



Angry mob takes state officials hostage in hassle over development

TEPOZTLAN, Mexico — Townspeople armed with wooden clubs, pipes and slingshots took seven hostages in September to protest plans to build a multimillion-dollar golf course. The hostages were released within 24 hours but anger and resentment linger, according to reports in the *Dallas Morning News*.

The tense public protest and the taking of hostages was spurred by the rumor that Morelos state officials were meeting in Tepoztlan

to approve plans to build the Tepozteco Golf Club and 800 homes, a project estimated at \$480 million. The course was designed by Jack Nicklaus.

Tepoztlan is a rural town of 17,000 known for its beauty, colonial charm, old churches and cobblestone streets. It is a popular tourist spot and weekend getaway from Mexico City, a metropolis of more than 20 million people.

Residents rang church bells to alert the town the day of the meeting between developers and

local officials. Hundreds showed up at the town hall. A group of about 400 converged on the house where the state officials were meeting. Police were waiting for them but the townspeople, armed with rocks, knives and sticks, overwhelmed police and the officers fled.

The residents took seven hostages including top state officials Victor Saucedo and Armando Ramirez; Moise Malpica, state transportation director; Socrates Gonzalez, an officer in the Mexi-

can Army; Diana Ortega, the president of the ruling party's Tepoztlan branch; and two others.

The proposed golf course is to be built on ecologically sensitive land that the Mexican government declared communal property in 1929, park land in 1937 and protected land in 1988. Residents say county regulations prohibit construction of golf courses and homes on the land. The Mexican government's National Institute of Ecology opposes the project unless the de-

velopers are able to obtain county permits.

Investors in the project include businessmen who are associated with former Mexican President Luis Echeverria, according to a list of investors that project foes have passed around.

The developers have defended the golf course. They say it will not hurt the environment and will help the region's economy by creating almost 3,000 permanent jobs and 12,000 temporary jobs during construction.

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Families focus of golf course, practice project

WEST BEND, Wis. — The official name is something of a mouthful, but the praise is rolling in for the Arthur Hills-designed Washington County Family Park Golf Course currently under construction in this small city northwest of Milwaukee.

The course, described as a "jewel" by county golf course superintendent Mike Kactro, was made possible in large part by Walter Malzahn, a West Bend resident who wanted a place where families could learn and play the game. Malzahn launched the project in 1991 with a \$300,000 donation that covered the cost of buying most of the land. The \$6 million public course is scheduled to open in April 1997.

The 18-hole layout near the Rubicon River is approximately 7,000 yards long and will offer a three-hole practice course, driving range, short-game practice area and putting green. There will also be an eight-acre public park adjacent to the course as part of the overall plan. The clubhouse is being designed by HRMA of Minneapolis, which has designed over 60 clubhouses in the last 10 years.

Denver Int'l to get golf neighbor

DENVER — Denver International Airport's dubious distinction of being the only major airport in the country without a nearby hotel is about to change and at least one new 18-hole golf course is on the way with it.

Nine hotel projects are either underway or in the planning stages, which will bring the number of available hotel rooms near the airport to 940 at a cost of more than \$50 million.

Two of the planned hotels are in the luxury category: a \$70 million, 500-room Westin Hotel at the airport terminal and a proposed 400-room Scanticon Hotel that could cost as much as \$80 million and include an 18-hole golf course.