

NEWS DIGEST

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NATO targets ground forces

Airstrikes aim for supply lines; Milosevic promises to rebuild

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Aided by clearing skies, NATO struck fuel depots, bridges and army barracks throughout Yugoslavia on Monday, and said it was taking particular aim at Serbian ground forces accused of terrorizing ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic brushed off the continued barrage, defiantly promising to rebuild the bomb-damaged structures and denouncing NATO "aggressors" and "criminals."

As night fell, air raid sirens sounded again in Belgrade, likely heralding the 14th straight night of NATO bombardments. Two strong detonations were heard late Monday in the northern city of Novi Sad, Tanjug said.

President Clinton promised an "undiminished, unceasing and unrelenting" air campaign, saying it would no longer be enough for Milosevic to just stop the killing. "A Kosovo denied its freedom and devoid of its people is not acceptable," he said. "Our plan is to persist until we prevail."

The 13th day of NATO airstrikes aimed to cut the Yugoslav military's lines of supply and transport — roads, bridges, airports, fuel depots and command centers.

Serb media said a bridge connecting Kosovo with the neighboring republic of Montenegro took a direct hit, and that the Yugoslav air force command building in a Belgrade suburb was targeted.

The better weather was little comfort for the tens of thousands of refugees who continued to pour out of Kosovo in an exodus not seen in Europe for a half-

century. The U.N. refugee agency said the number of ethnic Albanians reaching neighboring states had reached nearly 400,000.

Conditions remained dire at a makeshift refugee camp at Blace, Macedonia, on the border with Kosovo, where thousands were living in shelters of plastic and blankets in a muddy, fetid no-man's land.

"There are too many people in that small concentrated area for safety and also for sanitation and health concerns," said Chris Thomas of the American Red Cross.

The human tide has overwhelmed Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro. As of Monday, 239,000 refugees had arrived in Albania, 120,000 in Macedonia and 35,000 in Montenegro, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said.

At least 831,000 of the 2 million prewar Kosovo population have been driven from their homes since the conflict began in February 1998, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea said.

NATO said relief flights carrying 200 tons of food and other emergency supplies were scheduled into Albania and Macedonia.

There was growing debate, however, over plans for NATO nations including the United States to temporarily take in tens of thousands of the refugees.

Albania, despite its own impoverishment, said Monday it would not ask others to take in the refugees who have arrived there because dispersing them outside the region would only help further Milosevic's aims.

Hagel supports deploying ground troops in Kosovo

OMAHA (AP) — Sen. Chuck Hagel said most Nebraskans he has heard from are opposed to U.S. involvement in Kosovo, yet that is not stopping the war veteran from pressing for ground troops in the region.

"When you are in a war, you are in to win," Hagel said Monday from Washington, D.C., during his weekly media conference call. "I don't think you should ever take off the table any military option."

Hagel said he has received about 200 letters, telephone calls, faxes or e-mail messages from constituents regarding Kosovo. He said about 80 percent of those communications express opposition to U.S. involvement.

"In the end, I've got to do what I think is right," the Republican said. "That means sometimes you are not going to be that popular. I'm not

worried about that."

If most Nebraskans are upset with his decision, Hagel said they can elect a new senator in 2002, when Hagel would be up for reelection. Hagel added that he has not decided yet whether to seek a second term. Hagel was critical of the Clinton administration's handling of the Kosovo situation. He said the president was wrong to rule out the use of ground forces, and accused Clinton of relying on public opinion polls while making war decisions.

Sen. Bob Kerrey was not immediately available for comment Monday.

Kerrey, a Democrat and Vietnam veteran, has said that ground troops were not a good option because they would require far too many resources and the outcome was too unpredictable.

Washington has agreed to send 24 Apache helicopters, 2,600 troops and a missile launching system to Albania to give NATO the ability to directly attack Serb troops and tanks in Kosovo, where more than 2,000 people have died over the past 13 months as Milosevic's troops aimed to crush ethnic Albanian separatists. Kosovo is a province in Serbia, the main republic in Yugoslavia. "We're going after his tanks, his armored units, his artillery, those forces on the ground that are carrying out this horrific ethnic cleansing. They are going to be targeted

now and taken out," U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen promised on Monday.

President Clinton announced a toll-free telephone number Monday that people can call to donate money for ethnic Albanians expelled from Kosovo. The president asked for donations to nongovernmental groups in the area trying to stanch the humanitarian crisis. Clinton directed potential donors to a toll-free number: 1-800-USAID-RELIEF — unwieldy at 15 digits, but up and running Monday afternoon.

1 pleads guilty to Shepard death

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) — One of two men charged in the killing of gay college student Matthew Shepard pleaded guilty Monday to murder, admitting he tied the bleeding young man to a wooden fence and left him for dead on the prairie.

