

Police shooting starts riots

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — A rock and bottle-throwing crowd of hundreds of people set fire to businesses and vehicles after police fatally shot a man during a traffic stop Thursday evening.

Several officers were injured in the riot, which involved more than 200 people. One of the vehicles set on fire was a television news truck.

"It's just utter chaos," said a police dispatcher who refused to be identified. "We have officers injured, quite a few of them."

The shooting happened in a predominantly black neighborhood of south St. Petersburg. Two officers had stopped a car with two people inside about 5:30 p.m., Tampa television station WTVT reported.

The car lurched forward, hitting one officer. The other officers opened fire, striking the driver of the car, the station reported.

The man died before reaching Bayfront Medical Center, a hospital spokesman said.

Firefighters were reportedly unable to reach at least two separate fires because of the threat to their safety.

Clinton, Dole swing down South

Candidates hold rival rallies just miles apart in Republican-based state

LAKE CHARLES, La. (AP) — Shadowboxing in the South, President Clinton said Thursday his differences with Bob Dole don't involve labels or who is "a good person or a bad person," but what's right and wrong for America.

Clinton said his record proves he has the right answers.

"Even though our friends on the other side don't like to admit it, we are better off than we were four years ago," Clinton said in Birmingham, Ala., a state with a Republican pattern in presidential politics.

He drew a crowd that overflowed the sunny quadrangle at Birmingham-Southern College. "Maybe Alabama is going to come along with me," he said as he surveyed the turnout.

Dole campaigned at the Alabama capital in Montgomery, trying to preserve what the polls indicate is a narrow GOP lead.

Later, both he and Clinton were holding rival rallies in Louisiana, the president from an industrial park at Lake Charles and Dole from the heart of New Orleans.

"Shadowboxing," White House press secretary Michael McCurry said, summing up the campaign day.

Clinton, who shuns direct replies to Dole's assaults on his integrity and ethics, said the Nov. 5 election choice is "not a question of who's good and bad. It's a question of what's right and wrong for our people."

Retiring Sen. Howell Heflin took on the character rebuttal for Clinton. He accused the Republicans of concocted libel and vicious slander, but said that in the final phase of the campaign, they are issuing "the groans of anticipated defeat..."

Campaign press secretary Joe Lockhart said the Alabama polls show Dole with a lead of 4 or 5 percentage

points, and Clinton's first presidential visit there was an effort "to try to steal the state."

Clinton also is targeting other states in the South, once considered generally safe territory for a GOP ticket. He was in Florida on Wednesday and plans to return. He campaigns in Georgia on Friday, with Texas and Arizona among other likely stops in the final days of the campaign.

"It's a sign that we're doing well in traditionally Republican areas and Bob Dole is having to defend traditionally Republican areas," Lockhart said.

In conservative country, Clinton recited his proposals on matters like school uniforms, youth curfews, drug testing for driver's licenses for teenagers. He said they are local initiatives that can have a national impact in making schools and children safer.

Perot declines Dole's offer

Reform Party candidate says he'll keep fighting "to the bitter end" in the campaign.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Suddenly handed the campaign spotlight, Ross Perot on Thursday rejected Bob Dole's entreaty to quit the presidential race and said he was in "to the bitter end." Republicans and Democrats labeled Dole's move a desperate gambit.

Perot told reporters he would not discuss details of his Wednesday meeting with Dole campaign manager Scott Reed, calling the session "weird and totally inconsequential."

Perot, in Washington for a National Press Club speech, delivered a scathing indictment of President Clinton's ethics and said Dole and the Republicans also had abused the campaign finance system and traded favors for contributions.

"If you want this corruption stopped, vote for the Reform Party in 1996," Perot said. Later, he added, "Am I in this for the long haul? Yes. Do I intend to campaign to the bitter end? Yes."

