

7/6/92

U.N.-Coordinated Airlift to Sarajevo Faces Obstacles

FLIGHT, From A14

the fighting. "The security situation is tense," said Rick Garlock, senior logistics coordinator for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Because of the fighting around the airport, U.N. officials try to stagger the flights so that one plane at a time is being unloaded. But careful timing is often upset by the arrival of planes that appear overhead without prior coordination, according to Andrew Levinssen, a U.N. official coordinating activities in Zagreb.

There were three such flights into Sarajevo both Friday and Saturday, he said, all of them French. "These wild flights cause a lot of problems at Sarajevo," said Levinssen. Two planes, one from Italy and one from Norway, were prevented from flying into Sarajevo on Saturday because of a lack of space.

Then there is the cash crunch at Zagreb's airport. The company selling fuel there has been insisting that—humanitarian assistance or not—that pilots must pay for gas with cold cash. Hard currencies only. "This is our biggest problem," Levinssen said. "The planes come with American Express [cards], and it's not accepted by this company."

The pilot of a Greek C-130 was incredulous today. "We normally pay with credit cards, any place in the world," said Maj. Constantinos Moutsios. After a long impasse, the Greek crew pooled \$3,000—enough to buy gas for the jump from Zagreb to Sarajevo and back. "How do we get back to Greece? I don't know," Moutsios mused as fuel was pumped into his plane.

Levinssen said the United Nations is negotiating to persuade the company to accept credit cards.

The U.S. Air Force has avoided the problem by sending pursers loaded with cash on the relief flights. "Dollars," Master Sgt. Angel Morales said, indicating the briefcase he held tightly. "That's all they want."

Planes making the hop from Zagreb to Sarajevo follow a box route that keeps the aircraft away from Serb-held territory as much as possible. But some crossing of potentially hostile territory is unavoidable.

Unescorted by fighters, the cargo planes could be vulnerable to missiles reportedly deployed in the hills surrounding Sarajevo. But pilots and commanders discounted that threat. "From the information we have, we feel the area is safe," Rabov said.

British Flight Lt. Nick Davies, who has made the shuttle from Zagreb to Sarajevo six times, said crews spotted what could have been

a surface-to-air missile site and several anti-aircraft sites but nothing conclusive.

A bigger concern cited by several pilots was the possibility of being hit by some of the small-arms fire constantly heard around Sarajevo. Some aircraft are using combat approaches, offering less of a target, when landing at Sarajevo. "Just to avoid the risk of small-arms fire, we're coming in high and going in steep," Davies said.

Sniper fire remains a constant danger at the airport. A Canadian officer said today that shots had been fired toward his soldiers in the past two days. A U.N. technician was fired on last Friday while installing an antenna, a U.N. official said.

As operations at the airports improve, U.N. officials say they expect to be able to fly 200 tons of supplies a day into Sarajevo.

Zoo Creatures Suffering In Bosnian No Man's Land

SARAJEVO, From A1

Then, the Serb pounding of Sarajevo resumed—except for a zone of relative calm around the U.N.-protected airport. There, threats of armed intervention by the United States and the European Community appear to have persuaded the Serb forces that it makes sense to give ground. They avoid the airport and have stopped firing large artillery shells into the city.

But Serb sniper fire, mortar rounds and an occasional tank shell continue to find victims. Within minutes of Carrington's departure, three tank shells crashed into a front yard near Sarajevo Zoo. A Muslim family and several neighbors were gathered there beneath a big cherry tree; three children were up in the tree picking cherries. The shells killed seven, including the three children in the tree. Sarajevo television showed scraps of their blood-soaked clothes, along with bits of flesh and bone, dangling from limbs of the shredded tree.

They were buried Saturday at Lion's Park, a rapidly expanding cemetery where a back-hoe operator digs at least nine new graves every afternoon, anticipating the next morning's demand. The government here says 1,371 people have been killed in Sarajevo since April 6.

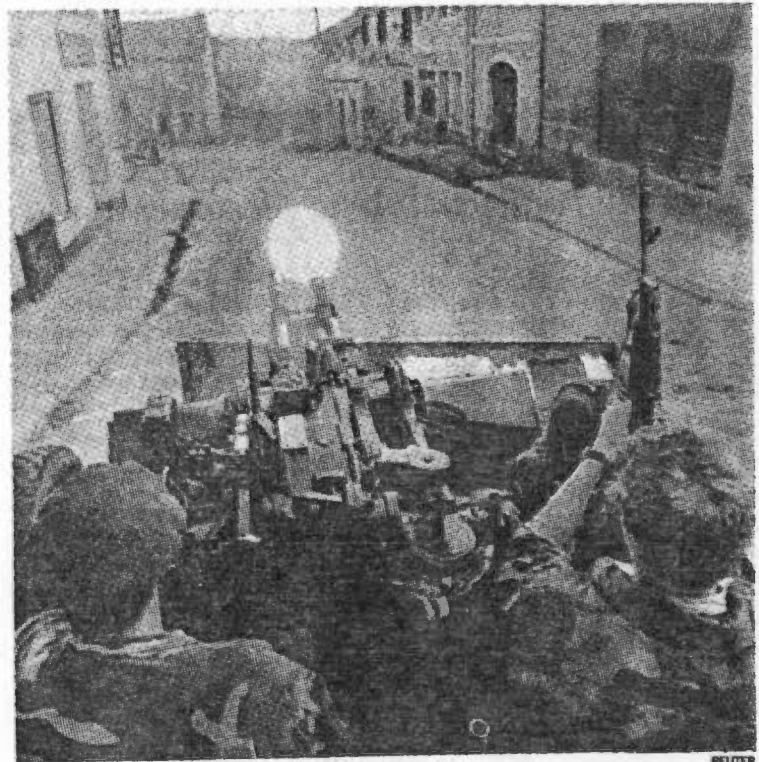
"I have stopped even thinking about an end to the war," said Pal Tokacs, an ethnic Hungarian whose

