

NATO troops move into Serb-held town

By NERMINA DURMIC-KAHROVIC
Associated Press Writer

TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina — NATO-led troops took up positions in at least two towns early yesterday to prevent violence between Serb factions, but drew an angry response from stone-throwing civilians, witnesses and officials said.

The peace force, in a statement, said it moved to "deter the outbreak of violence" after receiving indications that forces loyal to Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic would try to take control of police stations and the media in Serb-held areas of northern Bosnia.

Plavsic is locked in a power struggle with officials loyal to war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic.

While NATO troops already have taken action against police loyal to Plavsic in her northern power base of Banja Luka, international officials strongly support her drive to isolate Karadzic.

The NATO statement said that both regular police and the better-equipped special police were reported to be carrying unauthorized long-barrel weapons.

NATO said its troops — which included Americans — were positioning themselves to prevent violence, were conducting reconnaissance, and were supporting U.N. police whose job it is to monitor local police units.

However, they met an angry reception.

Ljuba Maratovic, director of the pro-Karadzic radio station in Brcko, said soldiers of the NATO-led peace force equipped with armored vehicles, most of them Americans, arrived at the main Brcko police station during the night.

He said in a telephone interview that local officials and citizens prevented them from entering, and that the soldiers had to withdraw. However, they remained in the town.

Eyewitnesses said stones were thrown at NATO vehicles, and that they heard shots fired — but it was unclear by whom or whether anyone was injured.

The local radio station appealed for citizens to come and defend the city. Sirens wailed in the streets.

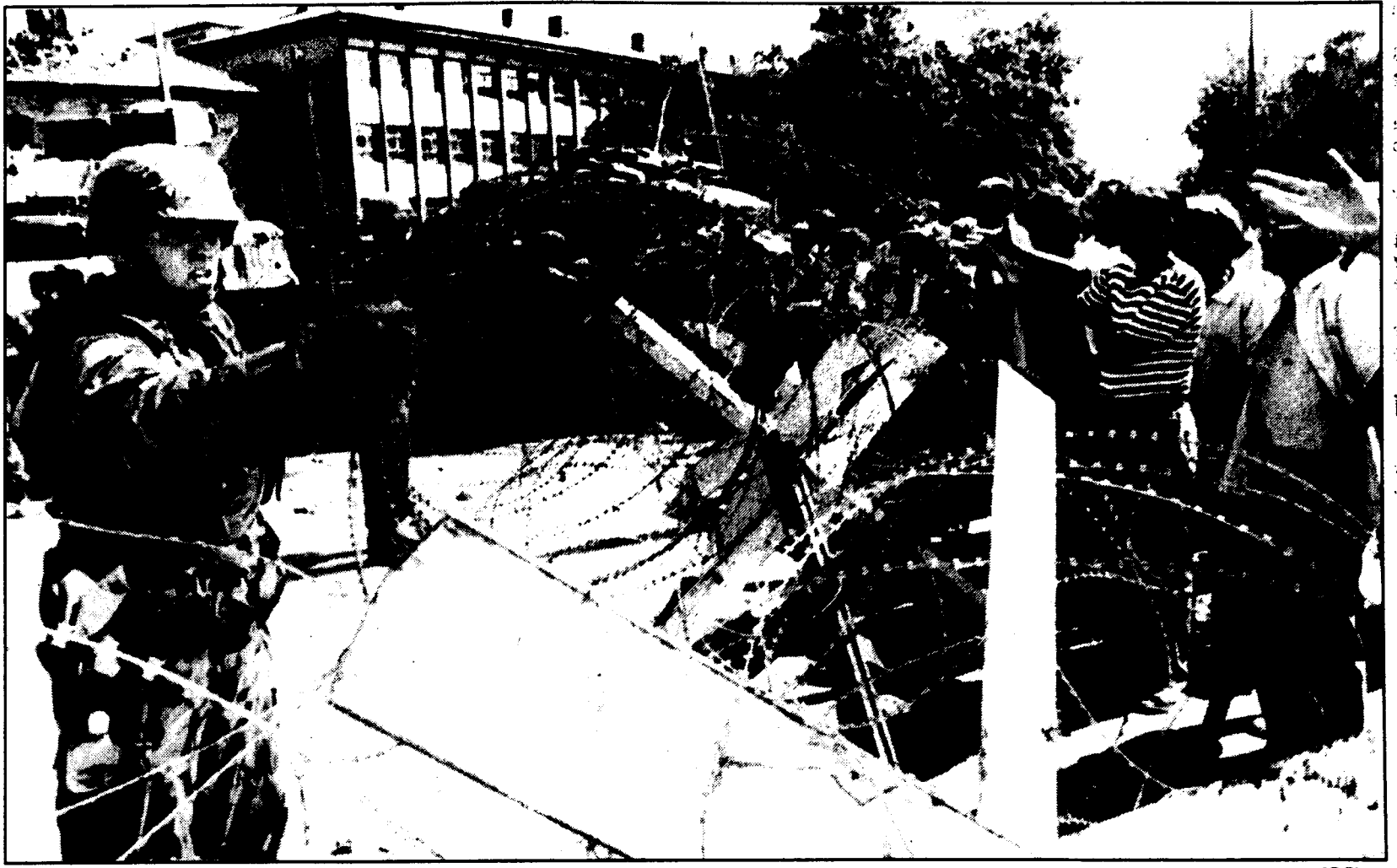
Brcko residents said that the local police chief, Andrija Milosevic, recently had switched sides in the power struggle and now was supporting Plavsic.

