By Blake Harden  THE WASHINGTON POST

November 25

SARAJEVO, BOSNIA

Through five months of nearly continuous bombardment, the only consumer item available every day in this suffering city has been the newspaper "Oslobodzence." The staff now edits the paper in an atomized state.

Above ground, most of the twin nine-story glass and steel towers of what was one of Bosnia's finest office complexes has been belted into a black glock by four major firms. All the fees were spent by artillery shells, which continue each day to puncture the ruins.

What used to be the ground-floor newsroom now lies directly under the guns of powerful Serb nationalist forces firing the city's heavy weapons ranging from tank cannon to night-vision sniper rifles. Serb militants fire round-the-clock at a range of 100 yards at whoever and whatever comes and goes from the newspaper office.

Tuesday morning, the driver of a city garbage truck was found slumped behind the wheel on a street near the building, killed by a sniper's bullet. The newspaper distributors who once carried "Oslobodzence" to all parts of the city no longer come to work. All 700 newspapers that once sold the paper have been blown up or shattered by shells.

Since no one else is willing to do it, "Oslobodzence" — which means Liberation — is delivered and sold by the journalists who write and edit it. They toss bundles of papers into the trunks and back seats of their own bullet-riddled cars and sell them on the streets.

The war has been almost as hard on the journalists who put out the paper as on the building that houses it. A reporter named Josef Simenc, last killed by a sniper's bullet in his home office, was a Serb militant's favorite target.

"The war has been almost as hard on the journalists who put out the paper as on the building that houses it," said John W. Altman, who is on leave from his position as "Oslobodzence's" editor-in-chief. "We still have 35 percent Serbs (nearly the prewar percentage of Serbs in Bosnia) with by-lines in the paper every day. They really hate us for that."

Karadzic's right leg was shattered in a car accident while he was on his way to the office. As is common in this gas-gun town, the car was traveling at 90 miles an hour to elude snipers; it collided with a police car.

By Sharon Walsh  THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

A heart specialist who reviewed medical records of Walter M. Clifford, the New York attorney Clark M. Clifford for the Justice Department has concluded that Clifford probably would suffer a fatal heart attack if he stands trial.

The Justice Department said that if a court-appointed physician confirmed the opinion, the government would take that "heavily into account" in deciding whether to try the 85-year-old former secretary of defense.

The opinion on Clifford's heart condition, offered by Fairfax cardiologist Albert A. Del Nogar, was submitted Tuesday by the Justice Department to court filings focused on the question of where Clifford and his law partner, Robert A. Altman, should stand trial.

Clifford's lawyers have argued that he is too ill to survive a trial in New York, away from his doctors and his home, but say he wants the chance to clear his name before he dies by standing trial in Washington. Clifford and Altman face separate perjury charges from New York state and federal grand juries.

While the Justice Department opposes the door to the possibility that Clifford could be found unable to stand trial in any jurisdiction, it said Clifford should not be allowed to choose the site for his trial based on his health.

New York prosecutors argue, "Clifford cannot argue that he is well enough to go to trial in Washington, but too ill to go to trial in New York," said John W. Moscow, assistant district attorney for New York.

Federal and state prosecutors have been at loggerheads for more than a month over whether to go to trial in New York, but Tuesday they agreed to hold the first trial in New York.

If a federal trial occurred first, Clifford and Altman could not be tried on the broader state charges because of New York's double jeopardy law, the authorities agreed. New York judge Janet T. Carlin on Jan. 4 is the trial date for Clifford and Altman in the state charges that they lied to bank regulators about the illegal ownership of First American Bankshares Inc. of Washington by the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

In federal court filings in Washington, the Justice Department asked U.S. District Judge Joyce H. Hens Green to allow a trial on similar charges in Washington to be delayed until after the New York trial takes place.

The department said it would seriously consider dropping its charges if Clifford and Altman were tried first on state charges. The department concluded, "It is unlike that the defendants will be tried in both federal and state court regardless which case proceeds first."

In assessing Clifford's ability to stand trial, Del Nogar reviewed information from medical tests on Clifford and corresponded with doctors from two of Clifford's doctors. He said he agreed with those doctors that the only appropriate treatment for Clifford would be coronary artery bypass surgery to improve blood flow to Clifford's heart.

He said, "I estimate that it is probable that the patient would suffer a heart attack as a direct result of undergoing trial." And in that event, Clifford "would stand a greater than 50 percent chance of dying."

Charles A. Siffman, the New York attorney for Clifford, declined to comment on Clifford's health. He said he agreed with those doctors that the motion asking that the charges against him be dismissed because of his health, and New York courts also would have to rule on that issue.

The 12-count state indictment brought against the two former officials of First American charged Clifford and Altman jointly with fraud, conspiracy and accepting bribes. Altman was charged alone with conspiracy and accepting bribes.

The two counts of bribery involve making false written statements. The three-count federal indictment charged the two jointly with conspiracy and charged Altman alone with making false oral statements.

The three-count federal indictment charged the two jointly with conspiracy and charged Altman alone with concealing facts from regulators. Green will decide the final trial date after a Sept. 10 hearing in federal court in Washington.

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