apartment is on the Serb-held side of the zoo. "We had hoped that there would be military intervention from the United States and Europe. It has reached the point where I am more nervous when it is quiet than when there is shelling."

Tokacs sat today beneath a horse chestnut tree in a friend's back yard. He did not seem nervous; it wasn't quiet. Mortar rounds thumped and machine-gun fire chattered in the near distance, just beyond the zoo. Tokacs, an agronomist who worked for the Sarajevo Parks Department before the war broke out, has become the unofficial chief zoo keeper. When the war started here and Tokacs's apartment was shattered by mortar shells, he began hiding out in the Parks Department administration building on the tree-shrouded grounds of the zoo.

"I slept on a bed of newspapers in my office. If there was heavy shelling, I would go down to the basement, where there is an armchair," he said. Tokacs, a 60-year-old with a beard and green eyes, speaks of the zoo's animals as though they were members of his family. From early April, when the shooting started, until 10 days ago he worked with people who live around the zoo to find grain and meat for its animals and birds.

"There was shelling all the time, and we would find cows or horses that had legs broken. We would slaughter the animals and put the meat in the zoo's two big freezers,"



Bosnian government militiamen fire an antiaircraft gun down a street during an unsuccessful attempt to prevent Serbs from capturing the town of Derventa.

said Tokacs. When mortar fire killed six zoo ponies four weeks ago, these, too, were slaughtered and fed to the lions, tigers, bears and leopard. The electricity failed in mid-June, and the freezer has been empty since. The animals either have fresh meat or they go hungry.

It was 10 days ago, while Tokacs was near the big cats' cage helping slaughter a wounded cow, that a Serb sniper killed Esref Tahirovic, 19, a volunteer zoo keeper. He was shot 15 feet from the lions' cage, and

sniper fire prevented medics from reaching him for nearly two hours. He died en route to a hospital.

The zoo is now off limits, and local militiamen prevent anyone from entering. Sarajevo's mayor, Mohammed Kresevljakovic, has asked the U.N. peace-keeping force here to help local residents bury the dead animals and evacuate the living.

Tokacs doesn't believe it will happen in time. "All my wild animals will die, because no one can feed them," he said.

In Bosnia, Not All Victims Are People

Animals Starve in Cages After Snipers Shoot Sarajevo Zoo Keeper

WP: 7/6/92

By Blaine Harden
Washington Post Foreign Service

SARAJEVO, Bosnia, July 5—The two lions at Sarajevo Zoo stopped roaring last Friday, the day American-donated food began arriving at the embattled city's airport. They have had nothing to eat for 10 days, since one of their keepers was shot to death by a sniper. The lions appear to be losing heart.

At least 10 dead zoo animals—deer, donkeys, ponies, goats, a swan and an antelope—are rotting unburied in their pens—all victims of mortar shells fired by Serb militiamen from the hills surrounding the city. The zoo has become a no man's land, a free-fire zone between attacking Serb nationalist forces and the Slavic Muslims, Croats and local Serbs who are defending the neighborhood.

People who live around the zoo, which is about a half mile from the city center, are afraid to bury the dead animals or feed the lions, the two tigers or the three bears that have survived three months of Serb shelling

to starve in their cages. Serb sniping around the zoo gets worse by the day.

The opening of Sarajevo airport and the daily arrival of tons of food and medicine have done nothing to halt the neighborhood battles that grind away at the edges of the Bosnian capital. Residents of what is now a semi-besieged city complain that despite the food aid they are as trapped as the creatures in the zoo.

"I would rather eat a potato in normal times than meat or oysters or lobsters now," said Ivica Cigelj, 43, a restaurateur turned militiaman who has the bad luck to live beside the zoo and across from the attacking Serbs.

Friday was the first full day of the international airlift, with 11 cargo planes from around the world disgorging food, hardware and medicines. British diplomat Lord Carrington, the European Community's chief mediator among the warring peoples of the former Yugoslav federation, also dropped in that day to talk peace with the opposing sides in this devastated republic. But he flew away with no new prospects for a negotiated peace.

See SARAJEVO, A16, Col. 3