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# World/Nation

## Violence escalates in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (AP) — Soldiers blew up four Palestinian homes and sealed five others Wednesday in reprisal for the murder of Arabs who collaborated with Israel. Palestinians hurled a grenade at a troop bus but missed.

Noting an increased use of guns and grenades by Palestinian activists, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin suggested there had been a shift in Palestinian tactics from stones to more sophisticated weapons.

"Once they shift from civilian violence to terror, for me (that) is proof that they failed to achieve their goals by what they call the intefadeh," Rabin said.

Intefadeh is the Arabic word for uprising.

But clashes continued between soldiers and demonstrators in the occupied territories.

Hospital officials reported four Palestinians wounded, three of whom were injured with plastic bullets.

In the Gaza Strip, sources said a grenade was thrown between a civilian car and a bus carrying soldiers.

There were no injuries as a result of

the attack, and soldiers sealed the area and detained a number of Palestinians, army officials said.

A day earlier, a grenade was thrown at an army jeep, wounding two soldiers in the legs.

Rabin, speaking at a Foreign Press Association luncheon, said Wednesday's incident was the third time grenades had been hurled at Israelis in the recent days since fighting began.

Rabin also said a village leader had been shot to death with an assault rifle by PLO enforcers.

He said terror attacks had declined in the occupied lands in the past 10 months, due to the fact that Palestinian activists have been focusing primarily on large-scale demonstrations and stone-throwing confrontations.

But the defense minister said the army had succeeded in stopping big protests and in recent days there had been an upsurge in the use of bullets, bombs and grenades.

The army did not identify the group behind the latest grenade attacks in the city.

Arab journalists in the Gaza Strip said rumors circulated that the attacks were the work of Islamic militants.

Palestinian sources said Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization was not involved, and prominent Palestinians said they were not aware of any change in PLO policy.

"I don't think a few such cases signals any change in policy. But whoever is behind such acts is definitely not on the same track as the PLO," said Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian human rights activist.

PLO leaders have said Palestinian protesters had access to weapons, although they had been instructed not to use them in confrontations with Israelis.

The restraint has won international sympathy for the Palestinians.

The embargo on terror is an essential ingredient for any Palestinian-Israeli dialogue after Israel's Nov. 1 general election.

Rabin said he believed the use of bullets by Palestinians may be an effort to prod PLO leaders into taking a stand politically on negotiations with Israel.

But many of the recent casualties coincided with stepped-up arrests and the introduction of plastic bullets.

Since the beginning of the intefadeh, Palestinians have been killed and wounded.

The overall death toll stands at 1,000 since the uprising began Dec. 8, 1987.

Ten suspected Arab collaborators Israeli authorities have been killed last December.

This figure includes three who were stabbed to death in recent weeks in Nablus, about 30 miles north of Jerusalem.

Soldiers blew up four houses in the city of Nablus, a low-income neighborhood with narrow winding streets.

Five other houses were sealed by the army.

**Reagan may call session for Contras**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan intends to call Congress to a special session later this year if he judges that the Sandinista government is seeking to mop up the remnants of anti-government Contras in Honduras, sources said Wednesday.

Reagan plans to announce his intent in a statement later this week, well-placed sources, who operate on condition of anonymity, said.

If the president decides to call a session, he would ask Congress for quick passage of a bill to release \$16.5 million in aid for the Contras now stockpiled in Honduran warehouses.

The precise forum and timing of Reagan's statement have not been decided, the sources said.

But they said it was intended as a strong signal to the left that "Reagan isn't backing down," as one source said, and he was watching developments in Honduras.

Under a Pentagon move, Reagan signed earlier this year a procedure is established for congressional consideration of a request for military aid for the U.S. military support since 1982 when it was ended in deference to efforts to forge a long-term deal between the two sides.

The rebels now are receiving \$27 million in humanitarian aid from the Pentagon appropriations bill.

