

World and Nation

South African leaders discuss future

From Associated Press reports
PRETORIA, South Africa — President F.W. de Klerk told militant anti-apartheid leaders Wednesday he was ready to negotiate on black voting rights, but they demanded more concessions before serious talks begin.

The three-hour meeting with Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and two other church leaders came a day after de Klerk announced his decision to free eight longtime security prisoners, including seven leaders of the outlawed African National Congress.

"I hope today's meeting will be looked on as a milestone on the positive road ahead," de Klerk said after the talks.

But Tutu, the Rev. Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the Rev. Frank Chikane, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, said de Klerk declined to give clear-cut responses to their demands.

"We made it clear we need results,"

Chikane said. "Without results, we can't have negotiations."

The clergymen demanded the lifting of the state of emergency, legalization of the African National Congress and other banned groups, the release of all detainees and political prisoners, the lifting of restrictions on political activity, and clemency for prisoners on Death Row.

"If these things happen, we'll say to our people: Give them (the government) a chance. They are serious," Tutu said.

However, the clergymen said they would press on with calls for tougher economic sanctions against South Africa unless de Klerk complied with their demands.

De Klerk, who became president in August, said the clergymen were reluctant to trust his pledges to negotiate a new, just political system.

"We are really no longer arguing about the fact that all South Africans must have a vote, that all South Afri-

cans must become involved in all decisions affecting their life," he said. "What we must now start talking about is how do we structure that."

De Klerk opposes a one-man, one-vote system and black majority rule. He has not specified what role he envisions for blacks in the national government.

The president said his government planned to consult with a wide range of South African leaders as part of a step-by-step process to negotiate a new constitution.

He declined to say when the eight prisoners would be released, but other government officials said it could be within days.

Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress' best-known imprisoned leader, is not among the eight, and de Klerk said his status was not discussed at Wednesday's meeting.

Mandela is widely expected to be released within the next few months. The decision to release the eight

prisoners unconditionally was widely praised overseas and in South Africa.

The state-run radio, in a commentary, acknowledged that the prisoners have a constituency among South Africa's black majority and need to be part of negotiations.

"Where Walter Sisulu, Oscar Mpheta and others are recognized by some communities in South Africa as their authentic leaders ... there is a need for them to be placed in a position where they can make a contribution to the debate on just how a future South Africa should look," Radio South Africa said.

Sisulu is the most prominent of the eight prisoners. He is a close friend of Mandela and was a major African National Congress leader before the organization was banned in 1960.

Mpheta, 80, is the oldest political prisoner in the country. He was seen Wednesday at Grootte Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, where he has spent most of his five-year prison term.

Latin American presidents consider role of Panama

From Associated Press reports
ICA, Peru — Seven Latin American presidents convened in this desert city Wednesday to discuss the proposed expulsion of Panama from their Group of Eight and support of the Andean nations' struggle with drug traffickers.

Panama's membership was suspended in 1988 after Gen. Manuel Noriega arranged the dismissal of President Eric Delvalle, who had tried to fire Noriega as military commander.

Peru and Venezuela are among the members pushing for Panama's expulsion.

"We cannot permit a country like Panama that scoffs at and ridicules the democratic system to continue with us," said Guillermo Larco Cox, Peru's foreign minister.

Diplomatic sources said Mexico and some others felt expulsion would amount to interference in the internal affairs of another country.

News in Brief

Officials of General Electric Co., which made the engine in 1972, said the discovery of the fan disk of the crippled DC-10 that crashed July 19 while trying to land at the Sioux City airport is important to the investigation into what happened to United Flight 232.

Governor threatens to close plant
WASHINGTON — The Bush administration pressed governors of seven states Wednesday to help avert a possible forced shutdown of the Rocky Flats nuclear arms plant by agreeing to temporarily store part of its radioactive waste next year.

Most of the seven — Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee and Washington — had indicated earlier this week they would not accept any of the waste, which contains plutonium that remains radioactive for 240,000 years.

The administration says closing Rocky Flats would amount to unilateral nuclear disarmament since it is the sole maker of plutonium triggers for warheads.

