

New South African president promises to stop oppression

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP)—F.W. de Klerk was sworn in as president Wednesday and promised a new constitution that would bring blacks into South Africa's government by the end of his five-year term.

He appealed to South Africans of all races to help build a nation "free of domination and oppression. 'We accept that time is of the essence and we are committed to visible, evolutionary progress,' de Klerk said in his inaugural speech.

He has vowed to eliminate discrimination and allow blacks, who currently cannot vote, participation in government under a five-year plan.

But he did not specify any apartheid laws he would repeal. Nor did he say how he would implement his goal of providing limited political rights to the 28-million black majority while maintaining the political domination of the country's 5 million whites.

De Klerk, 53, took the oath of office as reports spread that his government will free jailed black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela early next year. Newspapers quoted official sources as saying the release will be part of a package of reforms to draw blacks into constitutional talks.

"The negotiation process will, from the start, receive incisive attention," de Klerk said in the speech following his swearing-in ceremony.

His conciliatory words, affable style, and new policy of allowing peaceful protests against the government have generated optimism among foreign observers and many South Africans. But de Klerk rejects the basic demand of most black leaders: majority rule.

The Rev. Allan Boesak, a leading anti-apartheid activist and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, said he will give de Klerk six months to prove that blacks' skepticism is unfounded.

A tear rolled down de Klerk's cheek at a Dutch Reformed Church when the Rev. P.W. Bingle, a family friend preaching at the swearing-in, urged the new president to press forward without fear.

Chief Justice Michael Corbett handed de Klerk a paper from which he read the oath of office in Afrikaans and English before about 1,500 people. No foreign heads of state were present, an indication of South Africa's international isolation.

"We accept that time is of the essence and we are committed to visible, evolutionary progress." — F.W. deKlerk, South African president

In his 20-minute inaugural speech, de Klerk said his goal is "a South Africa free of domination or oppression in whatever form."

"We hope that he will demonstrate that he is serious about his vision for a new South Africa, because that is the vision we want," Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner, said in Windhoek, Namibia.

De Klerk said his government will move to eliminate discriminatory laws, give "urgent attention" to adopting a bill of rights, "gradually move away" from the 3-year-old state of emergency, and release security prisoners.

Contact lenses worn overnight damage eyes

BOSTON (AP) — About 12,000 contact lens users in the United States suffer painful and potentially blinding eye ulcers each year, largely because they wear their lenses while they sleep, research concludes.

The studies also showed, however, that even ordinary daytime use of contacts — while far safer than overnight wear — seems to slightly raise the odds of these ulcers, which are the most serious complication of contacts.

The research is most critical of extended-wear lenses, which were approved in 1980 for continuous use up to 30 days at a time. It found that people who wore these lenses day and night were 10 to 15 times more likely than strictly daytime users to have eye ulcers.

Sometimes people fitted with ordinary soft lenses also sleep with them. The study found that doing this just twice a month resulted in nine times the usual risk of the disease.

"Our paper shows that overnight wear is the major risk factor," Dr. Oliver D. Schein said. "It begins with even the first night of overnight wear."

Gorbachev engineers overhaul in Politburo; three members 'retire'

MOSCOW (AP) — Mikhail Gorbachev pulled off a major shake-up of the ruling Communist Party on Wednesday, dropping three Politburo members in a dramatic consolidation of power.

Tass news agency announced that former KGB chief Viktor M. Chebrikov, 66, and Viktor P. Nikonov, 60, were retired from the pinnacle of Soviet power, and 71-year-old Ukrainian party chief Vladimir V. Shcherbitsky said he, too, was retiring.

The personnel moves continued Gorbachev's molding of the top party apparatus, carried out in a series of bold strokes. Gorbachev is general secretary of the Communist Party as well as Soviet president.

The shake-up came after the party Central Committee on Wednesday approved a program directing restive Soviet republics to stifle calls to leave the union but acceding to demands for more local control of the economy.

The Central Committee also gave Gorbachev an early chance to reach deep down in the party for new faces by moving up the next party congress to October 1990.

Gorbachev forced the retirement of a quarter of the Central Committee at the last meeting of that policy-making body in April. Almost a year ago, two long-time members, including then-President Andrei A. Gromyko, were removed from the Politburo.

