

World news

White supremacist gains cited as opposition to black power

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — White-supremacist parties on South Africa's far right said Thursday their broad gains in five midterm elections proved there is a surge in white opposition to

sharing power with blacks.

The governing National Party of President P.W. Botha, campaigning on a platform of gradual race reform, won four of the five Parliament seats at stake in Wednesday's voting but lost ground everywhere to the far right.

Two ultraconservative parties slashed the Nationalists' past majority in four districts and took a seat away from Botha's party in the Orange Free State for the first time since 1953.

The National Party, in power since 1948, has a huge margin in Parliament, and parliamentary control was not an issue.

Leaders of the far-right Conservative Party and the Reformed National Party said voters showed anger over government failure to quell 14 months of bloody rioting over apartheid as well as dissatisfaction with the economy and the government's approach to race reforms.

Pro-government and liberal newspapers noted that the five

districts were largely blue-collar and rural and said the far-right had never been in a more favorable position than in Wednesday's vote.

The far-right's victorious candidate, Louis Stofberg of the Reformed National Party, had made an issue of a couple in his town of Sossolburg who married this year after the National Party repealed laws barring interracial sex and marriage.

Stofberg's pamphlets said the white man and his mixed-race wife "could live in your street...and their children could go to your schools."

Botha said he was satisfied with the outcome of the elections, "considering the difficult economic consequences of the recession, the drought (and) the present unrest situation in certain parts of the country."

"We will have to continue to work and build toward a peaceful South Africa for all population groups in a responsible manner," he said.

United States unveils new nuclear arms control today

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan announced Thursday the United States will unveil a new arms control proposal in Geneva today that he said will build on the recent Soviet proposal and emphasize reductions in "destabilizing" nuclear arms systems.

"I would characterize our arms control position as deep cuts, no first-strike advantage, defensive research...and no cheating," Reagan said in a televised statement at the White House.

He also announced that he has asked the Soviet Union to extend the current session of the Geneva arms control talks, scheduled to adjourn today, for an extra week to hear details of the American proposal.

Reagan said he has sent a letter on the subject to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and has also communicated with American allies, who had been urging an American counter-proposal to the Soviet plan unveiled in early October that called for a 50 percent cut in nuclear arsenals of both superpowers.

Just before making his announcement in the White House press room, the president met with four Soviet interviewers and told them he would accept some of the figures the Soviets had proposed in their plan for a 50 percent reduction in nuclear missiles and warheads.

He told the journalists from Moscow that his reply to the Soviet proposal will be laid out at the arms negotiating table in Geneva today.

Immediately thereafter, Reagan told U.S. reporters that the latest Soviet offer "unfortunately fell considerably short" in certain areas.

Bhagwan supporters rally for guru's release from jail

BONN, West Germany (AP) — More than 1,500 followers of jailed Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh demonstrated in four West German cities Thursday to demand his release from an American prison, police said.

Rajneesh, 53, was arrested Monday in Charlotte, N.C., on federal charges of covering up sham marriages to keep illegal aliens in the United States. He was apprehended during what American authorities say was an attempt to flee the country to avoid prosecution.

A delegation from the sect's communes in West Germany presented a petition to the U.S. Embassy in Bonn demanding freedom for the guru, claiming

Rajneesh's life was threatened by his arrest because of poor health.

Speaking at a news conference in Bonn, spokeswoman Ma Deva Nutan said "a lengthy imprisonment would surely lead to Bhagwan's death."

Police said about 1,000 Rajneesh followers demonstrated in Bonn and 200 of them meditated at a downtown square. About 200 followers danced in front of the Memorial Church in Berlin.

In Munich, another 200 followers marched peacefully to the U.S. Consulate, while in Hamburg about 300 Rajneeshes danced and sang their way to the U.S. consulate to petition for the guru's release.

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