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AVIATION NEWS

BARUCH -- Aarseth

At Fort Bragg, North Carolina, nine thousand paratroopers of the Eighty Second Airborne Division pile into giant "Flying Boxcars" for the biggest mass paradrop since the assault across the Rhine in World War II.

The sky soldiers -- tumbling into space seventeen seconds apart -- are wearing the Army's new T-10 parachutes, which function almost flawlessly.

And still they come -- paratroopers by the hundreds -- their billowing chutes peck-marking the heavens. Jeeps, three-quarter-ton trucks, howitzers and other equipment are also dropped during the maneuvers.

The big jump is part of Exercise Flash Burn -- grim, realistic war games designed to ready America's airborne striking arm for the radical, new concept of tomorrow's war.