the United States was consulting with many other countries to see if they want to join in the airdrop. Only when the number of participants is decided will a decision be made on the exact command mechanism, said the official, commenting on condition of ano-

nymity. Boutros-Ghali stressed that the bulk of humanitarian aid to the Bosnians would continue to be delivered by trucks, but said of the airdrop plan, "This is important. It will reinforce the morale of the people on the ground."

Clinton, asked about the risks of U.S. planes being shot at by anti-aircraft artillery, said he believed "the risks are quite small."

He rejected suggestions the relief operation could draw the United States into a deeper engagement, saying, "Not at all, because what we're discussing is very different." He said the effort under discussion was "purely humanitarian and quite limited."

Myers said the relief planes would fly without air cover, adding "it is our judgment...that there will not be too great a risk."

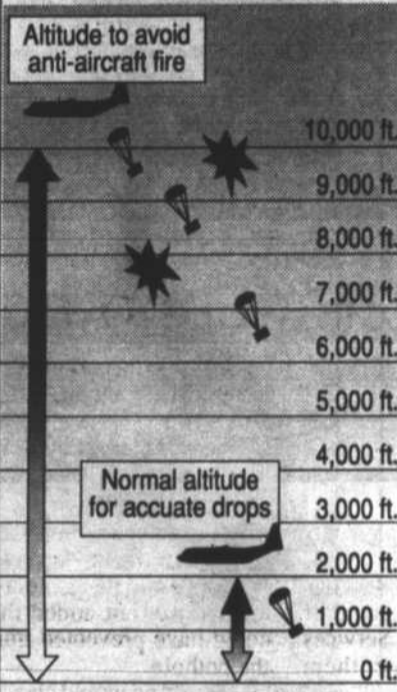
But relief experts said Tuesday that American pilots dropping food from high above eastern Bosnia could still be hit by Serb missiles, and their bundles could veer off target and smash houses or be lost, relief experts said Tuesday. Serb commanders have warned that the airdrops could lead to an escalation of the fighting.

"If they think they can do it, then for goodness sake, let's go for it because the situation in some of these areas is really bad," said Sylvania Foa, spokeswoman for the U.N. Human Rights Commissioner in Geneva.

The Washington plan calls for high-altitude drops, to protect U.S. pilots from anti-aircraft or missile fire.

Drops from 12,000 feet can easily veer more from a mile from designated mountain targets, and about a quarter of the supplies could be expected to fall to Serb besiegers.

Airdrops: avoiding anti-aircraft fire



C-141B Starlifter



Length: 168 ft. 4 in. Wing span: 159 ft. 11 in. Engines: Four Pratt & Whitney TF33-P-7 turbofans Maximum payload: 97,994 lbs

C-130



Conversion of Lockheed L-100-20 Hercules Length: 106 ft. 1 in. (32.33 m) Wingspan: 132 ft. 7 in. (40.41 m) Engines: Allison T-56 Series IV turboprops Cargo capacity: 42,000 lbs for low velocity air-drop

Source: Jane's All The World's Aircraft

AP/Wm. J. Castello

U.S. warns warlord: troops may use force

KISMAYU, Somalia — Trying to restore order to this port city before American troops withdraw, the U.S.-led military coalition told a top warlord Tuesday to get his fighters out of town or face military action.

The ultimatum to Mohamed Said Hirsi, known as Gen. Morgan, came after his supporters reclaimed part of Kismayu in street fighting that killed as many as two dozen people Monday. Morgan claimed some of his followers acted without his knowledge or consent.

But a warning message signed by U.S. special envoy Robert Oakley and Marine Lt. Gen. Robert Johnston, commander of coalition forces, insisted Morgan knew.

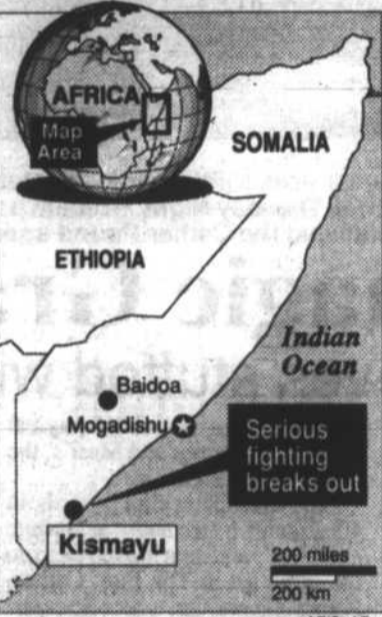
"There can be no excuse or pardon for the deliberate, well-planned actions of your forces and senior commanders in attacking Kismayu," said the letter being messaged by radio to Morgan.

