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NATION & WORLD

Tank-backed Serb troops move in on Muslim enclave of Zepa

• Once the city has been seized. Serb forces are expected to attack Gorazde, another U.N. safe area.

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) - As the world dithered Sunday over how to protect U.N. "safe areas" in Bosnia, a relentless Serb artillery and tank assault pushed the isolated Muslim enclave of Zepa close to collapse

Aid agencies, struggling to cope with a mass of human misery after the fall of the govern-ment-held pocket of Srebrenica, prepared for the possibility of thousands more refugees.

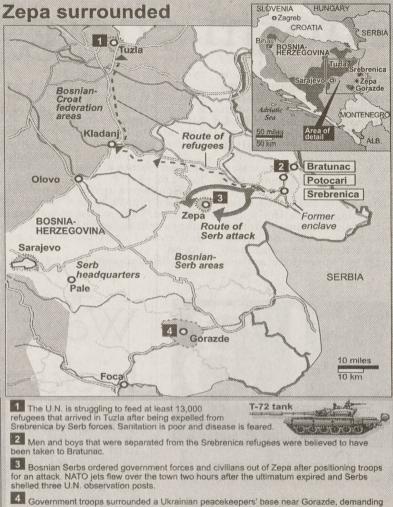
The Bosnian government, furious at international inaction, charged that U.N. commanders repeatedly stalled requests for NATO airstrikes from Ukrainian peacekeepers in Zepa. NATO jets buzzed Zepa on Sunday afternoon, but the U.N. officials said they did not request airstrikes.

Similar requests from Dutch peacekeepers in Srebrenica were ignored last week until Tuesday, when pinprick strikes on Serb tanks failed to stop the capture of the "safe area" hours later.

U.N. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, have said commanders promised the Serbs in early July that there would be no more airstrikes. The promise reportedly came a day before the Serbs released the last of more than 370 peacekeepers held as human shields by the rebels in retaliation for NATO airstrikes in late May.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, gloating over the United Nations' re luctance to use force, served notice that his forces intend to conquer all the land between Sarajevo and Serbia.

Once they seize Zepa - which



4 Government troops surrounded a Ukrainian peacekeepers' base near Gorazde, demanding their weapons. Gorazde is likely to be the Bosnian Serbs' next objective.

Associated Press

seems only a matter of time the Serbs are expected to turn the full force of their guns on Gorazde, the other U.N. "safe area" in eastern Bosnia.

The Bosnian Minister responsible for U.N. contacts, Hasan Muratovic, claimed that the Ukrainian commanin Zepa had requested NATO airstrikes three times over the weekend - once Saturday and twice Sunday. He demanded to know why the United Nations had been slow to respond. U.N. officials

said they knew of no requests for airstrikes. An estimated 200,000 people have died or are missing

since the Bosnian war started in April 1992.

Hearings on events at Branch Davidia compound in Waco set for Wednesda

□ A fact sheet distributed by House Republican leaders said that the raid raised serious questions about religious liberty and due process of law.

WASHINGTON (AP) — With potentially com bustible hearings just ahead, the House Republi can leadership distributed its fact sheet to rankand-file lawmakers concerning what it terms the "tragedy in Waco."

Designed to help Republicans field questions from reporters and thus shape public opinion about the hearings, it notes that most of the dozens who perished at the Branch Davidian compound, many of them women and children, "were not suspected of any criminal wrongdoing.

Questions about "excessive use of force, milita rization of law enforcement and due process of law must be analyzed," the material says. "The raid also raised serious questions about religious liberty in this nation."

Investigating the events at Waco "without investigating the extreme activities of some militias seems to suggest that law enforcement agencies are the real threat to the safety of American citizens," Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin wrote journalists recently.

The 1993 events in Texas must be viewed in the context of the April 19 bombing at Oklahoma City, with its connections to anti-government militia groups, he said.

The NRA has been critical of the Bureau of Al-

cohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the agency has involved in the siege against Koresh.

Four ATF agents and six Branch David vere killed when the ATF initiated a raid age the Waco compound Feb. 28, 1993.

Monday • July 17,1

Seven weeks later, an additional 81 David including Koresh, died in a fire that raced the the compound after the FBI tried to force ou compound's occupants with tear gas. The go ment maintains the fire was set by those insi The hearings are to begin Wednesday. The

witnesses runs from Henry McMahon, a firearms dealer who sold to Koresh, to Attorney General Janet Reno, who approved the raid and is slated to appear on the eighth and final day. Republicans hint at disturb-

ing revelations about the arsenal the government assembled at Waco, said to include at least one Abrams battle tank. The military provided

Perry equipment and reviewed federal agency plans for the initial encounter with the Branch Davidians, did not approve those plans, Defense Serra William Perry said Sunday.

That's not our position to approve. We few consultants who reviewed their plans gave them recommendations on how to be the equipment that was made available," he on ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley."

Hussein frees Americans from priso

□ Saddam Hussein ordered the release of the two men after a plea by a U.S. congressman.

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) Four months after they strayed across the border into Iraq, two Americans celebrated their release from a maximum-security prison Sunday with pizza and champagne and prepared for the long road home.

