The Daily Tar Heel

Putin promises pension hike President eyes quick actions THE ASSOCIATED PRESS such decisions, not to worsen the The Kremlin has described the instructed the government to MOSCOW - President Vladimir position of those who need the ocial reform as a long-overdue

Putin, seeking to assuage rising public anger, promised a moderate increase in pensions and blamed federal and local officials Monday for failing to properly implement Kremlin reforms that cut off benefits to millions of Russians.

Putin's first public comments since the unpopular change took effect came hours after lines of police blocked hundreds of protesters from retaking a major intersection in central St. Petersburg that thousands of pensioners had occupied over the weekend, bringing traffic to a halt. Demonstrators blocked major avenues and key highways in other cities.

The Cabinet and the regions have failed to fully implement the task we had discussed: in making

state's help," a somber-looking Putin told Cabinet members in a partially televised session. A law that gives retirees, the dis-

abled, war veterans and others cash stipends instead of benefits such as free medicine and public transpor-tation took effect Jan. 1, sparking the largest uproar in Putin's five years in power.

Large protests have spread to numerous cities across Russia's 11 time zones, including Putin's hometown, St. Petersburg. Officials said the reform affects about 40 million of Russia's 144 million people. Protesters say new monthly pay

ments of about \$10 are worth much less than the benefits, forcing them to have to choose between food, transportation and medicine.

effort to streamline and modernize the economy, but many commentators predict now that Putin may respond to the crisis by firing government ministers.

Putin defended the reform, say ing its general concept was right and that the state can't afford to maintain the existing unwieldy and inefficient social support system.

Without naming his predeces-sor, Boris Yeltsin, Putin blamed Yeltsin's government for increasing the number of people eligible for social benefits in the 1990s, while lacking the funds to deliver. Wages and pensions were months and even years overdue, he said.

Putin supported decisions by some local officials to issue sub-sidized travel passes and also

increase the average monthly pen-sion by at least \$7.14 instead of the planned \$3.57 — and to do it March 1 instead of April 1. Health and Social Development Minister Mikhail Zurabov said pensions may be increased by \$8.57.

Protesters across Russia have demanded more, saying an average monthly pension, which is about \$80, can't cover the rising living costs.

From Khabarovsk in the Far East to Penza and Vologda in western Russia, thousands of retirees again took to the streets Monday. In St. Petersburg, the mostly elder-ly demonstrators kept from blocking the intersection remained on the sidewalks, shouting "Shame!" and "Down with Putin!" and beat-

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON – President Bush said Monday he has "a big agenda in mind" for his second term that begins this week and

that four years is going to be a short time to meet all his goals. "We got to get moving and get some things done before - before people kind of write me off," Bush

Congress will work together to

pass his legislation. Unity will be

the most important theme of his

"I have a responsibility to try to

He said he'll announce his "big

agenda" at the State of the Union

address in two weeks, but it will

unite this country to achieve big things for all Americans," Bush

with CBS, ABC and NBC.

told CBS News in an interview. He said he hopes that with his final election behind him, Republicans and Democrats in inaugural address on Thursday, he said as he taped separate interviews ing spoons against saucepans.

Convicted killer prepares to seek parole

RALEIGH — Former Army doc-tor Jeffrey MacDonald, convicted 25 years ago of the stabbing deaths of his pregnant wife and two young daughters, will seek parole but not if he has to admit remorse, one of his attorneys said Monday.

MacDonald, eligible for parole since 1991, has declined to seek his freedom because he said he would have to admit guilt for the slayings at the family's Fort Bragg apartment Feb. 17, 1970. But MacDonald remarried a few years ago and has more reasons to want a life outside of prison, said his attorney, Tim Junkin of Potomac, Md.

vindicate himself," Junkin said in a life terms for the slayings of his phone interview. "He knows in his wife, Colette, 26, and daughters heart he's innocent and will always insist on that."

Junkin said he didn't know when the request was filed with the U.S. Commission and said he Parole wouldn't disclose when or where the hearing would be held.

Newsweek, which first reported the parole request in its issue this week, said the hearing would be held in February. That story quoted Christina Masewicz, a retired nurse who has written a book about the case and who obtained a federal document confirming the hearing.

MacDonald, 61, is being held at the federal prison in Cumberland, "He doesn't have any kind of change of heart. He's going to try to

wife, Colette, 26, and daughters Kimberley, 6, and Kristen, 2. He married a long-time friend, Kathryn

Kurichh, in August 2002. "He has a fairly new wife. He has a lot of reasons to live for if he could get out of prison," Junkin said. We have urged him to consider all his options as long as they're not

inconsistent with his quest to prove his innocence.' Junkin said he didn't believe

planned to attend the parole hearing to testify against MacDonald.

told ABC News. "I will say that in my inaugural address. I'm looking forward to the challenge." ever to walk the streets again," said Stevenson, 65, who lives outside

New York City. MacDonald was assigned to reflect his campaign promises. Special Forces at the time his fam-ily was slain. He claimed that the Those include overhauling Social Security and the legal liability sys-tem; improving the tax code, school killers stabbed and clubbed his family to death while one chanted, standards and the budget process; and making health care accessible

"Acid is groovy. Kill the pigs." The Army said it didn't have enough evidence to try MacDonald, to more Americans. Before the State of the Union, and he went free for years. A fed-eral court jury in Raleigh convicted Iraqis will hold the first elections for their new government. Although MacDonald of the killings in 1979 after the U.S. Justice Department

cess. "Having the vote is a victory for those of us who love freedom," Bush told NBC Nightly News.

