

# Yugoslav army conscripts begin mass desertions

YUGOSLAV army conscripts have been deserting in large and increasing numbers since fighting died down in Slovenia, according to runaway soldiers interviewed in this Slovenian town on Thursday, **Reuter reports from Maribor.**

Soldiers now in the hands of the Slovene authorities said that at one of the five barracks in Maribor a third of the garrison - 150 conscripts and some officers - walked out on yesterday morning.

"As far as I am concerned there is no army left," said Dejan, a 19-year-old conscript from Belgrade. "In the end they didn't even try to stop us

leaving." Other soldiers confirmed there had been a mass defection from the Franc Roznam barracks, saying officers had initially tried to cajole them into staying but made no serious attempt to stop them going. Defections were also reported from the town's other barracks.

Maribor, a pretty, medium-sized town on the river Drava, is less than 20km from a Slovenian border post at Sentilj, scene of fierce skirmishing last week between Slovenian defence units and federal border troops. All conscripts interviewed said their first aim was to get back to their families.