



YUGO NEWS



This Issue: *Serb family spat, Sarajevo airport closures, fall of Abdic, Papal visit cancelled*

1 August 94

Speaker of the Bosnian Serb parliament Krajisnik said "the seven-to-ten-day deadline given to the Serb side to reconsider its position is **blackmail** by the international community."

Serbia said that "at this juncture, more courage and moral strength are required to opt for peace than for the ongoing war. it is in the interest of the entire Serbian people and all the citizens of the Republic of Srpska, Krajina and Yugoslavia to opt for peace ... accept the proposal of the international community and enable the resumption of the peace process."

Bosnian Serb leader **Karadzic**, under pressure even from his patron Serbian President Milosevic, called for talks on changing the peace plan map.

The members of the 'contact group' were unanimous in rejecting Karadzic's proposal.

2 August 94

In the past week, the Bosnian government has seized the initiative on the **Bihac** front, posting its biggest gains of the campaign to subdue Abdic. After a fierce artillery barrage, government troops trapped the remnant's of one of Abdic's two rebel brigades in **Pecigrad**. About 2,000 government troops surround 400 rebels in one section of Pecigrad. The town is just six miles from Abdic's HQ at Velika Kladusa. The government lost about 100 soldiers in the assault.

Krajina Serbs reacted by liberating another three tanks from UN storage, deploying them along the Bosnian border.

✦ ✧ ✧

In its harshest language yet, Serbia warned it would **halt all aid** to the Bosnian Serbs.

"If at this moment, when peace is being offered to you, you usurp the right to decide the fate of Yugoslavia, you, as leaders ... sever all possibilities of cooperation with us," the letter to Bosnian Serb leaders said.

"If you are still blinded by some selfish, personal or group interests ... then you are on the way to committing a crime against your own people," it continued.

The threat to sever ties infuriated Bosnian Serb leaders. Speaker of the Bosnian Serb parliament Krajisnik spoke of "blackmail and pressure."

He said the assembly, which has rejected the plan twice, would meet again tomorrow to deliberate on "a final answer."

✦ ✧ ✧

The White House said that the Bosnian Serbs should accept the 'contact group' **peace plan**. Press Secretary Dee-Dee Myers repeated the laundry list of punishments, then said "the Bosnian Serbs know that; we've made that very clear to them, and we continue to urge them to accept the Contact Group's plan as the only viable step toward peace."

4 August 94

Yugoslavia **cut ties** to the Bosnian Serbs after they rejected the 'contact group' peace plan for the third time. The newest embargo appears genuine: boarder crossings were reported sealed, and a Bosnian Serb official was turned away. The most immediate affect will be a lack of fuel, almost all of which

transited Yugoslavia before arriving in Bosnia.

✦ ✧ ✧

Pecigrad fell to the Bosnian Army. 400 Bosnian rebels were captured.

5 August 94

Bosnian Serb troops seized a **T-55**, two APC's, an anti-aircraft gun and a mortar from the UN weapons collection site in **Ilidza**. (See the 17 July 94 article in the August'94 issue of Yugo News.) The Serbs have been trying to take weapons from UN for a week.

Some of the armor was parked near a hospital and a school. A French helicopter tried to locate the armor, but was turned back by small arms fire. 16 planes from 4 NATO countries - including the US - **retaliated**. The NATO aircraft were instructed to seek and destroy Bosnian Serb weaponry in sparsely populated areas, where Serb weapons were known to be located, because the stolen vehicles were taken to heavily populated areas. One Serb self-propelled anti-tank gun was obliterated. The Bosnian Serbs returned the stolen weapons. Another vehicle was later stolen, but returned.

6 August 94

Violating the exclusion zone, Bosnian Serbs fired three mortar rounds into **Sarajevo**.

✦ ✧ ✧

Bosnian Serb President Karadzic **mobilized civilians** to support the Bosnian Serb war effort. Participation is compulsory for all adults regardless of religion or nationality. The civilian 'brigades' will work in factories and on farms (primarily those of soldiers, of the families of dead soldiers and other "victims" of the war). Parliament Speaker

Krajisnik asked that body to declare a state of war, general mobilization and rationed supplies.

