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A RENEWED VIOLENCE IN MEXICO

Violence this week reached a level that raises doubt about the Mexican Government's capability to keep the Olympic events and the many foreign visitors insulated from its domestic crisis. The long firefight between students and army troops on the night of 2 October left many dead and hundreds wounded, at least doubling the previous casualties in the two-month student campaign.

Several trained observers at the scene reported that the encounter was a premeditated provocation by the students, who apparently were well armed. Student strike leaders, perhaps believing they had already won a significant victory in their reoccupation of the national university after the troops withdrew, pledged to continue the campaign against the government and broadened their demands. They now appear determined to try to force cancellation of the Olympics, which they recognize

as of the utmost importance to the government.

The government, for its part, is so determined to prevent disruption of the games and to protect the visitors that security forces are likely to overreact against student provocations. The potential for further violent incidents is therefore high.

The "martyrs" created during the past week will probably provide a new rallying point for university students in the provinces, where several demonstrations have been staged in support of the Mexico City strikers. All military zone commanders now have authority to move against disorderly students in the provinces without checking with the capital. One student demonstrator was killed by police this week in the state of Veracruz, and further trouble is expected in other states as well as in the capital city.

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