President Saddam Hussein freed William Barloon and David Daliberti after a personal plea by a U.S. congressman, who asked that they be released on humanitarian grounds. The men were expected to

Saddam may be hoping with the sanctions biting leave Iraq early Monday for the Jordanian capital Amman, a 10hour trip by desert road. Air deeper and stirring unre-Iraq, his gesture will be re-ed with leniency at the ner links to and from Iraq have been restricted by U.N. sanctions. view of the embargo. Barloon, 39, of New H ton, Iowa, and Daliberti,

Saddam ordered the Americans released after a meeting Sunday with Rep. Bill Richardson, D-N.M.

Jacksonville, Fla., were ployed by U.S. firms in K The state-run Iraqi News Agency said Richardson conveyed an appeal from "President Clinton, the U.S. Congress and the American people," but Secretary of State Warren Christopher stressed that Richardson went as a Congressman, not as a presidential envoy.

sentenced to eight year The release followed a U.N. Security Council decision last prison and committed to maximum-security Abu Gb prison west of Baghdad. week to extend trade sanctions against Iraq for another 60 days.

as aircraft mechanics.

said they strayed across

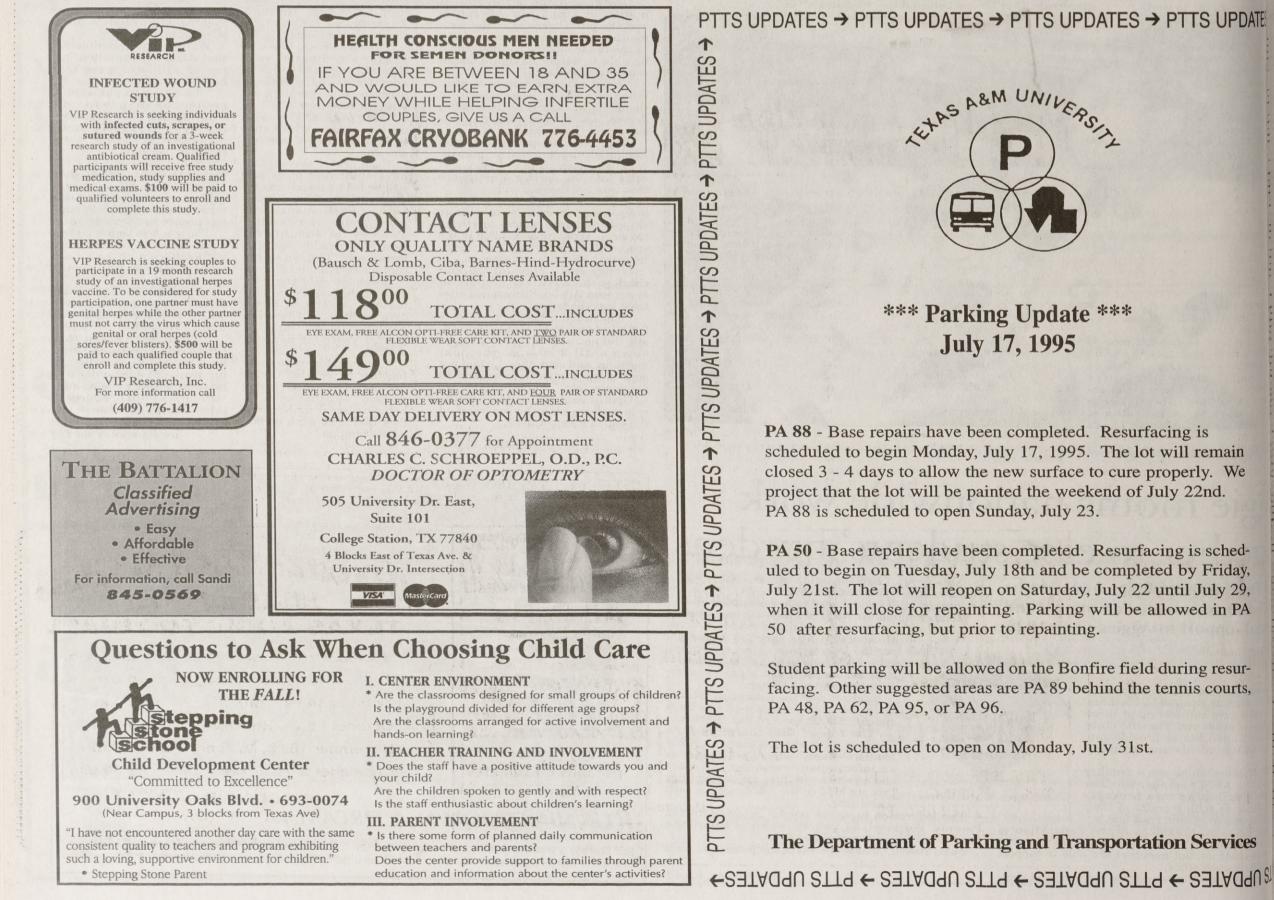
border by accident while ing friends at a U.N. post.

Barloon and Daliberti

spies. Washington denied

Iraqi officials suggested

On March 25, the men



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