7 August 94

In **Sarajevo**, a Bosnian Army soldier dropped seven hand-grenades on a Russian Army APC.

✦ ✧ ☉

Macedonia, still being denied access to the Greek port of Salonika, is planning on laying **embargo-busting** rail lines. One would run to Bulgaria, the other to Albania. Both would be electric. Both would be open for traffic in the year 2000. Macedonia also completed talks with Turkey about making its ports available for Macedonian freight.

✦ ✧ ☉

Bosnian Serb President Karadzic accused **Turkish peacekeepers** of arming Muslims in Zenica. He said that if UNPROFOR fails to stop the arming, the Turkish peacekeepers will forfeit their neutrality and be treated as combatants. The Bosnian Serbs have been expressed doubt about the neutrality of the Turkish peacekeepers since their deployment last month.

Note: Peacekeepers from Muslim Egypt are also serving in Bosnia.

✦ ✧ ☉

Bosnian Serb President Karadzic said he wouldn't accept the 'contact group' **peace plan** unless changes were made in the map. He said if the Bosnian Serbs gained sovereignty, they would settle for 50% of the territory, though not necessarily the currently designated pieces. He said he wanted to negotiate ahead of the Bosnian Serb's August 27th referendum on the plan. (*When they'll make their final final decision?*)

9 August 94

Sarajevo relief flights resumed after being suspended for 19 days due to sniper fire.

✦ ✧ ☉

The Bosnians captured key high ground that the Serbs had used for more than two years to bombard the town of **Gracanica**.

10 August 94

Yugoslavia's **Bosnian Serb** **blockade** is so strict that it is even preventing UN aid convoys from entering eastern Bosnia. Bosnian Serb President Karadzic called the blockade "unprecedented, unacceptable and incomprehensible." He said the Bosnian Serbs would fight on without Yugoslav support.

Bosnian government forces have used the breathing space provided by the air strike, and the Yugoslav embargo of the Bosnian Serbs, as an opportunity to **resume its stalled offensive** in central Bosnia. Bosnian forces took 12-square miles of Serb-held territory, including the hill town of Brdule, south of Vares, after one the heaviest bombardment in recent months. Much of the artillery fire passed over the Sarajevo exclusion zone, prompting the UN to threaten both sides with NATO air strikes if they don't cool off. Vares lies astride the key supply route between Sarajevo and Olovo. The Bosnian government also wants to drive the Bosnian Serbs out of artillery range of the military air strip being built northwest of Visoko.

Surprising even their own commanders, Bosnian forces have also advanced to within a few thousand yards the critical Serbian supply line near the northern town of **Brcko**.

✦ ✧ ☉

Thousands of civilians are fleeing the collapsing pocket held by Bosnian rebels near **Bihac**. Government troops liberated Cazin and a considerable part of Velika Kladusa. The Bosnian government said it would slow its assault to allow time for a 'political settlement'. Amnesty was also offered to any rebel who crossed the lines within seven days. Abdic, and any other rebel accused of war crimes, is not eligible.

✦ ✧ ☉

The **Serbian Orthodox Church** has endorsed the Bosnian Serb rejection of the 'contact group' peace plan. The Church also condemned Milosevic's embargo. The action puts the Church openly at odds with Milosevic, whom the clerics have always mistrusted because of his communist past.

11 August 94

Aid flights to **Sarajevo** were re-suspended after three UN aircraft were hit by ground fire.

Since the Bosnian Serbs sealed off Sarajevo two weeks ago, the city's **food stocks** have dropped to 14% of normal. (One ton of emergency food aid can feed 70 people for a month.) Muslims in the three eastern enclaves have also been cut off from UN aid.

✦ ✧ ☉

A Bosnian Serb tank remained in the Sarajevo exclusion zone near **Visoko** despite a Serb commander's assurance that it would be removed. Also, the Bosnian government is reinforcing Visoko with 3,000 troops.

