AFP: LE MONDE EN BREF

CONFLIT YOUGOSLAVE - L’armée yougoslave a décidé de préparer certaines de ses unités au combat pour soutenir les Serbes du sud de la Croatie, au 4ème jour des affrontements croato-serbes qui ont permis aux Croates de prendre le contrôle de l’aéroport de Zadar et dans lesquels 2 soldats français de la FORPRONU ont trouvé la mort. A Genève où les discussions de paix se sont poursuivies, le président bosniaque Alija Izetbegovic a menacé de quitter la conférence en cas d’impasse prolongée des pourparlers.

IRAQ - Le Conseil de sécurité de l’ONU a décidé de maintenir en l’état l’embargo multiforme contre l’Irak, estimant que ce pays ne s’est toujours pas conformé pleinement aux résolutions de l’ONU, a-t-on annoncé officiellement.
Le vice-premier ministre irakien Tarek Aziz a qualifié "d’arrogante et belliqueuse" l’attitude de la nouvelle administration américaine et affirmé que le "chapitre du Koweït est clos".

PALESTINIENS - Israël a proposé que les Palestiniens expulsés le 17 décembre vers le Liban puissent rencontrer leur mandataire, afin de pouvoir faire appel de la décision de bannissement devant une commission militaire.
Cette proposition a été immédiatement rejetée par le porte-parole de ces Palestiniens.

SOMALIE - Un Marine américain a été tué par balle au cours d’une patrouille à Mogadiscio, la capitale somalienne, a annoncé le Pentagone. Il s’agit du 3ème Américain tué en somalie depuis le début de l’opération "Restore Hope" (Rendre l’Espoir).

TOGO - Au moins 12 personnes ont été tuées et 25 autres blessées par la police à Lomé lors de violences qui ont éclaté pendant une manifestation de l’opposition, selon les constatations faites dans la capitale en fin de soirée.

ETATS-UNIS - Le président Bill Clinton a confié à son épouse Hillary la tâche d’élaborer d’ici à la fin du mois de mai une réforme du système de santé et a prédit "des décisions difficiles" pour réduire le coût exorbitant des dépenses médicales et donner à tous les Américains une couverture sociale.

REUTER - WORLD NEWS SUMMARY

WASHINGTON - Manhunt continues for killer who sprayed rifle fire into cars at the Central Intelligence Agency complex entrance.

NEW DELHI - India celebrates the annual Republic Day, where British prime minister John Major is chief guest.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

REUTER: Carmakers want duties on imports

NEW YORK - "The top 3 US carmakers have told US trade officials they intend to seek punitive duties on all imported cars, THE NEW YORK TIMES reported in its Tuesday edition. In effect, they are asking the new administration of President Bill Clinton to impose taxes that could add thousands of dollars to the sticker prices of imported Japanese and European cars, the newspaper said, quoting a federal official who insisted on anonymity. The US carmakers will charge that the Japanese and European manufacturers are violating federal law by selling cars for less in the United States than they charge in their home"
markets... Commenting on THE NEW YORK TIMES report, John Guiniven, spokesman for Chrysler, said the big 3 carmakers - General Motors, Ford and Chrysler - have been investigating Japanese price policies 'on an ongoing basis' since the Bush administration ruled Japanese manufacturers were not harming Detroit by dumping minivans into the US market."

HERALD TRIBUNE: Japan warns US against sanctions

TOKYO - "A senior Japanese trade official, responding to recent suggestions by the Clinton administration that it intends to toughen US trade policy toward Japan, warned Monday that Tokyo may retaliate if Washington imposes sanctions against Japanese products. In remarks that indicated a stiffening Japanese attitude, Sozaburo Okamatsu, director-general of the international trade policy bureau at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, said Tokyo 'would take retaliatory action' if the US administration revives the so-called Super 301 trade provision and applies its penalties unilaterally to Japan. Mr. Okamatsu's comments, which were made in response to questions at a briefing for foreign reporters, were the latest evidence that Japanese trade officials are increasingly inclined to react to threats with threats of their own."<br>

CURRENCIES<br>

FINANCIAL TIMES: D-Mark rallies sharply

FRANKFURT - "The D-Mark rallied sharply against the dollar yesterday on speculation that the Bundesbank might not cut short-term interest rates as quickly as financial markets had expected. The weakness in the dollar was also the product of a growing belief that the US Federal Reserve may not raise short-term interest rates now that the Clinton administration has signalled a tough line on tackling the budget deficit. The D-Mark gained nearly 2 pfennigs against the dollar as dealers grew concerned that public sector wage talks between the German government and trade unions were deadlocked."

OECD-MEMBER COUNTRIES

United States

REUTER: Record deficit in fiscal 93 predicted

WASHINGTON - "The US deficit will reach a record $310bn this fiscal year as the United States limps to economic recovery at only three-quarters the normal rate, the Congressional Budget Office said on Monday. The CBO, a research arm of Congress, said economic growth will be 2.8% this year, peak at 3.0% next year and then turn sluggish. 'In 1993 and 1994 the economy will grow at only three-fourths of the pace that is typical for this stage of recovery, CBO Director Robert Reischauer said... Driven by rising federal health care costs, the deficit is projected to hover in the $300bn range for most of the 90s and then grow rapidly to $358bn by fiscal 1998."<br>

NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

REUTER: Conservative parliament challenges reforms

KIEV - "Ukraine’s conservative-dominated parliament challenged the government’s market-oriented reforms on Monday, calling for a tightening of state control over the former Soviet republic’s shattered economy. Deputies discussing the state of the economy for the third day approved by 267 votes to 6 a resolution on first reading describing Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma’s reforms as ‘ill-considered and hasty’... The statement urged the government to re-establish price controls for milk and sugar, reintroduce the common Soviet practice of rationing and repeal a decree on privatising land."

HERALD TRIBUNE: S. Korea to cut interest rates

SEOUL - "Finance Minister Rhee Yong Man of South Korea said Monday that the central bank’s discount rate would be cut to 5% from 7%, and its discount rate for trade notes to 6% from 7%, effective Tuesday... Brokers said that the government, which controls South Korea’s financial system, has been unsettled by widespread expectations that the growth rate for the gross national product has fallen to less than 2% in the fourth quarter. South Korea’s economy has grown by 8 to 9% annually, slowed to a rate of 2.8% in the second half of last year, the lowest in 12 years. Poor domestic sales and exports also caused a record
number of business failures last year, estimated at nearly 10,000, and large lay-offs. But government officials, worried about inflation, had hesitated to cut interest rates."