

Tourists leave after FO issues warning

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BRITISH tourists were being evacuated from Slovenia last night after the Foreign Office told UK citizens to "leave now if at all possible", writes David Connett.

Foreign Office officials, hoping to take advantage of a lull in fighting, reversed earlier advice telling tourists to remain in their hotels. An FO spokesman said the Yugoslav authorities had guaranteed to give Britons safe passage out of Slovenia.

In a BBC World Service message the For-

eign Office advised travellers to use trains to avoid trouble on the roads and at frontiers.

Britons intending to travel to Yugoslavia are being advised to defer non-essential journeys. Holidaymakers in areas unaffected by fighting were told to keep in touch with developments and avoid crowds. A Foreign Office spokesman said it was working closely with tour operators and was in touch with Britons living in the country who had registered with the embassy.

A total of 5,000 Britons are thought to be in

Yugoslavia but less than 1,000 are in areas affected by fighting. A group of 260 people were due to arrive at Gatwick and Manchester early today after travelling by coach to Italy from the resorts of Kranjskagora and Bovec.

Liz Redmond, overseas personnel manager for Yugotours, the largest tour operators, said 679 customers would leave Slovenia by train as soon as possible. Forty Britons in Slovenia with other operators were also being evacuated along with Dutch and Austrian nationals.