✦ ✧ ☉

The **Bosnian army** is reorganizing to free up more workers for weapons-making. (Bosnian munitions factories only produce about 1 bullet per soldier per month.) The plan calls for soldiers to serve one week with their units, then three weeks in a factory.

✦ ✧ ☉

Repeating the indecisiveness of three months ago (*See the 13 May 94 article in the June '94 Yugo News*), the **US Senate** again directed the president to both seek a UN approval prior to ending the blockade (by 56-44) and unilaterally end the embargo on November 15th, 1994 (by 58-42).

12 August 94

In **Sarajevo**, the Bosnian government and Bosnian Serbs signed an anti-sniping agreement.

✦ ✧ ☉

Bosnian Serbs made three unsuccessful efforts to **remove heavy weapons** from UN custody. A similar, successful effort last week led to a NATO air strike.

13 August 94

Bosnian Serbs tried unsuccessfully to **seize heavy weapons** from a UN collection point. Some of the intended weapons were T-55 tanks.

✦ ✧ ☉

After meeting with UN envoy

Stoltenberg, Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic again rejected the 'contact group' peace plan.

In Strmac, the Croatian civilian blockade of UN peacekeepers ended. (See the 22 July article in the August'94 issue of Yugo News). The blockade may have been staged by Croat authorities to deflect the anger of the refugees away from the government, to divert attention from a parliamentary crisis and to put pressure on the UN.

14 August 94

Near Bihac, the Bosnian government and rebels began peace negotiations. Rebel leader Abdic released 140 prisoners as a "goodwill gesture".

15 August 94

The UN airlift to Sarajevo resumed after a five-day suspension due to sniping at the airport. Sniping in the rest of the city continued.

16 August 94

Sniper fire persisted in Sarajevo (a less than shocking occurrence) despite last week's agreement to the contrary.

Bosnian Serbs seized an anti-aircraft gun from French peacekeepers, using it to fire several rounds at Bosnian government forces.

Malaysia, a Muslim country, said it would keep its 1500 peacekeepers in Bosnia if the UN withdrew.

17 August 94

Macedonia banned the import of Greek livestock and meat. It blamed the action on an "epidemic" of hoof & mouth disease.

A British peacekeeper was killed near Gornji Vakuf while supervising the clearing of a minefield.

A mortar shell smashed into Sarajevo's airport, forcing the UN to halt aid

flights. Bosnian Serbs were seen aiming a 40mm anti-aircraft gun on traffic in and out of Sarajevo airport. The gun is stored at the UN weapons collection site in Ilidza, but none of the Ukrainian peacekeepers in charge of the site could be found.

Note: The Ukrainian unit is the same one that was in charge of the site that the tanks were stolen from, leading to the air strikes, two weeks ago.

The Bosnian and Krajina Serb parliaments asked Serbia and Montenegro for permission to join them and create "Greater Serbia".

The Bosnian Serb army withdrew permission for the evacuation of dangerously ill women and children from the Muslim enclave of Gorazde. The Serbs tried to link the evacuation to the release of prisoners, something the UN said was "totally unacceptable." In another incident, Bosnian Serbs held up a relief convoy for Gorazde, taking flour from the trucks before allowing them to pass. A second convoy was prohibited from going to Sarajevo. Finally, Bosnian Serbs also demanded fuel from UN peacekeepers.

Beseiged rebel leader Abdic declared a unilateral ceasefire. Having seized 80% of his territory, the Bosnian government has given Abdic seven days to surrender.

19 August 94

Government troops made major gains in the northwestern Bihac pocket. They are now on the verge of overrunning rebel forces loyal to renegade Muslim leader Abdic.

Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic warned Pope John Paul II, who hopes to visit Sarajevo next month, that it would be dangerous to visit because his security could not be guaranteed.

A French peacekeeper was shot dead near Sarajevo's Jewish cemetery - one of the city's most dangerous areas.

"A commission has been formed to determine the origin of the shooting," the

French UN battalion said in a statement.

That should be interesting: A Foreign Legion "commission" ...

20 August 94

Macedonian soldiers shot one of six Yugoslav smugglers attempting to enter Macedonia. The other five fled back to Yugoslavia.

