

Sarajevo guns silent; diplomacy gets its shot

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — With the threat of NATO airstrikes averted, U.N. peacekeepers Monday moved to control the remaining Serb guns around Sarajevo while diplomats turned up the heat for a political settlement.

Immediate airstrikes against remaining Serb artillery positions were unnecessary, NATO and U.N. officials said.

Although some Serb guns remained in place after the Monday 1 a.m. deadline, the Serbs were credited with trying to comply with an ultimatum that could have put NATO into combat for the first time ever.

Monday's catchword was momentum: Use this halt in the siege of Sarajevo as a model for a wider settlement in Bosnia.

"The challenge," said President Clinton at a White House news conference, "... is to build on this week's progress and create a lasting and work-

able peace for all the people of Bosnia."

Clinton said the United States would renew its efforts to help "reinvigorate the peace process," and that Russia would be a partner.

"We must not let this favorable moment pass," Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said during a visit in Hungary in which he stressed the need for cooperation between Moscow and the West on Bosnia.

The Bosnian Serbs said Russia's stronger role was welcomed. Russia sent 400 troops to join U.N. peacekeepers in Sarajevo.

"It was not natural that Russia was out of the whole process," Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said in Pale, his power center southeast of Sarajevo.

Karadzic said the Serb side would only use its withdrawn weapons for self-defense, not employ them as some feared against other towns held by Muslim-led government forces under

siege by well-armed Serbs.

He said a few weapons were "stuck" in their positions "but will also be controlled."

How informally that could happen was shown in the snowy hills northeast of Sarajevo. French U.N. troops arrived in two helicopters to control several cannons and a howitzer.

They demanded that the Serbs turn around the howitzer aimed at the center of Sarajevo, and the Serbs complied.

After nightfall Monday, U.N. Maj. Rob Annink said all sites had been visited and either brought under U.N. control or had the weapons withdrawn.

"The last scraps of metal are being put in the regroupment sites," he said.

NATO emphasized that it would continue to monitor Serb compliance and made clear air strikes were still an option.

"I reaffirm strongly that we will respond to any further shelling of

— 66 —
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— Clinton,
U.S. president

Sarajevo, whatever its origin, by an immediate military response," said French Gen. Jean Cot, commander of U.N. forces in former Yugoslavia.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin, talking to reporters in Sarajevo after meeting Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, said Russian President Boris Yeltsin could take substantial credit for removing Serb guns from around the badly shelled capital.

Yeltsin is to go to Bonn, Germany, on Tuesday for a meeting with U.S.

European and U.N. officials to work on the next steps.

The special U.S. envoy on former Yugoslavia, Charles Redman, was in Zagreb, Croatia, on Monday working on the Croatian aspect of the three-sided war in Bosnia.

The Muslim-led government has rejected the latest peace proposal. The proposal calls for dividing the country among its three ethnic groups.

Relief airlifts and convoys, suspended for one day as a precaution, will resume Tuesday.

Army leaders storm building, free hostages

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Army commandos stormed the Afghan Embassy late Monday, freeing five schoolboys and a teacher and killing three masked Afghan gunmen who had held them hostage for nearly 40 hours.

The kidnapers "had every intention of shooting us, but they ... were killed before they could move," one of the boys told state-run TV.

The kidnapers, carrying pistols and grenades, had demanded \$5 million for themselves and 2,000 truckloads of food for Kabul, the Afghan capital, where heavy fighting between rival Islamic factions has led to severe food shortages.

The kidnapers said they belonged to no faction, but wanted to draw world attention to the suffering of Kabul's people.

The raid on the embassy, a white, two-story house in a posh residential section of Islamabad, began with a loud explosion aimed at stunning or distracting the kidnapers. About 10 commandos then rushed in and fired furiously for about 15 seconds, killing the three young kidnapers.

No one else was hurt, said Interior Secretary Jamshed Burki.

The incident began Sunday when the gunmen hijacked a busload of boys and teachers from Peshawar, 120 miles away, and drove them to Islamabad.

They freed six teachers and 55 schoolboys Sunday and eight more students earlier Monday.

The Pakistanis refused to pay any money, but indicated they would negotiate on other issues. The interior minister offered the gunmen safe passage home if they freed the hostages. Government officials, police and military officers traipsed in and out of the embassy Monday, but negotiations deadlocked.

Americans fail to win medals Monday

LILLEHAMMER, Norway — No medals Monday for America — not for Bonnie and not for Picabo.

A shot at one, though, for the U.S. hockey team after their first victory of the Olympics.

A fired-up American team blistered Italy for five first period goals as they swept into the last spot of the medals round with a 7-1 victory — not a miracle on ice, but good enough to advance Team Tie (1-1-3).

"We're a team that has responded better to pressure, to having our backs against the wall," said U.S. captain Peter Laviolette. "Tonight we had to do it and we came out flying."

With Peter Ferraro scoring twice, the U.S. grabbed a 5-0 lead before the first 15 minutes were gone. They outshot the Italians 47-16 in dominating the game.

The hockey team will play unde-

— 66 —
Three one-hundredths of a second away ... that was a real strong race for me. That's what I'm most happy about.

— Blair,
U.S. speedskater

feated Finland in the next round. Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean skated in hopes of repeating 1984 — and they came up short. The Sarajevo gold medalists settled for bronze in Lillehammer.

