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With Sanctions Voted, U.S. Favors Attrition Over Force

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WASHINGTON, May 31 — Bush Administration officials expressed reluctance today to use armed force to support tough new economic sanctions against the Yugoslav Government, preferring first to assess the effects of the United Nations embargo approved on Saturday.

Washington's immediate goal, senior officials said, was to persuade the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav military to lift its blockade of Sarajevo. For two months, the people of the besieged capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been trapped under daily artillery attack from ethnic Serbs in the hills. Many badly need food and medical care.

The United Nations resolution imposed a security zone around Sarajevo's airport, but without military enforcement it was unclear what would prevent the Serbs from shelling the airport or attacking convoys carrying relief supplies to the city.

President Bush sent a letter to Con-

A horror fantasy: another Beirut in an election year.

gressional leaders today, saying he had frozen \$214 million in Yugoslav holdings in this country. But there are reports that Belgrade may have shifted much of its \$1.5 billion in foreign currency reserves from Western banks to private or secret accounts in Cyprus.

Administration officials conceded that enforcing sanctions in Serbia, a landlocked country with porous borders, could be difficult, but held out hope that worldwide condemnation would jar Belgrade into compliance. If not, officials said it could take months, perhaps years, before life became desperate enough for the Serbs to force them to make meaningful changes.

Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d has refused to rule out military intervention to end the fighting and speed relief for Sarajevo. But the Administration would strongly resist sending American troops into a Beirut-type operation in an election year.

"No one is pushing the military option very hard at this point," a senior Pentagon official said. "At the moment, the emphasis is trying to get as much international political and economic support to pressure the Serbs."

American armed intervention in Yugoslavia would risk some of the dangers that troops faced in Beirut in 1983, diplomats and military analysts said, including counter-violence from elusive guerrilla forces with little to lose.

If economic sanctions fail, members

of Congress urged the Administration to consider a blockade of Adriatic ports and the closing of Bosnian airspace to Serbian planes as a way of giving relief flights a chance to reach Sarajevo.

Representative Lee H. Hamilton, Democrat of Indiana, said in an interview today: "We've ratcheted up pressure on Serbia, and now we have to see how effective that is. We must be prepared to take additional steps to tighten it. At this moment, it's not the time for military options, but neither do I think they are remote."

Foreign officials expressed similar views. "This does not have to be the last word from the Security Council," Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek of the Netherlands said on Dutch radio today. "I see it really as a first step."

But recent use of international sanctions is not encouraging. The American-led embargo of Haiti has worsened economic conditions there, but has failed to oust the military Government.

Didn't Hurt Iraq Much

Economic sanctions against Iraq, which served as the model for the Yugoslav embargo, failed to persuade President Saddam Hussein to withdraw his army from Kuwait. More than a year after the Persian Gulf war ended, economic sanctions against Baghdad are still in effect, and the Iraqi economy is surviving.

Serbia is relatively self-sufficient: It easily feeds itself, exports electrical power, maintains an oil reserve for its army and has oilfields that meet about a quarter of its needs. Its proximity to sympathetic neighbors like Greece, and to Serbs in Bosnia, who are not affected by the embargo, could blunt the sanctions, too.

Among other things, the United Nations embargo requires nations to cease trading in any commodity, including oil, with the new Yugoslav federation of Serbia and Montenegro.

While diplomats here and abroad pondered the possible effect of sanctions, an intricate piece of Balkan politics was brought home today in the streets of Washington.

Thousands of Greek-Americans, shouting "Macedonia is Greek!" marched to dispute a former Yugoslav republic's right to use Macedonia as its name. The protesters, waving American and Greek flags, marched from The Mall to the White House. Many wore T-shirts with likenesses of Alexander the Great and Philip of Macedon.

Greece has sought to block recognition of Macedonia because the republic retained the name when it declared independence from Yugoslavia last year. Athens insists that the name Macedonia belongs exclusively to the Greek province of that name, and has accused the former Yugoslav republic of having designs on its territory.