

## World and Nation

## Leader of East Germany resigns

From Associated Press reports

BERLIN — Hard-line East German leader Erich Honecker, who oversaw the building of the Berlin Wall, stepped down Wednesday and was replaced by a younger Communist Party loyalist amid growing unrest and calls for democratic reform.

Two other ruling Politburo members also lost their jobs in a shake-up during a meeting of the Communist Party Central Committee, but changes from Honecker's course were unlikely.

Communist Party leaders have made it clear they will resist pro-democracy movements like those under way in Warsaw Pact allies Poland and Hungary, which on Wednesday approved constitutional amendments creating a democratic political system.

Tens of thousands of East Germans have fled the country in recent months, turning their backs on the rigid authoritarian system, and thousands of citizens have staged massive demonstra-

tions in recent weeks.

Honecker's replacement, 52-year-old Egon Krenz, has a reputation as a hard-liner opposed to the growing pro-democracy movement. The state-run news agency ADN said Krenz would take over as Communist Party chief, head of state and head of the military, replacing his mentor in all three roles.

The 77-year-old Honecker, who was reported ill following a gall bladder operation in August, said he was resigning for health reasons.

"My health no longer allows me to bring the energy to bear that the fate of our party and people requires today and in the future," he said in a statement carried by ADN.

Krenz, the youngest member of the Politburo, is known as a tough backer of the country's orthodox communist structure. He had been in charge of internal security issues and government-run youth organizations while being groomed as Honecker's successor.

"I told the Central Committee that I realize this is a difficult task that I have taken over," Krenz told East German television after his appointment. "In this very complicated time there is much work before us."

During a recent visit to China, Krenz led an East German delegation that expressed support for the way Chinese leaders handled pro-democracy protests in June. The protests were crushed when Chinese soldiers moved in with tanks and guns, and hundreds of people were killed.

However, Communist Party sources have said it was Krenz's decision to ask East German police to stop attacking pro-democracy demonstrators earlier this month in East Berlin and Dresden.

The demonstrations were the largest in the nation's 40-year history.

In West Germany, the mass-circulation newspaper Bild reported that Krenz was considering loosening travel restrictions for East Germans.

The difficulty of getting permission to travel outside the country has been one of the main complaints among citizens.

East German television said Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who has sponsored many of the reforms sweeping Eastern Europe, congratulated Krenz on his appointment.

President Bush held out the prospect of improved relations with East Germany but suggested it was "way too early" to say whether the changes could pave the way.

The two other Politburo members who lost their jobs figure heavily in recent internal criticism.

Joachim Herrmann, 60, ran the country's news media as a vehicle for pro-government propaganda and for barbed attacks on the "imperialist" West. In recent days, the news media have been printing more criticism in an attempt at openness.

## EPA warns homeowners against radon gas dangers

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — Tests in eight states by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) show surprisingly widespread concentrations of cancerous radon gas, including almost three of every four homes tested in Iowa, the agency said Wednesday.

The latest results prompted EPA Administrator William Reilly to repeat his agency's call for every homeowner to test for radon.

Radon is a colorless, odorless and radioactive gas produced by the decay of uranium in all soil and rocks. Seeping from the ground and concentrating in houses, radon has been blamed for up to 20,000 of the nation's more than 130,000 annual lung cancer deaths.

"Radon is one of the most serious environmental health problems today. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer (after smoking) in this country," Reilly said at a news conference.

He said radon tests have been conducted in 37,000 homes in 25 states during the past two years and about one-fourth showed unhealthy radon.

## Hit me with your best shot

HOUSTON — No one can agree on whose idea it was, but a defense attorney has agreed to let the plaintiffs in a lawsuit give him a beating rather than ask his client to pay a \$50,000 settlement.

"I would love to hit him," said Anna Manz of Cincinnati, whose daughter sued over her husband's death in a construction accident.

Lawyer Tom Alexander, who represents Derr Construction Co. of Euless, Texas, agreed to allow Mrs. Manz, her daughter, Michelle Parks and their attorneys take their best shots at him.

"The clients are very pleased," said Alexander. "He likes to have a lawyer, so to speak, who will go to the mat for him."

## News in Brief

Derr Construction was one of several defendants in a wrongful death case brought by Mrs. Parks on behalf of her husband, Billy Parks, 29, a foreman who was killed in a January 1987 construction fall in Houston.

## Mixed reviews on study

WINSTON-SALEM — Too few septic tank sites across North Carolina were sampled recently to conclude there is a widespread threat to groundwater, state officials say, but environmentalists argue the results are shocking.

The N.C. Groundwater Section, in a 34-page analysis of samples taken from five regions, concludes: "There is no question that trace organic compounds are present in the groundwater beneath most of the sites. In some cases ... these compounds represent a significant health threat."