Besides Bush's swearing in on Thursday, the inaugural week festivities include a salute to America's military and several lavish balls. Bush said he doesn't think all the pomp is excessive despite the war and last month's devastating tsunami.

Bush said it's important to cele-brate a "peaceful transfer of power" and that he suspects inaugura-tion guests have been generous in donating to tsunami victims. "You can be equally concerned about our troops in Iraq and those who suffered at the tsunamis with celebrating democracy," he told CBS.

The president opened his inau-gural week Monday with a salute to outgoing Secretary of State Colin Powell and the late Martin Luther King Jr. "More than four years ago when

I needed a secretary of state, I knew what I was looking for," the presi-dent said. "I wanted someone who believed deeply in the values of our country and could share them with the world, a person of wisdom and decency, a leader who could bring out the best in people. I found all this and more in Colin Powell."

Powell was often seen as out of step ideologically with other senior officials in Bush's administration but has remained the most popular administration official in poll after poll. He announced his resignation after Bush was re-elected.

that MacDonald had to admit guilt to be paroled. Colette MacDonald's brother, Bob Stevenson, said Monday he

"I don't want Jeffrey MacDonald

turnout is not expected to be high as voters face violence at the polls, Bush said the election itself is a sucreopened the case. 3 ъ 1 Servers **Hosts/Hostesses** For our DURHAM, NC Location We're looking for experienced SERVERS and HOSTS/HOSTESSES like you! We offer great pay and benefits along with exciting advancement opportunities. Interested candidates, please visit us daily, 2pm - 4pm at: 6911 Fayetteville Road Suite 102, Durham, NC 27713 or call: (919) 572-1210 **EASTERN FEDERAL** easternfederal.com Weaver Dairy at Airport Rd. 933-8600 RACING STRIPES* ISP Daily 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30 COACH CARTER* 101 Daily 12:35, 3:25, 7:00, 9:50 EOE **MONTANA GRILL** IN GOOD COMPANY* EGB Daily 1:00, 3:30, 7:20, 9:40 MEET THE FOCKERS IGH Daily 12:00, 2:30, 4:55, 7:20, WHITE NOISE* ICHI Daily 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 7:25, 9:45 www.tedsmontanagrill.com M. MARINA HALFMAN **Classified Advertising** The Daily Tar Heel **For Rent** Rooms **Travel/Vacation** Travel/Vactation LARGE FURNISHED ROOM in home o Private entrance, bath. Utilities, cable Microwave and refrigerator. \$435/mo deposit. 919-933-9493 or Glazerbabe MILL CREEK CONDO 4BR/2BA all appli cluding W/D and 65" widescreen TV. Pool/ STSTRAVEL.COM

Abbas takes 1st step against attacks

planned, for talks with two militant groups, Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Abbas' victory in the Jan. 9 elec-tion for president of the Palestinian

Authority raised hopes for a break-through in Mideast peacemaking. But the Karni attack, two days

before Abbas was sworn in, swept away Israeli goodwill, and Israeli

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon sus-pended contacts with Abbas.

Secretary of State Colin Powell urged Abbas in a phone

call Sunday to rein in the armed

groups, Palestinian and U.S. offi-cials said. Powell "emphasized the

critical need to take action to stop

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ELEKTRA PG13 12:45-3:00-5:15-7:30-9:45

MEET THE FOCKERS PG13 1:15-4:00-7:00-9:40

RAMALLAH -Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, under growing pressure to rein in militants, ordered his security forces Monday to prevent attacks on Israel and investigate a deadly shooting of Israeli civilians last week.

But Palestinian security officials were short on details about possible actions against armed groups, and a spokesman for Hamas said his extremist group would continue attacks.

The order by Abbas, approved by his Cabinet, was the Palestinian leadership's first step against militants since six Israelis were slain Thursday at the Karni crossing

between Israel and the Gaza Strip. "A decision was taken that we will handle our obligation to stop violence against Israelis anywhere, Cabinet minister Saeb Erekat said.

While Israel's government cau-tiously welcomed the announcement, it remained unclear how far Abbas was willing to go. He has insisted he will use persuasion, not force, to get militants to halt vio-

Palestinian ministers said Abbas planned to travel to Gaza on

The Daily Tar Heel

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Tuesday, a day earlier than initially Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets," U.S. Consulate spokesman Chuck Hunter said.

Israeli soldiers raided several areas in Gaza over the weekend to halt rocket fire on Israeli settlements and border towns, with-drawing early Monday after clashes that killed 16 Palestinians, including seven civilians.

Israel decided to hold off on a major military offensive in Gaza to give Abbas more time to act against militants, a senior government official said Monday.

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	Personals	
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