

World news

Botha offers Namibia statehood and promises to lift emergency

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — President P.W. Botha announced that the 195-day-old state of emergency imposed to fight anti-apartheid turmoil in South Africa probably would be lifted on Friday.

His announcement Tuesday was praised by the United States and was given a cautious welcome from some South

African liberals. But it provoked expressions of concern from the largest anti-apartheid grouping, the United Democratic Front, that the emergency would be supplanted by repressive legislation.

Botha also made a new offer of statehood for Namibia, proposing an Aug. 1 target date for starting moves toward the territory's independence. He made it conditional on a withdrawal of Cuban troops from neighboring Angola.

Botha made his announcements to a packed parliamentary chamber in the country's legislative capital.

He claimed the level of violence had dropped sufficiently to enable him to issue a proclamation, "most probably this coming Friday," to lift the state of emergency.

But critics of the system of racial segregation that keeps power in the hands of South Africa's white minority said they could not readily explain the timing of Botha's announcement. They insisted the level of violence had not dropped.

The emergency, imposed July 21 on 30 urban and rural districts and subsequently lifted from seven, gives police and troops sweeping powers to use guns against rioters and detain suspects indefinitely without trial. It has been widely condemned abroad, and its removal is a primary demand of anti-apartheid activists.

Botha also said Parliament would be asked to review existing laws in case new ones were needed to help "protect lives and property effectively."

The United Democratic Front, a multiracial coalition of anti-apartheid groups, said lifting the emergency would be an "acknowledgment that the emergency has failed to suppress the desire of our people to be free."

But the organization expressed concern at Botha's mention of new laws, saying: "The government is going to broaden the already Draconian provisions of the Internal Security Act. The effect of this is that a de facto state of emergency will exist throughout our country."

Commission says it has evidence of corruption

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — The government of Corazon Aquino said Tuesday it has new evidence that ousted President Ferdinand Marcos and his family and friends may have plundered up to \$10 billion of the nation's wealth.

Former Sen. Jovito Salonga told a news conference that documents found at the presidential palace after Marcos hurriedly abandoned it Feb. 25 link Marcos to purported illegal purchases of property in United States.

Salonga is chairman of a five-member commission Aquino created last week to recover "all ill-gotten wealth" that the Marcos family and its associates allegedly accumulated and secreted under dummy names during Marcos' 20-year rule.

Asked how much money was involved, Salonga replied, "maybe \$5 billion to \$10 billion." He did not elaborate.

The estimate was the largest yet. The 1985 national budget of the financially strapped Philippines was \$3.3 billion.

The nation's foreign debt is \$26 billion and, according to the Marcos government, the average per capita income of the 55.5 million Filipinos last year was \$136.

Rep. Stephen J. Solarz, D-N.Y., told a news conference at Manila airport Tuesday he believes the U.S. government "ought to be doing everything we can to facilitate the recovery of these assets" because they were "stolen and swindled from the pockets of the Filipino people."

Solarz, chairman of the House subcommittee on Asian affairs that recently conducted hearings on Marcos' alleged holdings in the United States, said there was "persuasive documentary and direct evidence that the Marcoses control a real estate empire in the New York City area alone of up to \$350 million."

Lawyers for the new government obtained a court injunction in New York on Sunday barring sale of five New York properties allegedly owned or controlled by Marcos.

Meanwhile, most members of the Philippines' highest courts resigned Tuesday to give Aquino's week-old government a free hand in revamping the judicial system. The system is composed of Marcos appointees and has been viewed by the public with distrust.

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Arms talks round concludes

GENEVA (AP) — The fourth round of U.S.-Soviet arms talks ended Tuesday after six weeks of negotiations. The chief Soviet envoy said the United States was uncooperative, and the top U.S. delegate blamed the Soviets for slow progress.

"We introduced a lot of proposals here... and we regret that there was no positive response by the American side," said Viktor Karpov.

"We still hope for a cooperative spirit but we regretfully don't have it," he said. "We hope that maybe next time there will be more progress."

The fifth round of talks is scheduled to start May 8, said

the head of the U.S. delegation, Max Kampelman.

In an unusual public criticism of his negotiating partners, Kampelman said the reason for slow progress was "that the Soviet delegation has not acted to fulfill the commitments undertaken by President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at their November summit in Geneva."

"The round ended with less accomplished than we had hoped," Kampelman said. He said, however, that positive factors included a commitment by both sides to speed up work toward an agreement on medium-range nuclear forces.

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