In one of the first surveys that the state has made of some of the 1,473 large septic-tank systems in use, groundwater contamination turned up at all five sites tested: two elementary schools, a car wash, a funeral home and a furniture plant.

The sites are in Iredell, Chatham, Wayne, Henderson and Onslow counties.

"It's a little bit dangerous to try to draw conclusions," Perry Nelson, the chief of the section, told the Winston-Salem Journal on Tuesday. "We're really just scratching the surface, and we need to go back and look at it further."

But Chip Hughes, a researcher for the Clean Water Fund of North Carolina Inc., said that the results are shocking.

"We just thought we had a limited problem, but when you look at this study it shows that the problem is more widespread and potentially troublesome than we had believed."

## Former ANC prisoners recall experiences

From Associated Press reports

SOWETO, South Africa — Walter Sisulu was mocked by guards, strip-searched and forced to break rocks in a quarry during 26 years in prison, but news of the struggle against apartheid kept him from despair.

"I never had the feeling I was at the lowest," the 77-year-old African National Congress (ANC) leader said Wednesday. "There were moments I felt very much in high spirits ... every time there was a movement, a strike" on the outside.

Sisulu and two ANC colleagues, Elias Motsoaledi and Ahmed Kathrada, recalled prison life during an interview at a Soweto church with American journalists.

They and senior ANC leader Nelson Mandela were convicted of planning anti-government sabotage and sentenced to life terms in 1964. Mandela remains in prison, but Sisulu, Motsoaledi, Kathrada and two others sentenced

with them were among eight long-term political prisoners freed unconditionally Sunday.

The ANC is the biggest group fighting white domination in South Africa.

After their convictions, the ANC leaders were sent to a maximum-security prison on Robben Island, off Cape Town.

"At the early stages, they (guards) went out of their way, as they openly stated to us, to crush us, to break our morale," said Kathrada, 60. "They tried to instill into our minds that we would be forgotten factors in a few years' time."

He recalled a jailer with a swastika tattoo who said, "I've come to fight a war."

"We started off chopping stones, breaking big stones into small stones and small stones into smaller stones," Kathrada said. "In 1965, we started working at a lime quarry, with picks and shovels."

That continued for 10 years.

He and other prisoners of Indian descent, and those of mixed race, initially were treated better than black prisoners, Kathrada said. Sisulu and other blacks were forced to wear short pants even in winter, were not provided with socks and were not given bread, he told reporters.

Sisulu said: "We used to come back from work on very cold days — no hot water. We stripped naked outside, then passed through a cold shower of sea water."

At one stage, Sisulu was deprived of solid food for three days and Mandela for six because prison authorities decided they had not worked hard enough.

In May 1971, pro-independence guerrillas from Namibia were transferred to Robben Island and clashed with guards, Kathrada said.

"We embarked on a hunger strike and they decided to punish us further. They came one night, many of them

very drunk, and they stripped us all naked. We faced the wall. This was a simple question of wanting to humiliate and punish us."

An older prisoner, Govan Mbeki, almost suffered a heart attack, Kathrada said, but the hunger strike continued.

"We were meeting the oppressor at close hand. It helped to keep us united. What kept our morale up was our confidence in our beliefs ... confidence that we are going to triumph sooner or later. Of that we had no doubt at any stage."

Pressure by prisoners eventually ended the discrimination between racial groups and won other concessions, including permission to study and engage in sports, Kathrada said. They were allowed newspapers in 1980 and radio and television in 1986.

He expressed gratitude to the International Red Cross and to Helen Suzman, a retired opposition member of Parliament, for campaigning on behalf of the prisoners.

## Hungary ends one-party communist rule, adopts amendments

From Associated Press reports

BUDAPEST, Hungary — In the glare of television lights, Parliament changed the country's communist name and created a democratic system Wednesday by adopting key constitutional amendments.

Amendments formally ending one-party domination in Hungary, regulating free elections by next summer and creating the office of state president won overwhelming approval at the nationally televised session of Parliament.

The country was renamed the Republic of Hungary. Like other Soviet bloc nations, it had been known as a

"people's republic" since 1949.

But the chamber stalled on one key move toward democracy, postponing a decision on opposition calls for a referendum on when to elect the head of state. Government leaders want the election next month, but opposition leaders say it's too soon.

Nonetheless, speaker of Parliament Matyas Szuecs, who takes over as acting president until a new head of state is elected, proclaimed Wednesday a historic day for Hungary.

"A parliamentary democracy and a legal state is being built in Hungary on the ruins of a dictatorship of sorts," Szuecs reportedly told the Yugoslav

news agency Tanjug.

The voting came on the heels of another landmark decision — the dissolution of the Communist Party and its replacement by the Hungarian Socialist Party, which vows commitment to a democratic system while continuing for the moment to dominate national politics.

