

NATO and European Warships Blockade Yugoslavia

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ROME, Nov. 20 — Both NATO and the Western European Union ordered their warships in the Adriatic today to carry out a full naval blockade on the former Yugoslavia to enforce a United Nations embargo.

The effect of the naval action remained unclear, however, because only a small limited amount of the strategic trade to Serbia and Montenegro covered by United Nations embargoes arrive by sea, diplomats in Rome said.

Most shipments of oil and other supplies covered by the sanctions are believed to reach Serbia and Montenegro, which are the only two republics left in what was once Yugoslavia, by road or by barge along the Danube, the diplomats said.

Technically, the measures agreed today will give warships of NATO and the Western European Union the same powers to stop and search merchant shipping as the Western allies used to impose United Nations sanctions against Iraq during the Persian Gulf crisis.

Seeks to End Bosnia War

Diplomats in Brussels said North Atlantic Treaty Organization ambassadors in Brussels agreed that the new measures, designed to interdict shipping of banned goods and thereby increase pressure for an end to the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina, should be carried out as soon as possible.

In Rome, foreign and defense ministers of the Western European Union, enlarged today to 10 members with the accession of Greece to the organization, announced that they committed aircraft and naval vessels to insure "strict implementation of the embargo at sea."

At a news conference, Defense Minister Volker Rühle of Germany said the decisions would permit Western European Union vessels to fire warning shots to halt suspect vessels "but they are not allowed to destroy ships." The same rules of engagement are expected to apply to NATO vessels.

The Western Economic Union, long a moribund organization with only a nominal role in Western Europe's defense during the cold war, has emerged since the fall of Communism as the potential military arm of the European Community. However, its precise role, both in relation to the Community and to NATO, with whom the organization's



Reuters

NATO and Western European Union warships in the territorial waters of the former Yugoslavia have been ordered to carry out a full naval blockade to enforce the United Nations embargo. Ships and barges traveling along the Danube to Yugoslavia lined up at a checkpoint in Mohacs, Hungary.

members largely overlap, remains ill-defined and disputed.

At present, the Western European Union has five warships assigned to patrolling the Adriatic, but until today they were permitted only to question suspicious vessels about their origin and cargo. NATO has seven warships in the region from its Standing Mediterranean Fleet, and the two fleets have shared duties of monitoring shipping to Yugoslavia since July.

The United States guided-missile frigate Halyburton is one of the seven NATO vessels that have been ordered to enforce the embargo. In addition, two Sixth Fleet ships — the cruiser Wainwright and the amphibious assault ship Guam — have been taking part in surveillance operations in the Adriatic, but are not part of the NATO operation.

Action is taken to enforce the U.N. embargo.

A NATO statement in Brussels said that "all ships entering or leaving the territorial waters of the former Yugoslavia will be halted to inspect and verify their cargo and destination."

Italian officials said the coordinated deployment of warships of NATO and the Western European Union to enforce the new measures would probably begin next Tuesday after officials had worked out details on Monday.

Appeal for More Ships

Defense Minister Salvo Ando of Italy, said, however, that "this new operation will require more resources" and urged West European nations to send more warships to the Adriatic. The Italian official said the existing number of allied warships in the Adriatic was not enough to enforce the embargo. Last week, NATO said the number of its ships would be reduced, but there was no word tonight whether this decision still held.

A further impediment to the new measures is that, of the seven NATO vessels, the German destroyer Hamburg is barred by German government policy from doing more than asking merchant ships to identify themselves and their cargo.

"For German foreign and defense policy, the fact that we cannot participate fully in these operations is unfortunate," Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel of Germany told the Rome news conference.

Also in Rome, the NATO Secretary General, Manfred Wörner, urged coordination between the two fleets. His presence at the Rome meeting was the first time a NATO Secretary General had attended a high-level Western European Union gathering.

U.S. Accuses Greece and Italy

The United States has accused the two Western European members closest to Yugoslavia — Greece and Italy — of permitting supplies of fuel to be shipped to Serbia via Montenegro.

A week ago, the American delegate to the United Nations, Edward J. Perkins, publicized a list of companies in Greece, Italy, Egypt and Malta accused of delivering supplies to the for-



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mer Yugoslavia in violation of United Nations embargoes.

"These are completely unsubstantiated," an Italian official spokesman said of the accusations. "These suspicions have not been substantiated and the same is true for Greece."

Mr. Perkins had said an Italian shipping company had agreed to take 8,000 tons of coke to the Montenegrin port of Bar, while a Greek shipping concern had delivered 200,000 tons of petroleum products to the same port since June.

Serbian Launch Attack

SARAJEVO, Bosnia and Herzegovina, (Reuters) — Serbian forces began a heavy artillery assault on the Bosnian town of Travnik today in an apparent attempt to open a new corridor toward Sarajevo.

A barrage of constant shelling could be heard around nearby Vitez, a major refugee center that is defended by Muslim and Croatian fighters.

The offensive was begun as the commander of United Nations peacekeeping forces in Bosnia, Gen. Philippe Morillon, met the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, to urge his side to honor a cease-fire.

A Croatian military commander acknowledged two days ago that Serbian forces had broken through the front line near Travnik and had the town, 50 miles northwest of Sarajevo, at their mercy.