The gold went to Russians Oksana Grietschuk and Evgeni Platov, with their teammates Maia Usova and Alexander Zhulin — the reigning world champions — taking the silver.

Speedskater Bonnie Blair missed her record-setting sixth medal by .03 of a second in the women's 1,500-meter speedskating, while it wasn't close at all for skier Picabo Street, who finished in 10th place in the women's combined after a second in the downhill portion. Russia's Lyubov Egorova earned

her third gold medal in Lillehammer to tie the all-time Winter Games record of six. Egorova anchored the winning Russian squad in the women's 20-kilometer cross-country relay — her ninth Olympic race and ninth medal.

Blair could have become the biggest U.S. medal winner in Winter Games history by finishing in the top three.

"Three one-hundredths of a second away ... that was a real strong race for me," Blair reflected. Her time of 2 minutes, 3.44 seconds was a personal best, and "that's what I'm most happy about," she said.

Blair, who skates for the record again in the 1,000 Wednesday, finished fourth.

| 1994 LILLEHAMMER | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|-------|
| Medals table | | | | |
| Through Monday, February 21 | | | | |
| 33 total medals | | | | |
| Country | G | S | B | Total |
| Russia | 9 | 7 | 3 | 19 |
| Norway | 8 | 6 | 2 | 16 |
| Italy | 3 | 3 | 8 | 14 |
| Germany | 4 | 2 | 6 | 12 |
| United States | 4 | 3 | 0 | 7 |
| Canada | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| Austria | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Netherlands | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Switzerland | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| France | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Kazakhstan | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Japan | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Finland | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Sweden | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Belarus | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Britain | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Slovenia | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

G-Gold, S-Silver, B-Bronze

Savings and loan cleanup nearing \$150 billion

WASHINGTON — Nearly five years after the government launched its cleanup of the savings and loan industry, the end is in sight, but the cost to the taxpayers is steep — \$150 billion and counting.

While the industry is no longer in financial trouble, echoes of the S&L disaster remain, like the 1989 failure of an obscure Arkansas thrift, Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan.

Madison's owner invested in some rural real estate with a small-state governor, who later became president.

On Thursday, Republicans hope to turn a congressional hearing on the performance of the Resolution Trust

Corp., the S&L cleanup agency, into a forum on President Clinton's long-ago investment.

The thrift industry now looks like this: Last year, only 10 S&Ls failed, the fewest since 1979, and none so far this year.

The industry — about half its former size — is profitable. It's earned \$8.9 billion since the start of 1992.

And the government bureaucracy charged with cleaning up the mess is making plans to finish its work by the end of next year.

The RTC already has whittled its workforce from a peak of 8,800 to 6,740 currently. It has wrapped up the

affairs of 680 S&Ls and disposed of \$394 billion in assets.

Clinton in December signed legislation providing the agency with \$18.3 billion to finish its job, bringing the taxpayer tab for the S&L disaster to more than \$150 billion.

By the time the RTC shuts down, it expects to have handled an additional 63 failed thrifts now operating under its control and sold the \$64 billion in assets left in its portfolio.

Washington attorney Lawrence B. Simons, head of the Federal Housing Administration in the Carter administration, now is the leading candidate. His main challenge will be selling

assets such as hopelessly delinquent loans and vacant land. For the most part, the traditional thrift that offered customers savings accounts, home mortgages and little else, has disappeared. It's been supplanted by commercial banks and mortgage companies who sell their loans to big government-chartered mortgage buyers.

The surviving thrifts look like consumer-oriented banks, and soon even the legal distinction between S&Ls and banks may disappear. The Clinton administration has proposed merging the Treasury Department's Office of Thrift Supervision into a new Federal Banking Commission.

Hundreds killed in Saddam's death camps

TEHRAN, Iran — Iraqi exiles claim Saddam Hussein's regime recently slaughtered hundreds of prisoners at the infamous Radwaniyah death camp southwest of Baghdad.

Most were Shiite Muslims who have been rounded up by the Baghdad government since an ill-fated uprising in southern Iraq right after Saddam's Gulf War defeat in early 1991.

Ayatollah Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim, a senior Shiite cleric and leading dissident, and Hussein Sharastani, who monitors human rights abuses in Iraq, told The Associated Press in separate interviews that refugees from Iraq reported that the Radwaniyah executions took place three months ago.

Many of the victims were buried in mass graves, they said. But they noted

that hundreds of bodies have been delivered to their families for burial in recent weeks — a move apparently aimed at intimidating the Shiites.

"We know from refugees and eyewitnesses that 150 bodies were delivered to al-Amarah," a southern Shiite city, said Sharastani, head of Gulf War Victims, a human rights group in Tehran.

Sharastani said he also received similar reports from other places and believed as many as 2,000 prisoners were executed.

"From past experience, we know that not all the bodies of people executed are returned, so we calculate from the number returned that around 2,000 inmates were executed in Radwaniyah, and possibly elsewhere," he said.

There was no independent confirmation of the claims.

Baghdad does not permit outside observers into Iraq to monitor human rights, and the few journalists allowed in are heavily restricted.

Saddam's regime, dominated by minority Sunni Muslims, has in recent months intensified a campaign of repression against the majority Shiites.

Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organization, reported in November that hundreds of people were being rounded up by military and intelligence units.

"Many died under torture or were executed en masse," Amnesty said. "Former detainees at Radwaniyah testified that executions were carried out regularly throughout 1993."

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