

# Nations send more troops to Bosnia

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — With hundreds of U.N. peace keepers held hostage in Bosnia, foreign ministers from the United States, France, Britain, Germany and Russia stepped up efforts Monday to deal with aggressive Serb tactics.

Using a French plan as a starting point, Christopher wants to regroup U.N. peace keepers in Bosnia without abandoning major Muslim strongholds.

About 2,000 Marines from Camp Lejeune, N.C., were being transferred from exercises on the Italian island of Sardinia to the Adriatic Sea, where the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt was headed. The Clinton administration has continued to exclude American ground troops.

Britain said it would start sending more troops to Bosnia on Tuesday, and Prime Minister John Major called President Clinton to tell him so.

At a meeting Monday of European Union foreign ministers in Brussels, France got the backing it sought for a tougher peace-keeping mandate.

Christopher and foreign ministers of France, Britain, Germany and Russia were meeting Monday night at the Hague.

The U.S. Marines' transfer was "a precautionary measure. No decision has been made yet to send them into combat," National Security Adviser Anthony Lake said in Washington.

"Either we find credible means to reinforce" the U.N. force in Bosnia, "or the withdrawal will have to take place," Jacques Andreani, French ambassador to the United States, told Cable News Network.

France, with the largest peace-keeping contingent in Bosnia, was in the driver's seat for the meeting of the so-called "con-

tact group."

"We have to work with the partners rather than tell them what to do," said a senior U.S. official. "We are not going to be the ones that force decisions upon our allies that put the lives of their soldiers at risk. This is a process of consultation."

A senior U.S. official, assessing the latest Balkans crisis, said the Serbs may have decided to try to drive the U.N. peacekeeping force out of Bosnia.

"That's why it is even more imperative, from our point of view, that a way be found for UNPROFOR [U.N. Protective Force] to stay," said the official.

Before leaving Washington, Christopher met at the White House with Defense Secretary William Perry, Deputy National Security Adviser Samuel Berger and other administration policymakers.

They concluded the best approach was to use as a starting point a French proposal to regroup the peace keepers. But Christopher intends to try to revamp it so that such major Muslim towns as Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde remain protected by peacekeeping units.

Some 25,000 U.S. troops are available in the event of an evacuation from Bosnia.

U.S. commando raids have not been ruled out to rescue U.N. hostages, said U.S. officials, speaking to reporters on condition of anonymity.

Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., said the American people "are not willing to commit the flesh and blood to Europe, and neither am I," even to help in a withdrawal or rescue effort for U.N. troops. Simpson called the latest developments in Bosnia perplexing, "a body blow," a problem with no easy solution.

# Stray bullet kills 9-year-old at playground

MILWAUKEE (AP) — A stray bullet fired during an argument over a playground basketball game struck a 9-year-old boy as he fled the gunfire. The third-grader later died and a 20-year-old man was charged in the shooting.

Marcus Deback was shot in the head on Sunday and died Monday at Children's Hospital, spokeswoman Kristin Bartelt said.

Alonzo A. McDade, 20, was charged in an arrest warrant with reckless homicide. McDade turned himself in Monday afternoon, police said.

Witnesses said about 20 youngsters were playing basketball when the argument began. One of the players left the court, got a gun from his car, came back and started shooting.

The gunman fired four to six shots, striking Marcus as he ran toward an exit in a chain-link fence that surrounds the playground, police Lt. James Ardis said.

"He was just a 9-year-old hanging around the playground with a group of his friends," Ardis said.

He was more than that to Ronn Johnson, principal at the Catholic school where Marcus attended classes.

Marcus, an only child, approached Johnson during the first week of school and asked him if he would be his big brother.

"From that point he really was like a little brother to me. He was always in the office — not in trouble, just talking," said Johnson, 28.

Marcus was often disciplined for talking in class and probably would have been expelled, if Johnson allowed expulsions, but he ended up on the honor roll.

"We used every resource we could to channel his energy into positive things," Johnson said. "You kind of looked behind the faults to see the needs and wanted to hug him to death, and he knew that."



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