Colorado Gov. Roy Romer has vowed to shut down Rocky Flats, which is situated 16 miles from Denver, if waste stored in plant buildings exceeds 1,600 cubic yards. The Energy Department estimates that limit will be topped by March 1.

House OKs some federally paid abortions

From Associated Press reports
WASHINGTON — The House agreed Wednesday to allow federally paid abortions for poor women who are victims of rape or incest, reversing nearly a decade of more restrictive votes and inviting a veto from President Bush.

By a 216-206 vote, the House rejected the language it has kept in the law since 1981 and instead endorsed a more liberal provision already passed by the Senate. An effort by conserva-

tives to reverse the vote then failed, 212-207.

Federal aid for abortions, available under Medicaid, is now limited to poor women whose lives have been endangered by a pregnancy.

Wednesday's vote came three months after a Supreme Court ruling giving states greater powers to restrict abortions. Lawmakers and activists who say women have a right to an abortion have argued that that ruling spurred

supporters of their position to make their views known to their legislators.

"The political momentum on this issue is so strong now that if President Bush vetoes this, he'd be making a big mistake," said Rep. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who led the fight for the eased limitations.

But Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., who has led the anti-abortion fight in the House for years, said, "I couldn't char-

acterize it any other way than as a defeat for the unborn. I was surprised, upset and disappointed."

The provision adopted by the House would allow Medicaid payments for abortions when the mother's life is in jeopardy or when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. Since 1981 — and as recently as Aug. 2 — the House has voted for language limiting federal aid to abortions only in cases in which the woman's life was in danger.

East German Communist Party officials fear pending labor woes

From Associated Press reports
BERLIN — High Communist Party officials believe labor trouble is ahead in East Germany and have demanded a report on the "critical situation" from Erich Honecker, the nation's 77-year-old leader, party sources said Wednesday.

East Germany's chief ideologist, Kurt Hager, reversed himself and called for reform to curb growing unrest, but the Communist Party said strengthening communism is the only solution to the nation's problems.

There have been conflicting signs recently as to whether the Honecker regime will yield to demands for more

democracy or cling to the orthodox party line that has caused tens of thousands of East Germans to leave the country.

The demand for a report, made by party members at a meeting Tuesday of the policy-making Politburo, suggests Honecker may face an internal challenge to his 18-year leadership. The sources disclosed it soon after the radio broadcast Hager's remarks.

Party sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said some members of the 163-seat Central Committee were invited to the meeting of the Politburo, which has 21 members. The sources said the meeting continued late Wednes-

day.

They said the complaining officials told Honecker "there are increasing signs of coming strikes in the factories" and "there is no time to waste."

Honecker was told some workers already were refusing to work overtime and called on the government to address the "increasingly pressing questions" of the nation's people, the sources reported. He was asked to report by the end of the week, they said.

Politburo member Egon Krenz was responsible for the restraint shown by security forces during Monday's pro-democracy demonstrations in Leipzig, East Berlin and Dresden, the sources

said. Krenz often is mentioned as a successor to Honecker.

Late Wednesday, the official news agency ADN said Honecker had postponed a visit to Denmark scheduled for Oct. 25-26. No reason was given.

Hager, one of the hierarchy's most influential figures, recommended a greater role for the people in solving national problems, a more open society and reform of the state-controlled news media. He did not suggest specific actions.

Hager, also 77, made the recommendations in an interview Saturday with the Soviet weekly newspaper Moscow News while street protests were under

way and Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev was visiting East Germany.

State radio read his comments Wednesday. Earlier in the day, the party newspaper Neues Deutschland vigorously defended the country's communist system.

"Our task in the immediate future is to come up with a clear concept for the development of necessary changes," said Hager, who has been known as a hard-liner opposed to the Gorbachev-style reforms in Eastern Europe.

"That will require, above all, the active involvement of the people in solving important problems and a new policy of public information. A freer

and broader discussion is developing in the press."

Virtually all news media are under strict official control.

Referring to the mass exodus, mostly of skilled young people, Hager said, "All of the obstacles have to be cleared away that have apparently prevented our youth from developing their full potential."

He said the government should respond to the "needs and mood" of the people.

During his two-day visit last week for East Germany's 40th anniversary, Gorbachev urged Honecker to make democratic reforms.

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