Other witnesses reported a heavy presence of the peace force near Bijeljina, in the northeast corner of Bosnia near the border with Serb-led Yugoslavia.

U.N. spokesman Andrea Angeli in Tuzla, a government-held city in the region, said U.N. police had remained in their own headquarters in Bijeljina.

He said the local radio station had called for a demonstration against the international forces.

No other details were available immediately.



U.S. troops secure their positions as Serbs protest in eastern Bosnia. The Serbs attacked NATO troops trying to control tensions between

supporters of war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic and Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic yesterday.

California's ban on affirmative action passes amid protesting

By JEAN H. LEE
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — After nearly a year of legal challenges, California's affirmative action ban became law yesterday — the 34th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

Thousands of the law's opponents streamed across the Golden Gate Bridge in protest of California becoming the first state in the nation to eliminate race and gender considerations in everything from hiring to education.

"This is history," said 60-year-old demonstrator Jistine Singleton, who drove overnight with a church group from Riverside in Southern California.

California voters passed the measure, Proposition 209, last November by a 54 percent margin, but the ban has been tied up in the courts since. The American Civil Liberties Union and

other opponents tried to have it struck down, but the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused Tuesday to block implementation while it is appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

King's speech in Washington in 1963 was on the marchers' minds as they trooped across the bridge, four and five abreast on a pedestrian sidewalk, chanting and singing "We Shall Overcome."

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, who organized the march, urged Prop 209 opponents to continue fighting.

"In this country there are those who are dreamers and those who are dream-busters. The dreamers need to outlast the dream-busters. We must pursue the dream of an inclusive society," Jackson said.

Schoolchildren, college students and the elderly of all races walked side-by-side, many wearing "Save the dream" buttons as drivers honked and waved.

"I don't think we've undone the negative effects of slavery," said Jean Mont-Eton, 68, of San Francisco. "I still think we need affirmative action."

San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, who is black, likened the ban to Jim Crow laws decades ago.

"This same kind of march was held years ago, when Southern bigots were doing the same thing," he said.

Meanwhile, it wasn't clear whether implementation of the law would have any immediate impact.

In San Francisco, City Attorney Louise Renne said a local affirmative action program would stand despite Proposition 209.

"In San Francisco, at least, there will be no precipitous action to undo the hard work we have already undertaken to remedy past discrimination," Renne said.



San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown urges people back at a march across the Golden Gate Bridge, yesterday. He led thousands of marchers against the new anti-affirmative action laws that went into effect yesterday.



Brown nosers

Franco Ricardo, of Boston, molds the First Family out of brownies at a Martha's Vineyard market, yesterday. The amount of calories in the sculpture is estimated at 57 million.

AP poll says Americans have no faith in new tobacco laws

Americans have said in an Associated Press poll they do not think new tobacco laws will reduce teenage smoking.

By LAURAN NEEAARD
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans are highly suspicious of the proposed tobacco deal, saying it won't even achieve a prime objective of lowering teen-age smoking unless cigarette prices rise much more than expected, according to an Associated Press poll.

More than half of those surveyed say the deal is not worth giving up the key concession that cigarette makers demand — banning class-action lawsuits. And two-thirds expect tobacco companies to sell as many cigarettes as ever.

Seventy percent say the price of a pack of cigarettes would have to rise by more than \$1 — much more than expected under the deal — to have much effect on teen smokers.