The Fall of Abdic

The Bosnian army captured Velika Kladusa, seizing the castle rebel leader Abdic had used as his headquarters.

The final Bosnian army drive began with an elaborate plan of deception:

The army staged a mock mutiny in its own ranks in order to flush out infiltrators from Abdic's forces. Loyal troops simulated attacks with dummy bullets, detonated blank shells, spread disinformation about an internal rebellion and kept United Nations troops in their barracks to make sure they could not see what was going on.

Abdic responded by sending weapons and ammunition to the supposed rebels. The army seized the lot.

Abdic's military prospects turned sour when the remaining rebel brigade's commander was killed by a surprise attack.

Abdic has fled to Serb protection in Krajina. His rebellion lasted 11 months.

The victory frees up one corps for use on other fronts.

23 August 94

A Greek fighter jet violated the airspace of Macedonia. The jet flew 7km into Macedonia, buzzed an army barracks, and returned to Greece.

26 August 94

Immediately after the Yugoslav

embargo of the Bosnian Serbs began, goods vanished from shops in their territory and the price of petrol leapt. Karadzic pledged that the Bosnian Serbs would trade with their enemies before submitting to Milosevic's will. Oil is now coming in from Croatia; the price of petrol has tumbled. State shops remain empty, but private shops are full. Warnings that the whole population would be drafted into the army or work brigades have proven to be hot air. The atmosphere in Pale, the Bosnian Serb capitol, is smug.

Croatia and **Krajina Serbs** have a list of problems they agreed to jointly resolve: resettle refugees; reopen the Zagreb-Belgrade highway; provide for Krajina Serbs that hold Croatian pensions; and restore trade, hydro-electric, oil and rail links. But the two sides have merely agreed to talk. Action won't happen until Milosevic and Croatia's President Tudjman strike a deal for all the former Yugoslavia.

29 August 94

Macedonia established diplomatic relations with Hungary.

Macedonia used credits from Italy, Turkey and the US to purchase 55,000 tons of corn from those countries.

Macedonian border troops shot another **Yugoslav smuggler** after he refused orders to halt.

30 August 94

Bosnian Serbs overwhelmingly rejected the 'contact group' **peace plan**. 90% of them voted *against* it.

Two UN aircraft were forced abort landings at **Sarajevo airport** after being threatened by a Bosnian Serb commander.

A Ukrainian peacekeeper was **seriously wounded** by a mine in Croatia.

31 August 94

The Bosnian government has long

called for the embargo to be lifted but as the Oct. 15th US deadline approaches they have privately expressed **reservations**.

European countries with troops on UN duty in Bosnia have warned they will pull out their soldiers if the embargo ends, on the grounds that fighting would intensify and endanger their forces. That would leave isolated Muslim enclaves unprotected from Serb attack, a factor weighing heavily on Bosnian leaders. In contrast Bosnian Serbs, supposedly the losers if the embargo is lifted, are thought to relish the prospect of making a **pre-emptive strike** before arms can reach the Bosnian army. (Bosnian Serb commander Mladic warned a US general that he would launch pre-emptive strikes against the Muslims if the US lifted the arms embargo against Bosnia.)

In a bid to increase their hold on occupied territories, Bosnian Serbs have increased their **deportation** of non-Serb minorities. Thousands are being expelled each week.

Serb sniper fire hit a marked Red Cross vehicle and press cars at **Sarajevo airport**. French peacekeepers returned fire.

Pope John Paul will go ahead with a visit to Sarajevo on Sept. 8th after the Vatican was assured of his safety by local police and UN troops.

Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia established **diplomatic relations** with Saudi Arabia.

The **UNPROFOR IG** is investigating the unauthorized sale of fuel and private cars by UN peacekeepers.

Two Ukrainian peacekeepers are **missing in action** near Zepa. The soldiers were driving a water tanker.

1 September 94

Bosnian Serb troops fired on a **French helicopter** near Sarajevo. Damage forced the helicopter to make an emergency landing. While doing so, a RPG. was fired at it. The helicopter was

carrying 11 peacekeepers.

Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic threatened to **cut off supplies** of gas, water, electricity and food to the Muslims and Croats in Bosnia, unless Yugoslavia lifts its sanctions against Bosnian Serbs.

A Chicago couple suspected of stealing hundreds of wedding dresses as part of a **multi-state burglary operation** are missing after mistakenly being allowed to post bond. Authorities believe the pair sent some of the proceeds of their crimes to the former Yugoslavia to help arm Serbians. (See the "Embargo Busting" article in the July'94 issue of *Yugo News*).

The two were arrested after police observed them attempting to break into a hardware store. They were taken to the county jail but were soon free after posting \$50,000 bond. It's likely that Alexander Nikolic, a Serbian national, is already on his way back to the Balkans. Also unaccounted for is his partner, Grazyna "Grace" Fiszer.

Nikolic, a master locksmith, was convicted of **smuggling arms** to Serbia last year and received five years probation.

3 September 94

Repeating his assertion of two weeks ago, Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic said he could not guarantee **Pope John Paul's** safety if he visits Sarajevo.

4 September 94

Snipers of undetermined origin opened fire on the proposed site of **Pope John Paul's** open-air mass in Sarajevo. 25,000 people are expected to attend the mass. Danish peacekeepers returned fire.

The first of 1,220 **Bangladeshi peacekeepers** began arriving in Bosnia. Bangladesh is a Hindu country.

5 September 94

The Bosnian Serbs advanced east

of Breza, within the Sarajevo exclusion zone, after a strong artillery barrage. The Serb counterattack halted a Muslim attempt to relieve the siege of Breza. The Muslims are attempting to regroup, but their defensive positions are poorly prepared.

✦ ✧ ✧
The UN accused the Bosnian army of firing a mortar at the Sarajevo airport.

Investigators cited evidence gathered from an examination of the remains of the bomb, its vector and the resulting crater. The UN charges lend weight to the Serb suggestion that might stage an incident during Pope John Paul's visit and blame it on Serbs.

✦ ✧ ✧
President of the Bosnian Federation Zubak narrowly escaped death when his airplane was targeted by Serbian machine guns over Mount Igman. His airplane was riddled with bullet holes.

Papal Visit Cancelled

A "grieved" Pope John Paul canceled his "pilgrimage of peace" to Sarajevo after failing to obtain security guarantees for the tens of thousands of people who had hoped to greet him.

Bosnian Serbs, whose troops ring the battered city, refused to vouch for security for the nine-hour trip, saying Moslems could attack the Pope and blame the Serbs. Orthodox Christian Serbs see the Vatican as biased against them and Bosnian Serb leaders had privately told papal envoys that the Pope's presence in Bosnia was "highly undesirable."

The decision was "especially influenced" by a letter from UN special representative Akashi warning the Vatican of the serious risks posed by the visit.

The Vatican's announcement coincided with an increase in small arms fire around Sarajevo airport and a Serb shelling attack within a UN heavy weapons exclusion zone.

A papal visit to Zagreb, capital of predominantly Catholic Croatia, is going ahead next weekend. Half a million people are expected to throng Zagreb to see the Pope.

6 September 94

Two UN transport aircraft were hit by small arms fire at Sarajevo airport, where the papal aircraft would have landed.

Beyond the issue of the Pope's visit, the UN faces a growing problem with increasingly bold violations of the exclusion zone. Bosnian Serb forces have been using an anti-aircraft gun to fire on commercial traffic on a mountain road above the city for weeks. The truck-mounted gun shoots and scoots in flagrant violation of the exclusion zone. The gun challenges UN authority in Sarajevo, which has been slowly eroding since Bosnian Serbs rejected the latest international peace plan last month. Irritating as the violations have become to UN officials, they are loath to call in NATO airpower in response to firing incidents involving single weapons.