Under the law, Reagan could call an expedited vote on the aid if the certified by Congress that two of three conditions are met:

- That the Soviet Union continues to funnel unacceptable levels of military hardware to the Sandinistas.
- That the leftist Sandinista government is violating terms of a regional peace accord.
- That they launch an unprovoked attack on the rebels.

Administration officials said that the first two of those conditions already exist.

One source familiar with the House planning said, "The president will say if anything appropriate (condition) occurs, I will call Congress back into session."

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The Consumers Union and others filed a petition with the Department of Insurance seeking more Medicare supplement policies called Medigap policies.

Charlotte Flynn, of the group, said the elderly are often misled by unscrupulous insurance agents into purchasing policies that are not their best interest. She said the elderly will have no choice but to purchase the Medigap business, she said.

The news conference outside the state board building.

A 1986 congressional report said that \$3 billion of the \$12 billion the elderly nationwide for health care is wasted on unnecessary health policies. Texas consumers more than \$500 million in Medicare supplement insurance in 1986.

Carol Barger, of the Consumers Union, said the state insurance department received about 2,500 complaints about gap policies last year, but the state insurance board has done little to help the industry.

## Mexico takes action to prevent inflation

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The plunge in the price of oil, Mexico's leading export, has forced the government to announce painful budget cuts, consider an International Monetary Fund contingency loan and renew calls for a better deal on the foreign debt.

It also highlights a stubborn battle against inflation and an ambitious trade liberalization program meant to diversify Mexico's export earnings and wean it from dependence on oil-generated revenues.

Pemex, the government oil monopoly, said on Oct. 7 that average spot market prices for Mexican crude had sunk to about \$9 a barrel and that revenues for this year would fall below 1987's \$8.6 billion figure.

Last year, oil accounted for 41 percent of total Mexican export revenues and keyed the country's overall \$8.4 billion trade surplus.

Reacting to the drop in oil-based earnings — estimated by one Energy Department official at \$2 billion below official projections so far this year — President Miguel de la Madrid's administration announced more than \$200 million in budget cuts last Friday.

It took pains to assure Mexicans, whose paychecks are worth half what they were in 1982, that the cuts would spare social programs.

"We can manage the problems (caused by falling oil prices) with some sacrifices," Agustin F. Legorreta, president of the private Business Coordinating Council, said Tuesday.

The falling price of oil has spurred new calls for renegotiation of Mexico's \$104 billion foreign debt. Legorreta said interest payments on the debt are taking funds away from economic development.

The government has been using its foreign reserves to support a 7-month-old peso currency exchange rate freeze as part of an anti-inflation wage and price stabilization program. If the price of oil keeps dropping, however, the government may actually be forced to add to the debt burden.

Most analysts believe the government when it says inflation is its No. 1 economic priority and analysts say President-elect

Carlos Salinas de Gortari will try to maintain the fight. Salinas takes office Dec. 1.

"The danger of hyperinflation is so big that the effort should continue," Jacobo Zaidenweber, president of the Mexico-United States Chamber of Commerce, said in a recent interview. "It could take between one and three years in one form or another."

Under terms of a 1987 foreign debt rescheduling agreement with the IMF, Mexico has the option to draw up to \$1.2 billion in contingency loans if the price of crude drops below the \$9 barrier.

Reserves, which reached a high of \$16 billion in April, dropped to an estimated \$12 billion in July as the government propped up the peso against the dollar.

The government has resisted fresh calls to devalue and give Mexican entrepreneurs a new export advantage that could help offset the shrinking trade surplus. A devaluation would generate new inflationary pressures; the anti-inflation plan has, officially, reduced annualized inflation from a record 159.2 percent in 1987 to about 45 percent this year.

Although resisting the calls to devalue, the administration has stressed the importance of non-oil exports to make up for the shortfall in oil revenues.

Through June, Mexico's first-semester merchandise trade surplus totaled \$2.4 billion, well below 1987's \$4.76 billion, according to the Center for Private Sector Economic Studies. But non-petroleum exports, at \$7.1 billion, were up 20 percent over the same period in 1987.