Dole authorized Reed's overture to Perot after a week of internal campaign debate over whether there was any way to shake Clinton's lead in national and critical state polls. But the GOP nominee was described by aides as furious that word had leaked of what was supposed to be a secret mission.

"A drowning man will grab onto any log," said Texas Reform Party director Bill Walker. White House press secretary Mike McCurry, asked the administration's reaction, responded, "Mystification."

Campaigning in Florida, Dole admitted he was frustrated by the polls and said testily: "Wake up America! You're about to do yourselves an injustice if you vote for Bill Clinton. ... If you want to see this country go down the hill in the next four years, you vote for Bill Clinton."

U.S. astronaut hopes to vote in orbit aboard Russian space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA is scrambling to get a ballot up to the Russian space station for U.S. astronaut John Blaha, who won't be back on the planet until after Inauguration Day.

The 54-year-old Texan, who arrived at Mir on Sept. 18, missed the opportunity to register for an absentee ballot for the presidential election because he was training in Russia, said NASA spokesman Rob Navias.

NASA is working with local, state and federal voting officials in an attempt to e-mail a ballot to Blaha from Texas by way of Moscow. His response would come back the same way and would be encrypted to ensure a secret ballot.

But it's still up in the air as to whether everything can be worked out by Nov. 5, said Phyllis Taylor, director of federal voting assistance.

"I don't think I'll be able to vote, but I'll tell you this ... President Clinton has done a great job in the past four years," Blaha said Thursday in a space-to-ground news conference. "I didn't vote for him four years ago, but I think he's done a great job and I'm all for him."

"I also think Bob Dole did a great job in the U.S. Senate. So both men are doing very well, and I hope we'll keep the spirit of everybody together and work to try and improve America."

Blaha, the replacement on Mir for record-setting astronaut Shannon Lucid, is supposed to return to Earth in late January on space shuttle Atlantis.

Lucid, meanwhile, told reporters Thursday she has readjusted well to gravity following her record six-month mission and is glad to be back in the office. She has had her fill of junk food; she gorged on the stuff during her first week or so back.

Israelis mourn Rabin one year after death

JERUSALEM (AP) — Mourning the leader who had brought peace within reach, Israelis wept and prayed Thursday for Yitzhak Rabin, marking a year since his assassination by a Jewish extremist.

"We are still swimming in a sea of confusion ... looking for a way out," Rabin's grandson said. "Our world has changed. We are no longer the same family, the same people."

In the Tel Aviv square where Rabin was gunned down, thousands lit memorial candles and placed flowers on the pavement. Some embraced. Others hummed "To cry for you," a ballad that has become an anthem of lost hope, especially for younger Israelis.

"Friend, we miss you," read a banner headline in the Yediot Achronot newspaper.

The prime minister's assassination occurred Nov. 4, but according to the Hebrew calendar, the anniversary falls Thursday.

The sorrow briefly covered up the poisonous divisions in Israel that have deepened since the assassination. But even Thursday's somber ceremonies were not entirely without rancor.

Pointing an accusing finger,

Rabin's son Yuval said hard-line Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu must accept some of the blame for creating the hate-filled political climate that led to Rabin's murder.

Assassin Yigal Amir says he shot Rabin to prevent him from trading land God promised the Jews for peace with the Arabs.

Netanyahu remained silent during the grave-side memorial at the request of the Rabin family. In a speech to parliament, he did not address accusations that he bears some responsibility for inciting the assassination. Two opposition legislators walked out when Netanyahu began to speak.

Throughout the day, TV stations replayed the images that have been etched in the memory of every Israeli: the amateur video showing Amir firing the fatal shots at the end of the Nov. 4 peace rally; the announcement by Rabin's aide that the

prime minister had died on the operating table of a Tel Aviv hospital; the eulogy by Rabin's freckle-faced granddaughter Noa, who had moved the world by speaking of her own personal loss.

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during summer sessions. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling 472-2588. The public has access to the Publications Board. Subscription price is \$55 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, Neb.

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