

World and Nation

Social Security

New program will re-classify the physically disabled

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Still smarting from the bruising it took in its first attempt, the government said Thursday it will resume culling Social Security disability rolls of people who have become physically able to hold jobs.

But it said it will use a scalpel, not a meat cleaver, in its new approach to evaluating the medical condition of some 2.6 million people now classified as physically disabled and unable to work. The program begins next month.

New federal regulations will require proof of medical improvement before disability benefit checks can be cut off. And Social Security says more thorough reviews coupled with a personal approach, including face-to-face interviews, should ease the trauma for disabled people worried about their benefits.

Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret M. Heckler said the

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new procedures were developed after months of review and consultation with affected groups who were sharply critical of the first attempt at reviewing the disability rolls.

Congress first ordered the review in 1980 after the General Accounting Office estimated that more than 500,000 people receiving disability checks were physically capable of holding jobs.

HHS began the job in 1981, but it soon was engulfed by protests that truly disabled people were being chopped from the rolls unfairly.

Of the first 1.2 million people reviewed, 491,000 were ordered cut off from benefits. Appeals restored

benefits to about 291,000 of those people. Lawsuits involving some 69,000 cases are pending.

Lobbying groups for beneficiaries, and their congressional supporters, said that people were being dropped from the rolls after only a cursory review of medical records, often without an opportunity to argue their case and in some cases without being allowed to present additional medical documents.

In April 1984, after trying unsuccessfully to quell the uproar through internal reforms, Heckler suspended the review and sought new standards from Congress.

Legislators responded with a new

law that requires, with a few exceptions, that medical improvement be documented before any person taken off the disability rolls.

The exceptions include those whose medical conditions have improved, but whose ability to work is established, such as through completion of vocational training through actually holding jobs. It also includes cases of fraud or to follow prescribed treatment would restore his or her ability to work.

Social Security Administration spokesman James M. Brown said officials want to prevent past errors from recurring.

"Some mistakes were made," he said. "People were taken off rolls who should not have been taken off. We do not deny that." But he said the new process is "going to be fair. It's going to be compassionate."

In January, about 55,000 people will go out asking people to return to their local Social Security office to begin the review, he said.

Ship stowaway scheduled for hearing on political asylum

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — A Palestinian stowaway who twice jumped ship, the second time wearing handcuffs as he dived into swirling river waters Thursday morning, has told immigration authorities that he is seeking political asylum.

Mohamad Marie, 20, a Palestinian born in Syria who had sneaked aboard the ship in the Dutch port of Rotterdam, was brought to New Orleans later in the day for an immigration hearing.

The double escape recalled the incident of Miroslav Medvid, a 29-year-old Ukrainian sailor who jumped off a Soviet freighter here in October. Medvid twice tried to escape, but later said that he chose to return home and the ship sailed with him aboard despite strong protests in Congress.

Marie, however, had claimed he wanted to go to Canada after getting off the ship Monday and did not raise the asylum issue until Thursday, said Darrell Goff, a Border Patrol agent in Baton Rouge.

Agents said Marie dived off the Liberian-registered ship Enard Hope about 3:15 a.m. Thursday and was rescued from the river near Baton Rouge.

The freighter, loaded with coal, left port without Marie, en route to

the West Coast and Japan, the freighter's U.S. shipping agent said.

The Border Patrol said it was notified Sunday in Baton Rouge that the ship had a stowaway. That day an immigration inspector boarded the ship, interviewed Marie and ordered that he be kept aboard, said Goff, who described it as a routine case.

On Monday, Marie slipped aboard a water taxi and made it to shore, Goff said.

William Worley, deputy chief of the Border Patrol in New Orleans, said Marie was apprehended and turned over to the ship's agents, who arranged to fly him to Syria.

Marie got as far as Atlanta, Worley said, but was turned back because he made a commotion and did not have a visa to enter Germany, a stop-over. He was then returned to Louisiana and put back on the ship by the agent, Worley said.

"The only request he made was to go to Canada," Goff said. However, he didn't have a visa to enter Canada, where his father lives.

Goff said Marie told authorities his father has enemies in Syria and that he feared harm if he returned.

He was returned to the ship Wednesday.

Thursday morning, he jumped ship and was found bobbing in a strong current in the morning dark-

ness, said Eric Guidry, owner of Tri-G Marine Supply Co. Inc.

"He was handcuffed and they picked him up about a mile below the ship," Guidry said.

"He was still trying to hold his head up above the water when my crewboat went over and picked him up. . . . He was probably an expert swimmer," Guidry said.

In Cleveland, meanwhile, a Polish sailor who has asked for asylum was assured of support by Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio.

"There is a strong feeling, I think, throughout the country that if a young man wants to remain in the United States under these circumstances and wants political asylum, that we ought to make every effort to see that it's possible," Metzenbaum said Wednesday.

Leszek Kapsa, 27, a cook on the freighter Ziemia Lubelska, decided to defect after talking to a visitor on the ship, a Polish citizen who lives in Cleveland and offered to let Kapsa stay with him, said the Rev. Marian M. Kencik of Transfiguration Church.

The visitor, who did not want to be identified because he is also seeking asylum, contacted Kencik and the priest called the senator.

