

**GOP Shoots Down Border Crisis Request**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A key Republican said Friday that President Barack Obama's multibillion-dollar emergency request for the border is too big to get through the House, as a growing number of Democrats rejected policy changes Republicans are demanding as their price for approving any money.

The developments indicated that Obama faces an uphill climb as he pushes Congress to approve \$3.7 billion to deal with tens of thousands of unaccompanied kids who've been arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border from poor and increasingly violent Central American nations. And they suggested that even as the children keep coming, any final resolution is likely weeks away on Capitol Hill.

As House members gathered Friday morning to finish up legislative business for the week, Rep. Hal Rogers of Kentucky, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, which controls spending, told reporters: "It's too much money. We don't need it."

Rogers previously had sounded open to the spending request for more immigration judges, detention facilities, State Department programs and other items. He said his committee would look at the parts of Obama's request that would go for immediate needs, but that others could be handled through Congress' regular spending bills — though no final action is likely on those until after the November midterm elections.

And asked whether the House would approve the spending package as-is, Rogers said "no."

**Deaths Might Have Been Prevented**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two of the four U.S. deaths in Benghazi might have been prevented, military leaders say, if commanders had known more about the intensity of the sporadic gunfire directed at the CIA facility where Americans had taken refuge and had pressed to get a rescue team there faster.

Senior military leaders have told Congress in closed-door testimony that after the first attack on the main U.S. diplomatic compound on Sept. 11, 2012, they thought the fighting had subsided and the Americans who had fled to the CIA base about a mile away were safe. In fact, they were facing intermittent small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades around midnight and had returned fire. Then the attackers dispersed.

Hours later, at first light, an 11-minute mortar and rocket-propelled grenade attack slammed into the CIA annex, killing security contractors Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty.

In hindsight, retired Gen. Carter Ham, then head of the U.S. military command in Africa, said he would have pressed Libyan contacts in the defense ministry and other officials to help speed up the evacuation of Americans from Benghazi.

Also, a special operations team that had been dispatched from Croatia to Sicily after the first attack might have made it to Benghazi, if a host of variables were ideal — a quick departure, wind direction and speed, and an unobstructed runway to land a U.S. aircraft.

**Kurdish Forces Take Over 2 Oil Fields**

BAGHDAD (AP) — Kurdish security forces took over two major oil fields outside the disputed northern city of Kirkuk before dawn Friday and said they would use some of the production for domestic purposes, further widening a split with the central government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

The takeover of the Bai Hassan and Kirkuk oil fields were the latest land grabs by Kurds, who have responded to the Sunni militant insurgency that has overrun large parts of Iraq by seizing territory of their own, effectively expanding the Kurdish autonomous zone in the north. Those moves have infuriated al-Maliki's government while stoking independence sentiment among the Kurds.

Kurdish fighters, known as peshmerga, pushed into the city of Kirkuk, a major hub for the oil industry in the north, and the surrounding area weeks ago in the early days of the Sunni militant blitz. But until now they had not moved into the oil fields in the area. On Friday, however, the fighters took over the Bai Hassan and Kirkuk fields and expelled local workers, the Oil Ministry in Baghdad said.

Oil Ministry spokesman Assem Jihad denounced the move as "a violation to the constitution" and warned that it poses "a threat to national unity."

The Kurdish Regional Government said its forces moved to secure the fields after learning of what it said were orders by officials in the Oil Ministry to sabotage a pipeline linking oil facilities in the area. It said production would continue, and that staff can return but will operate under Kurdish management.

**Residents Of Eastern Ukraine Town Flee**

DONETSK, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's president vowed vengeance in blood after 19 troops were killed in an insurgent rocket attack Friday, and residents of the rebel-held city of Donetsk began fleeing in large numbers for fear of a government siege.

The barrage of rocket fire just before sunrise at a base near the Russian border was a devastating setback for government forces, who had seemingly gained the upper hand last week-end when they pushed the pro-Russian fighters out of their stronghold city of Sloviansk. In addition to those killed, 93 soldiers were wounded, the Defense Ministry said.

"For every life of our soldiers, the militants will pay with tens and hundreds of their own," Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko warned. "Not one terrorist will evade responsibility. Everybody will get what is coming to them."