Russell Henderson, a 21-year-old high school dropout and roofer, avoided a trial and a possible death sentence with his plea.

He was sentenced to two consecutive life terms and will not be eligible for parole. His only hope for release is a pardon.

Judy Shepard cried at the courtroom podium while talking about her son, then turned to Henderson: "I hope you never experience another day or night without experiencing the terror, humiliation, the hopelessness and helplessness that my son felt that night."

Authorities said Henderson and Aaron McKinney, 21, posed as

"I hope one day you will be able to find it in your heart to forgive me."

RUSSELL HENDERSON
Shepard murderer

homosexuals and lured the 5-foot-2, 105-pound Shepard out of a bar last October, kidnapped and pistol-whipped him and left him tied to a fence in the cold. The 21-year-old University of Wyoming student died five days later at a hospital.

Although he pleaded guilty to felony murder and kidnapping, Henderson said his friend and co-defendant delivered the fatal blows.

He matter-of-factly recounted the grisly beating and his attempts to cover up his role, then asked forgiveness from his and Shepard's families.

"There is not a moment that goes by that I don't see what happened that night," he said. "I hope one day you will be able to find it in your heart to forgive me."

Henderson said he tried to stop the beating, but McKinney struck him with a gun when he spoke up. "Matthew looked really bad, so I told (McKinney) to stop, he's had enough," Henderson said.

McKinney will be tried in August on first-degree murder, kidnapping and aggravated robbery charges. He could be sentenced to death.

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■ New York Man accused of spreading AIDS sentenced to jail

MAYVILLE (AP) — A man accused of infecting least 13 young women with the AIDS virus through unprotected sex was sentenced Monday to four to 12 years in prison.

Nushawn Williams, 22, struck a plea bargain after only two victims agreed to testify. Some of the other women never came forward.

Investigators said Williams traded drugs for sex with young women and teens he approached in schools and parks.

■ Washington, D.C. Court rules passengers' bags can be searched

The Associated Press (AP) — Passengers' personal belongings are fair game when police officers search a car for criminal evidence against the driver, the Supreme Court ruled Monday.

The 6-3 decision reinstated a Wyoming drug conviction and expanded the already considerable police power to stop and search vehicles without a court warrant. Police officials praised the ruling, but defense lawyers condemned it.

■ Washington, D.C. Pinsky given third term as U.S. poet laureate

The Associated Press — Robert Pinsky, who emphasizes that poetry should be an integral part of everyday life, was given an unprecedented third term Monday as America's poet laureate.

Pinsky, 58, is the country's ninth poet laureate since Congress created the title in 1985.

Named to the one-year post in 1997, Pinsky, who also teaches creative writing at Boston University, has been especially active, appearing in public and on television, in emphasizing poetry's role in everyday activities.

■ Egypt Iraqi opposition leaders to discuss Hussein ouster

CAIRO (AP) — Iraqi opposition leaders, under U.S. pressure to unite to remove Saddam Hussein from power, are planning to meet in Britain this week, dissidents said Monday.

But two of the main opposition groups — the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq and the Iraqi Communist Party — said they would not attend the meeting, the first gathering since the Clinton administration last year named Frank Ricciardone to coordinate with the Iraqi opposition groups.

■ Mexico Accused killer ordered to remain in prison

CUERNAVACA (AP) — A man suspected of killing 137 people in Mexico has been formally ordered to remain in prison along with three alleged accomplices.

A criminal court judge in Cuernavaca, 35 miles south of Mexico City, issued the orders Sunday against Fernando Hernandez Leyva and his alleged accomplices.

Sanctions on Libya suspended

CAMP ZEIST, Netherlands (AP) — The United Nations suspended sanctions against Libya on Monday after Moammar Gadhafi surrendered two suspected Libyan intelligence agents for trial in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet.

The handover — hailed by Clinton administration officials as a victory against terrorism — ended seven years of punishing sanctions against Libya, and began what could be a lengthy trial process in the Netherlands.

"Now, at last, the road to justice has begun," President Clinton said.

The two Libyans were being held at this former U.S. airbase, awaiting arraignment under Scottish law on charges of planting the suitcase bomb that blew up Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people, including 189 Americans.

Suspects Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi and Lamem Khalifa Fhimah, accompanied by U.N. representative Hans Corell, landed at a military airport earlier Monday near The Hague. They were swiftly extradited to British custody in the Netherlands.

Before leaving the Libyan capital of Tripoli, the suspects said they hoped to return to their families after being found innocent.

"We are confident in ourselves," said al-Megrahi, 46. "The days will prove that what we are saying is true."