✦ ✧ ✧
Three 262mm rockets carrying cluster bombs were launched at the

Muslim towns of Buzim and Cazin, near the center of the Bihac enclave, causing at least 70 civilian casualties. UNPROFOR suspects Krajina Serbs, who have shelled the Bihac enclave periodically in support of Bosnian Serb forces who flank the eastern side of the pocket. More recently, the Krajina Serbs have lent artillery support to the recently deposed rebel Muslim leader Abdic.

✦ ✧ ✧
A Yugoslav fighter briefly violated Hungarian airspace. The intruder returned home without further incident after being confronted by a Hungarian interceptor.

Quote

"Let's cut deals. It's better than fighting." (war profiteer and defeated rebel, Fikret Abdic)

Source

Wall Street Journal, The Economist, New York Times, InterNet*, FBIS Daily Reports.

* i.e., the 'Information Superhighway' popularized by VP Gore.

Macedonian Tour Guide

The Macedonian Information Center (MIC) has printed an English-language tourist guide, "This is Macedonia". The guide contains all necessary information about Macedonia, its hotels and motels, spas, best restaurants, monuments and old architecture. Special attention is devoted to the leisure activities, but the guide also includes information about the cultural events, fairs, shopping, sports and recreation, national parks and night life in the Macedonia. A special chapter is devoted to travel information: trains, buses and international airlines. The guide includes a travel map of Macedonia.

Printed in English, 56 pages - 22 x 13 cm, in color. More than 80 colored photos
Price: US\$ 10.00 per copy (US\$ 7.00 + US\$ 3.00 postal fees)

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Mitrev Antonie, Secretary, MIC

Operation Sharp Guard

(NATO/WEU maritime enforcement of economic sanctions against the former Yugoslavia in the Adriatic Sea)

Command Structure

ADM Mario Angeli, Italian Navy, Commander, CTF 440 & Allied Naval Forces Southern Europe

RADM Gianfranco Coviello, Italian Navy, Deputy Commander, CTF 440

RADM James R. Stark, USN, Commander, CTG One (operations)

RADM Elio Bolongaro, Italian Navy, Commander CTG Two (operations)

Commodore Alastair Ross, Royal Navy, Commander CTG Three (training & port visits)

RADM John Coleman, USN, Commander CTF 431 (maritime patrol aircraft)

Vessels Operating

Canada: 1 frigate

Denmark: 1 frigate

France: 1 guided missile destroyer, 1 frigate

Germany: 1 guided missile destroyer, 1 frigate

Greece: 1 frigate

Italy: 3 frigates

Netherlands: 2 frigates

Spain: 2 frigates

Turkey: 1 guided missile frigate

Britain: 1 guided missile destroyer, 1 frigate, 1 oiler

USA: 1 nuclear guided missile cruiser, 1 destroyer (plus 1 Aegis guided missile cruiser, supporting but not assigned)

Maritime Patrol Aircraft

France: 1 airborne early warning

Italy: 8 attack

Netherlands: 1 airborne early warning

Portugal: 1 airborne early warning

Spain: 1 airborne early warning

USA: 1 airborne early warning

NATO: 10 airborne early warning

Operation Deny Flight

NATO enforcement of "no-fly zone" above Bosnia-Herzegovina

Command Structure

SACEUR → CINCSOUTH: ADM Leighton W. Smith Jr., USN, Naples, Italy

COMAIRSOUTH: LTG Joseph W. Ashy, USAF, Naples, Italy.

5th Tactical AF: LTG Andrea Fornasiero, Italian Air Force, Vincenza, Italy (day-to-day mission tasking)

Assigned Aircraft

France: 10 fighters, 10 attack (plus 7 on recall), 6 recon, 1 tanker, 1 airborne early warning (plus 1 aircraft carrier, as available)

Netherlands: 12 attack (plus 2 on recall), 4 recon

Spain: 1 transport

Turkey: 8 fighters (plus 10 on recall)

Britain: 6 fighters, 7 attack (plus 3 on recall), 2 recon, 2 tankers (plus 1 aircraft carrier, as available)

USA: 20 fighter/attack, 20 attack, 3 Spectre's (plus 1 on recall), 3 command & control (plus 2 on recall), 10 tankers, 10 airborne early warning (plus 1 aircraft carrier as available)