Shcherbitsky, regarded as a conservative force both in Moscow and his native Ukraine, was the last Politburo member serving from the time of President Leonid I. Brezhnev. His retirement leaves Vitaly I. Vorotnikov of the Russian republic the only pre-Gorbachev appointee on the 11-man Politburo.

Shcherbitsky long has been rumored to be in trouble with Gorbachev. He presumably will remain party chief in the Ukraine until a meeting there can be called to name a replacement.

Gorbachev continued to fill the ruling body with his own men, elevating the new KGB chief, Vladimir Kryuchkov, and the head of economic planning, Yuri Maslyukov, to full membership.

Nursing aide convicted in murder trial despite state's lack of physical evidence

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP)—A former nursing home aide was convicted Wednesday of smothering five patients in a pact with her lesbian lover.

A Kent County Circuit Court jury deliberated five hours before finding Gwendolyn Graham guilty on five counts of first-degree murder and one count of conspiracy to commit murder in the 1987 deaths of patients at Alpine Manor Nursing Home in Walker.

Graham, 26, of Tyler, faces mandatory life imprisonment without parole.

With a lack of hard evidence, the case rested largely on the testimony of Catherine Wood, Graham's accomplice and former lover. Wood, who has already pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, testified that Graham killed patients because she said it "relieved tension."

Wood said the two had formed a love pact, each agreeing to suffocate patients so they would be bound to one another.

The victims were Belle Burkhard, 74, Marguerite Chambers, 60, Edith Cook, 97, Myrtle Luce, 95, and Mae Mason, 79. They were killed between January and April 1987.

At least two of the victims' families sat through the entire trial.

"My mother can finally rest in peace," Jan Hunderman, daughter of victim Marguerite Chambers, said. "The scars will always be there, but it helps knowing the truth."

Linda Engman, daughter of victim Mae Mason, said she was "thrilled" with the verdict. "I wish we had the death penalty," she said.

Graham, testifying Tuesday, denied that any murders had occurred at the home and said the murder plot was nothing more than a joke made up by Wood that had gotten out of hand.

"Cathy would start it and I'd just

go along," Graham said.

But when Graham left for her hometown of Tyler with another woman, she said a jealous Wood threatened to go to police with the story.

When police began investigating the deaths, Graham said she realized Wood "was going to get even, just like she said she was."

Fran Shadden, a close friend of Graham's, said she was shocked by the jury's decision.

"I just don't believe they can convict someone with no physical evidence," she said.

Texans

(Continued from page 1)

was on board listed Houston as his home.

The Peace Corps identified the returning volunteer as Margaret Schutzius, 23, of Dallas.

The oilmen included Pat Huff, 38, of Franklin, an employee of Tulsa, Okla.-based Parker Drilling Co.; Mark E. Corder, 35, a petroleum geologist with Exxon Corp.; James Turlington Sr., 48, of Belville, a senior operation supervisor for Exxon; and Russell O. Jordan Sr., 29, an Esso Resources Canada senior projects engineer who listed his hometown as Houston.

Peace Corps spokesman Jim Flanagan said Schutzius had just completed her service after 27 months in Chad — the first three were spent in initial training, followed by 24 months teaching English as a foreign language. She arrived in Chad in June 1987.

Schutzius, a graduate of Lake Highlands High School in Dallas, studied romance languages and literature at the University of Chicago,

but did not obtain a degree before leaving for the Peace Corps.

"Even though it was a terrible tragedy, and her life was short, she stood for a lot while she was with us," said Schutzius' mother Mary K. Hassett. "She loved her work and was dedicated to the betterment of education in Africa."

Huff, a 14-month employee of Parker Drilling, was working on an Exxon-owned oil rig in southern Chad and was returning home for a month, Colwell said. He was expected to arrive in College Station Wednesday afternoon, said Parker spokesman Tim Colwell.

Colwell said officials with UTA Airlines notified the company about the accident. Three other Parker Drilling employees also were on the plane, he said.

Huff was married and the stepfather of two children, said his mother, Janice Huff, of Franklin. She said he had worked for years in overseas oilfields.

"He had no fears," Janice Huff said. "I said something to him a few months ago after so many planes had been going down and he said, 'No, not really. You always think it's going to happen to someone else.'"

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