However, the surplus was hurt when merchandise imports surged by 53 percent between January and June to \$8.3 billion. That was encouraged by trade liberalization aimed at forcing domestic industry to become competitive and lower prices.

On Monday, Tomas Rodriguez Weber, director general of Capital Goods and Petrochemical Industries affairs at the Commerce Department, reiterated the government's position that manufactures exports are the best way to compensate for the weak oil sector.

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## ABC-Post poll: Bush ahead with solid lead

NEW YORK (AP) — A state-by-state poll released Wednesday of nearly 10,000 likely voters rated George Bush to be solidly ahead in the race for the presidency, saying he held a huge lead in the contest for electoral votes.

Although polls of the nation as a whole indicate a close race between Bush and Michael Dukakis, the ABC News-Washington Post survey of the standings in each state — where the election actually is decided — put Bush firmly ahead.

ABC reported that Bush led solidly in 21 states with a total of 220 electoral votes — just 50 short of the total needed to win. Dukakis was firmly ahead in only three states with 30 electoral votes.

With the election nearly a month off, voter sentiments can change. But the ABC-Post poll, the only public survey of its size this year, was the first recent poll to indicate a significant advantage for either candidate.

The poll was conducted from Sept. 21 through Monday among 9,778 likely voters in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. ABC said it had a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

ABC and the Post also conducted a standard national survey that put the race at 51 percent for Bush to 45 percent for Dukakis. A CBS News-New York Times poll Wednesday had nearly the same result: 50-45.

That second ABC-Post poll was conducted Oct. 5 through Tuesday among 1,187 likely voters nationwide. The CBS-Times poll was done Oct. 8 through Monday among 1,009 probable voters. Both had four-point margins of error.

Such national polls measure popular sentiment across the nation as a whole. But in the election each state gives its electoral votes to the winner in that state, so the state-by-state standings are more relevant to the outcome. Such polls are rarely done because conducting polls in each state requires a far larger sample than surveying the nation as a whole.

The CBS-Times poll found increasing doubt about the qualifications of the Republican vice presidential nominee, Sen. Dan Quayle, to serve as president and it indicated the concern was keeping the race a close one in terms of the popular contest nationally.

By a 2-1 margin, probable voters in the CBS-Times poll doubted Quayle's qualifications for the presidency, his worst rating in that survey. He was seen as qualified by only 30 percent, while twice as many — 63 percent — said they would worry about him serving as president.

Quayle's presence appeared to help Dukakis: Asked if they could vote only for president, without considering the running mate, support for Dukakis dipped from 45 percent to 41 percent. Bush's support remained at 50 percent.

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## Congress approves base closings

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress overwhelmingly passed legislation Wednesday, which authorizes the Pentagon to close unneeded military bases for a savings of up to \$5 billion a year.

The Senate approved the bill 82-7 and the House followed shortly afterward with a 370-31 vote which sent the measure to President Reagan. He is expected to sign it.

The Defense Department estimates that between \$2 billion and \$5 billion a year can be saved if it is permitted to pare down the list of 3,800 U.S. military installations.

"We are addressing one of the great sacred cows in this country and in this body," Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, said.

The bill sets up a complicated base-closing procedure which essentially cuts through the thicket of laws enacted by Congress in the past decade to thwart Pentagon efforts to shut down bases.

Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., chairman of the Armed Services Committee, said, "We know we cannot afford excess bases that we don't need, we all understand the reality and the sensitivity of the communities in America that are so dependent, in some cases, on these bases

... and we know that reflects itself here in the Congress."

The bill endorses a Pentagon-appointed commission, which has been meeting for months trying to put together a list of bases to be closed. The current panel will include 12 members by the bill.

The panel will make its recommendations by Dec. 31 and Defense Secretary Frank C. Carlucci will then have until Jan. 15 — five days before he leaves office — to either accept or reject the entire list. He will not be able to change the list.

No base closures would begin before 1990.