Ukrainian government troops have been fighting for more than three months against separatists in eastern Ukraine, and in the last two weeks, they have cut the territory held by the rebels in half. Driven from Sloviansk, the rebels have regrouped in Donetsk, an industrial city of 1 million, and Ukraine has said it will cordon off the area.

In anticipation of a siege, leaders of the self-styled Donetsk People's Republic announced they will evacuate entire neighborhoods. Many residents have rushed to pack up and leave for fear of getting caught in the cross-fire, given the insurgents' strategy of using residential areas for cover.

**As Deaths Rise, No End Seen To Israeli Offensive**

BY JOSEF FEDERMAN  
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Asserting it has broad international support for a fierce military offensive in the Gaza Strip, Israel is showing no signs of ending the operation, vowing to press on until there is a halt to rocket attacks from the seaside territory.

But a mounting Palestinian civilian death toll is beginning to draw international criticism and could quickly put the brakes on the campaign.

Israeli officials say they are pleased with the results of the four-day operation so far. Military officials say the round-the-clock airstrikes have hit Hamas hard, taking out the militant group's command centers, rocket-launchers and storage sites, and knocking out much of its long-range rocket arsenal.

A greater threat — and gamble for the Israelis — would be sending ground troops into Gaza.

Addressing a nationally televised news conference Friday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the offensive was progressing well and brushed off a question about a possible cease-fire, suggesting the campaign will continue for some time. He also refused to rule out a ground offensive.

"I will end it when our goals are realized. And the overriding goal is to restore the peace and quiet," Netanyahu said.

Israel began the assault Tuesday in what it said was a response to weeks of heavy rocket fire out of the Hamas-con-

trolled Gaza. It is the heaviest fighting since a similar eight-day campaign in November 2012. The outbreak of violence follows the kidnappings and killings of three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank, and the kidnapping and killing of a Palestinian teenager in an apparent revenge attack.

In four days, Israel has pummeled more than 1,000 targets in Gaza — twice the rate of the 2012 operation. More than 100 Palestinians have been killed, including dozens of civilians, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza.

Adding to Israel's technological edge, the "Iron Dome," a U.S.-funded, Israel-developed rocket defense system, has intercepted more than 100 incoming rockets, preventing any Israeli fatalities so far. Palestinian militants have fired more than 600 rockets, most falling in open areas.

Asked about reaching a possible cease-fire, Netanyahu evaded the question. Instead, he said he has held phone conversations with key allies, including President Barack Obama and the leaders of Germany, Britain, France, Canada and Russia.

He described the talks as positive and said he had told his counterparts that no country would tolerate rocket attacks on its citizens.

"No international pressure will prevent us from acting with all power," he said.

Israel's ambassador to the U.S., Ron Dermer, told reporters that Israel has "strong diplomatic backing for what it's trying to do."

For now, international criticism of Is-

rael appears to be muted. White House spokesman Josh Earnest reaffirmed "Israel's right to defend itself," although he also called for the sides to "restore calm" and to protect innocent civilians.

Britain, another close ally, this week also offered its "staunch support" for Israel's right to self-defense, while Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper "reiterated Canada's steadfast support for Israel," his office said.

But the support has not been wall-to-wall.

France, home to Europe's largest Jewish and Muslim populations, has sent mixed messages. Early this week, President Francois Hollande said Israel should "take all measures" to protect its population. But following some criticism, he later deplored "the numerous Palestinian victims" and said "the escalation must cease."

The European Union also has been measured, condemning the indiscriminate rocket fire from Gaza on Israeli population centers but also deploring the growing number of civilian casualties.

Netanyahu rejected criticism of the death toll among civilians, saying that Israel does everything possible to protect them. He accused Hamas of putting civilians in harm's way by using residential areas for cover.

At least 35 of the dead, and perhaps many more, were civilians, including an 80-year-old man, an 80-year-old woman and 17 children under the age of 13, according to a tally by *The Associated*

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**Washington State Fire**



A firefighter battles the Mills Canyon Fire near Entiat in Chelan County, Wash., on July 10 as hot, dry weather blankets the state and has fire crews ready for action.



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