Congress and President Clinton begin grappling with the proposed deal next month, and such poll findings are bound to figure in the debate.

"This reflects a huge amount of cynicism and skepticism about tobacco," said Massachusetts Attorney General Scott Harshbarger, who insists the public is missing the deal's good points.

"If it is left to the current, polarizing debate... this is going to be a major problem. We will miss an opportunity that may not come again, and tobacco wins."

The findings present a dilemma for deal supporters, who would like to toughen some provisions but without going so far that tobacco

companies back out. Yet, public distrust plays into deal opponents' hands.

Indeed, critics immediately seized on the findings.

"The American people have it right: They're not against a settlement, they're against a bad settlement," Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., said in a statement. "It's exactly this kind of public opposition to the deal that's going to force Congress to make significant changes."

The proposed deal would settle state lawsuits against tobacco companies by setting new national policy. Companies would pay \$368.5 billion over 25 years, curb advertising and marketing and pay fines if teen smoking doesn't fall significantly. In return, they won the class-action ban and other legal protections, plus restrictions on pending government control over nicotine.

Clinton has said he will stiffen the deal, including a demand for full government nicotine regulation. The AP's telephone poll of 1,003 adults, conducted Aug. 20-24, found 58 percent of Americans support such regulation, including 54 percent of smokers.

An additional 54 percent said a deal isn't worth the class-action lawsuit ban. But the smokers who would file such suits were split evenly: 39.5 percent said a deal was worth that concession vs. 41 percent who said it wasn't.

The poll was done by ICR Survey Research Group of Media, Pa. The margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The deal is expected to force cigarette companies to raise prices by 62 cents a pack. Currently, the cost of a pack averages \$1.74, including tax. A key question is

whether that increase would cut teen smoking.

Eight in 10 Americans said a jump of even 75 cents is insufficient to do that. Seventy percent said prices would have to rise more than \$1 a pack to curb teen smokers significantly — including 61 percent of the smokers whose wallets would be hit.

"The poll appears to be in accordance with the best evidence," said Massachusetts Institute of Technology economist Jeffrey Harris.

His calculations indicate prices would have to rise between \$1.15 and \$1.50 a pack to reduce teen smoking by the amounts the deal requires — roughly 30 percent over five years.

But Harris cautioned that public perceptions are a little too cynical — cigarette sales would drop some under the deal. Every 10 percent increase in price would lower the number of cigarettes sold by 4 percent, his calculations indicate. Half of that drop comes from people who kick the habit, the rest from people who just smoke less.

In other words, raising prices the expected 62 cents would lower U.S. cigarette consumption from 24 billion packs a year to about 20.8 billion packs — and cut the overall number of smokers by 3.5 million to 4 million, Harris said.

The American Medical Association, a chief lobbying force behind the deal, has called for a \$1 a pack increase. The AP's poll found 10.4 percent of Americans, and 14 percent of smokers, think that would be enough.

But getting even \$1 would be a struggle, cautioned the AMA's Dr. Randolph Smoak. "Our Congress is not tax-inclined," he said. "That may be a sticky issue."

LSU student dies after binge drinking, team of investigators look into death

By LESLIE ZGANJAR
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BATON ROUGE, La. — A state-assembled team will investigate the binge-drinking death of a Louisiana State University student celebrating fraternity pledge week who was too young to buy alcohol legally.

"This young man made a mistake," said John Kennedy, secretary of the Department of Revenue and Taxation, who oversees the state's Alcoholic Beverage Control board.

"If someone assisted him in making that mistake and broke the law, they're going to answer for it," Kennedy's announcement

"We want to know who is responsible, who was at the parties, how the alcohol was acquired."

— William Jenkins
LSU chancellor

Wednesday came on the same day a private funeral Mass was said in suburban New Orleans for Benjamin Wynne, who died of alcohol poisoning the day before.

Preliminary autopsy reports showed the Sigma Alpha Epsilon

pledge had a blood-alcohol level of .588 percent, an amount authorities said would have required consuming more than two dozen drinks.

The control board investigation was one of five launched in the wake of the 20-year-old student's death. The legal drinking age is 21.

The university, campus police, Baton Rouge police and the national chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon are also investigating.

"We want to know who is responsible, who was at the parties, how the alcohol was acquired," said LSU Chancellor William Jenkins, who attended Wynne's Mass.

He added that police have no evidence the student was forced to drink as part of any hazing ritual.