Parliament also began discussion of a law that will regulate the operation and finances of political parties in the first multi-party elections since 1947.

Among the 94 modifications were amendments eliminating all references to the leading role of the dissolved Communist Party.

"Political parties may be freely established and may freely function," the amendment declared.

An entirely new constitution is to be drawn up and adopted by the new Parliament after the national elections, but Justice Minister Kalman Kulcsar has said the amendments were necessary to make next year's elections legal.

The new post of president of the republic replaces the 21-man collective presidency that had broad powers, including acting for Parliament when it was not sitting, as well as overruling parliamentary decisions.

Once the amendments take effect this month, the presidential council will

be dissolved and Szuecs will assume its powers until a president is elected.

The new president will be the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, will be authorized to call national and regional elections and may initiate a referendum.

The president may also dissolve Parliament if it fails to approve a new government or votes for no-confidence in the government four times in one year.

The new president may be stripped of his office if he knowingly violates the constitution or other laws and may not be a leader of any political party.

Before the key votes, Premier Miklos

Nemeth called an emergency Cabinet meeting to discuss an opposition petition to postpone the election to the new state presidency, tentatively scheduled for Nov. 26, until after next year's parliamentary elections.

Some opposition parties assert they have no time or resources to organize against Socialist Party candidate Imre Pozsgay. Banking on an overall opposition majority after next year's elections, they want the president to be appointed by the new Parliament.

Deputies backed Nemeth when he suggested to Parliament that committees should sort out the petition problem later.

## Space shuttle completes successful launch after protests against probe

From Associated Press reports

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Space shuttle Atlantis finally lifted off Wednesday on its controversial mission to send the nuclear-powered Galileo probe to Jupiter for the closest look yet at the colossus of the solar system.

"You looked marvelous going up," Mission Control told commander Don Williams as the winged spacecraft reached orbit after two launch post-

ponements.

"I feel a lot better," said Williams. The Galileo's troubles — including money problems over the years and recent protests over its nuclear power supply — were left behind, and the probe was ready to begin its six-year, 2.4 billion-mile roundabout journey to Jupiter.

The astronauts were to release the probe from Atlantis' cargo bay later in

the day. The shuttle circled Earth at an altitude of 184 miles.

Although concern over the Galileo's 49.4-pound plutonium power supply was argued in court, it drew no protesters to the Kennedy Space Center on launch day. Environmentalists had argued that a Challenger-like accident could scatter deadly plutonium-238 over Florida.

Nothing like that happened Wednesday,

and even the weather cooperated. Clouds and rain threatened to halt the launch until the last minutes of the countdown, but the clouds suddenly dissipated and the shuttle darted into a bright blue sky, trailing a 700-foot geyser of fire.

The 132-ton Atlantis has a crew of five for the mission that ends Monday with a landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California at 2:38 p.m. EDT.

The \$1.5 billion mission already was seven years behind schedule when Atlantis was grounded by rain at the last minute Tuesday and by a faulty engine computer last week.

"It feels great," said NASA chief scientist Lennard Fisk after lift-off. "It's been a long time."

Williams' crew consists of pilot Mike McCulley and mission specialists Ellen Baker, Franklin Chang-Diaz and Shan-

non Lucid.

The lift-off was the start of a voyage that will take the probe on a looping path past Venus in February, back to within 620 miles of Earth in December 1990 and past Earth again at a 200-mile altitude two years later. The craft will arrive at Jupiter in December 1995 for a two-year orbit.

As part of the mission, a robot will separate from the Galileo spacecraft and plunge through Jupiter's gaseous atmosphere.

Scientists hope to gain insight into the birth of the solar system by studying Jupiter, which holds original material from that event 14 billion years ago. The planet's radius is 11 times that of Earth and its mass 318 times greater.

The mission originally was to have started in 1982, but money ran out. Then the Challenger explosion in January 1986 delayed all shuttle flights for three years and prompted a change in the rocket to propel Galileo.

The mission originally was budgeted at \$425 million. It will climb to \$1.9 billion by the time Galileo finishes a 10-orbit trip around Jupiter in 1997.

The sweeps past Earth and Venus will take advantage of the planets' gravity to accelerate the spacecraft to the proper speed to reach its distant target. Small on-board motors will fine-tune the flight path.

## For the Record

In the caption accompanying Wednesday's article, "Mould delivers solid solo show," the band pictured was incorrectly identified. The band was 54.40.

Also, in Wednesday's article, "Ani-

mal rights pamphlet targets UNC lab reform," a quote by Andrew Peterson saying "No worthwhile research is coming out of it," was meant to refer to a specific experiment, not to animal research as a whole. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the errors.



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