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Census Bureau releases figures on age groups

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The nation's school-age population has plummeted in four states out of five, but a large crop of toddlers is coming along to reverse that trend in most areas, new Census Bureau figures showed Tuesday.
The nation's fastest growing group is in the 25-to-44 age bracket, and the elderly are also increasing sharply, according to new state population estimates by age.
Overall, the Census Bureau said, the nation's population increased by 9.6 million between 1980 and 1984, with 91 percent of the growth occurring in the South and West.
The nation's school-age population — youngsters aged 5 to 17 — dropped sharply in many areas, reflecting the so-called "baby bust" of the recent past as young people postponed marriage and family for education and careers.

Between 1980 and 1984, the school-age population fell 5.3 percent to 44.8 million, the bureau said.

However, the movement of the nation's huge post-war baby boom generation into the childbearing years has helped promote an increase in pre-schoolers, who will begin moving into the nation's schools shortly.

The under-5 population jumped by 9 percent between 1980 and 1984, the report disclosed, with increases occurring in all but six states.

The young-adult population, aged 18 to 24, declined by 3 percent and is expected to continue to fall through this decade as the small school-age group moved into that bracket.

"By contrast, persons 25 to 44, the most rapidly growing segment of the population, registered a 14.1 percent gain during the 1980-84 period," the report said. "Every state showed growth in this age group since 1980."

Growth of the 45 to 64 age group remained sluggish because of the small number of children born during the Depression era, but the elderly increased their numbers sharply.

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The Reagan administration's decision to try to close Beirut airport marks a new low point for the government of President Amin Gemayel, once viewed by Washington as offering the best hope for a strong, new Lebanon.
The action, announced Monday, will hurt Gemayel's government and the Lebanese economy more than it will the hijackers. The administration has put demands on Gemayel to

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Flash fires

Two people killed in California

Associated Press
LOS ANGELES — A flash fire roared through a Los Angeles neighborhood Tuesday, killing two people, injuring four and engulfing at least 30 homes, in the latest of a series of fires that have charred 71,000 acres in the West.

City fire spokesman Jim Wells said the fast-moving wildfire, reported around 3 p.m., leapt from rooftop to rooftop in fashionable Baldwin Hills, 10 miles southeast of downtown.

A television camera inside a helicopter showed at least two people sprawled motionless in a smoke-filled street. Wells later confirmed both were dead.

The flames in the newest fire roared without warning up a hill and through a housing development.

One eyewitness told reporters he saw something thrown from a passing car moments before the fire erupted.

More than 15 major fires have been reported since last Thursday. Six major fires continue to rage out of control in California, Arizona and Idaho, including a 6,000-plus acre blaze threatening a youth camp and residents of Ojai, Ca. But firefighters neared containment of the largest blaze in California, 20,600 acres near Palm Springs.

The worst blaze reported was in San Diego, where a firestorm started by an arsonist destroyed 64 houses and damaged 20 other buildings in San Diego, leaving 150 people homeless and causing damage estimated at \$8.5 million.

At the Army's Fort Ord, about

100 miles south of San Francisco, small arms practice at the 28,000-acre headquarters of the 7th Infantry Division ignited a 500-acre brush fire Monday, lofting smoke visible 40 miles away. Hot spots continued to burn on Tuesday.

Near San Diego, another fire threatened a Marine Corps base. Capt. Jerry Broecker, spokesman for Camp Pendleton, said helicopters continued to bomb a 1,100-acre fire with water Tuesday. The fire broke out Monday night, he said.

In Ventura County, firefighters fought to stop the blaze speeding toward the city of Ojai, 65 miles northwest of Los Angeles. About 600 youths and counselors were evacuated from Camp Ramah in the hills above Ojai and hundreds of residents in the northwest part of the community of 10,000 were ordered to leave their homes Tuesday.

U.S. shows lack of confidence in Gemayel

halt terrorism in Lebanon that U.S. officials concede he has no hope of meeting.
Lebanon's ambassador to Washington, Abdallah Bouhabib, reacted angrily, accusing the administration of "playing domestic politics" in Lebanon.
"The State Department knows, the administration knows, the cause of terrorism is not in Lebanon," he said. "The plane (TWA Flight 847) was hijacked from Athens."

When the Reagan administration wanted to talk to someone about releasing the hostages, it didn't go to Gemayel, but to Lebanon's justice minister, Nabih Berri, who is emerging as the real power in that embattled country.

And when the administration decided to retaliate for the hijackings, it didn't attack the hijackers, but sought to close the Beirut airport.

Bouhabib said the hijackers had nothing to do with Lebanon, whose

people, he argued, resolutely opposed the hijacking. He said Gemayel sent Reagan a strong condemnation of the hijacking on June 21.

He also said that Berri had Gemayel's blessing in his dealings with the Americans. Bouhabib said he knew the limitations of their government.

The administration had looked to Gemayel to rebuild Lebanon after the Israeli invasion in 1982.

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