It demanded that all of Morgan's forces and weapons must be moved to areas north of Doble, 50 miles northwest of Kismayu, by midnight Thurs-

day. "If any of your forces are found outside of these locations on Feb. 26 or thereafter, they will be engaged," the letter said. "Any weapons will be destroyed."

Gunfire erupted regularly Tuesday in Kismayu, and U.S. and Belgian troops patrolled warily.

Monday's fighting postponed a planned withdrawal of U.S. forces, who were to turn over full command to Belgian troops. Belgian Lt. Col. George Marinus said Tuesday that the Americans now "will not leave Kismayu until order has been restored." Military officials and residents said



several hundred of Morgan's supporters entered the city before dawn Monday in a bid to take back homes and property occupied by supporters of rival faction leader Col. Omar Jess.

No firm casualty figures were available, but it appeared from various accounts that about two dozen people were killed. One man said he saw 16 bodies, and a relief official at a hospital said about 15 died there.

WORLD WIRE

Study: Balding men at risk of heart attacks

CHICAGO — A new study found 21- to 55-year-old men who were bald at the top were three times more likely to suffer heart attacks than those with full heads of hair.

Men with mild to moderate baldness on top had about a 1 1/2 times greater risk. Men with receding

hairlines but no baldness on top faced no increased risk.

Findings of the study of 665 male heart-attack victims and 772 similar men who had suffered no heart attacks appear in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

Helicopter crash kills 4 U.S. servicemen

BERLIN — A U.S. Army helicopter crashed Tuesday while attempting to land at an air base in Wiesbaden, killing four American soldiers and injuring four others, a U.S. military spokesman said.

Lt. Col. Dick Bridges said all the victims were U.S. Army personnel. He did not release their names pending notification of relatives.

Bridges said the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter was on a 100-mile flight from Stuttgart when it crashed in the Wiesbaden air base about 7:35 p.m. (10:30 a.m. CST).

The cause of the crash was un-

known and under investigation, he said.

The helicopter was carrying three crew members, who were based in Wiesbaden, and five passengers based in Frankfurt, he said. Wiesbaden is about 25 miles west of Frankfurt.

Local fire fighters said they were called in to the crash site, but the U.S. military would not permit them to give any information.

The site of the crash on the military base was closed off. Reporters and photographers were not allowed access.

Turmoil builds over King trial juror

LOS ANGELES — The trial of four white police officers in the Rodney King beating was thrown into turmoil Tuesday by accusations against a black woman juror and a legal fight over a defense attorney.

"This is the 11th hour and 59th minute," the judge said in exasperation as developments stalled selection of three alternate jurors and moved a prosecutor to express fears of a mistrial. Jury selection of the 12 regular jurors, including two blacks and a Hispanic, was completed Monday, and opening statements in the racially charged case had been expected to begin Wednesday.

Defense lawyer Ira Salzman said an excused juror had come forward to accuse one of the blacks on the final jury of making prejudicial comments about the defense.

"With this new information I cannot accept this jury as constituted," said Salzman, who represents Sgt. Stacey Koon. The excused juror, who is white, was summoned to court to explain, and the judge ordered all participants into his chambers for a closed hearing. He said the issue was so sensitive that the man couldn't be questioned in public.

The judge also dismissed the pro-

spective jury panel for the night, delaying the selection of jury alternates until Wednesday. Opening statements can't begin until the jury and the alternates are selected.

"This is an attempt to provoke a mistrial after the jury is sworn because the defense is unhappy with the composition of the jury," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven Clymer.

The issue that appeared most troubling to U.S. District Judge John G. Davies involved defendant Timothy Wind. The former officer said he was reluctant to sign a waiver of conflict of interest by his lawyer, Paul DePasquale.

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