Chicken makes menu at Buckley gala

Associated Press

NEW YORK — William F. Buckley Jr. invited 700 of his friends, including President Reagan and Charlton Heston, to share chicken potpie Thursday and celebrate the 30th anniversary of the National Review, the conservative magazine he founded.

The guest list included journalist Mike Wallace, CIA Director William Casey, actor Tom Selleck and former ambassador Clare Boothe Luce. Heston was to serve as master of ceremonies and Reagan was to give a 10-minute speech.

Musical entertainment at the

Plaza Hotel was to range from jazz piano to Bach, Handel and Scarlatti played on the harpsichord — although not by Buckley, who is accomplished on the instrument.

Other speakers were to include Rep. Jack Kemp, R-N.Y.; William Rusher, publisher of the National Review; conservative columnist George Will; and Priscilla Buckley, sister of the founder and the magazine's managing editor who is retiring at year's end, said spokeswoman Dorothy McCartney.

Buckley, the final speaker, founded the National Review in 1955 with \$130,000 of his own money and private contributions.

Alexander's assistant, Cecilia

In the first issue, Buckley proclaimed that the magazine "stands athwart history yelling Stop."

Buckley, who has been described as "the Renaissance man of the Right," is host of PBS-TV's "Firing Line," and has written numerous books, including a series of spy novels. He served briefly in the CIA after graduating from Yale University, but said he found it boring.

McCartney described the dinner's main course as "chicken potpie a la Pat and Mr. Alexander," and said it was a special recipe created by Buckley's wife, Pat, and S. Alexander, the Plaza's director of catering.

Alexander's assistant, Cecilia

3 killed in refinery explosion

Associated Press

LAKE CHARLES, La. — An explosion and flash fire in a refinery pressor at a Citgo Oil refinery killed three workers who were trying to repair it Thursday.

A fourth employee suffered minor injuries in the blast at refinery on La. 108 just west of Sulphur.

The cause of the explosion in a hydrotreater unit at the plant is still under investigation, said Kent Young, a Citgo spokesman in Oklahoma City.

The four employees — two machinists and a unit operator — were repairing a compressor when the explosion occurred at 11:30 a.m., he said.

Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's spokesman John Scott Dwyer said the four men "were working on this unit when it exploded in a flash fire" ignited.

"It ignited," Doyle said. "Some type of gas substance in the area where they were working on the compressor and it ignited."

Doyle said the injured man was treated at the scene.

"There's no problem with any other leakage, it's all closed," Doyle said.

Young said the fire did not spread beyond the compressor and the hydrotreater unit, which was removing impurities from kerosene at the time. Operations in the remainder of the refinery were not affected, he said.

Vic Carleton, director of engineering at the plant, said equipment damage was minor and "the fire was extinguished quickly."

Lyons, described it as full of breasts "in a rich supreme sauce with artichoke hearts, mushrooms, leeks, baby carrots and green beans."

Guests paid \$300 per couple, \$175 for the unattached.

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Witnesses say police disrupted vigils

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Police using whips and tear gas broke up candlelight vigils for imprisoned anti-apartheid activists and dispersed thousands of mourners at a black girl's funeral, witnesses said Thursday.

National police headquarters in Pretoria reported stone-throwing and gasoline bombings late Wednesday and early Thursday in most of the sprawling mixed-race townships east of Cape Town.

A spokesman denied charges that riot patrols broke up the candlelight services Wednesday night without provocation. He said the gatherings were illegal and that police moved in after their warnings were ignored.

Black activist Winnie Mandela, wife of jailed guerrilla leader Nelson Mandela, entered a clinic in Johannesburg for a stay of several days because of exhaustion, a family source said.

Mandela, 50, had been through several tense weeks after her husband, 67, had prostate surgery and persistent rumors spread of his impending release after more than two decades in prison.

A witness said police fired tear gas Thursday morning to scatter about 5,000 mourners at the funeral of an 18-year-old girl shot dead by police last week in Soweto, the huge black township near Johannesburg.

Police said they warned the crowd that the gathering violated state of emergency rules limiting funeral attendance to 50 people.

Most mourners regrouped after the initial charge and the service went on, but police returned and fired more tear gas canisters to drive the mourners away from the dead girl's home, the witness said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

In other Soweto incidents, an officer was seriously wounded by a hand grenade and a school was damaged in an arson attack, police reported.

It was the second grenade attack in two days on a police patrol in the township.

National police headquarters said there were no deaths in the violence Thursday. Three people were reported killed Tuesday and Wednesday in Cape Province.

About 900 people have died in more than 15 months of rioting against apartheid, the race laws with which the government preserves privilege for South Africa's 5 million whites and denies rights to the 24 million blacks. Nearly all the victims have been black.

The Rev. Allan Boesak, a leading mixed-race cleric, said he led a candlelight vigil Wednesday night at his church in Bellville South, outside Cape Town. Some of the 700 people

who attended went outside and were hit by tear gas from an armoured police vehicle across the street, he said.

"I just think the South African police once again have shown themselves to be the pigs that they think that they are," said Boesak, who faces subversion charges but is free on bail. "There is absolutely no excuse for what happened here."

Lt. Attie Laubscher, the Town police spokesman, said 200 people gathered outside Boesak's church and "police asked them to disperse. The majority did, then warned the rest who were standing around, and then used gas to disperse them."

The parish council sent a letter to Louis le Grange, minister of order, demanding that churches "may carry out their worship without being disrupted by your police."

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