S. Africa moves in attempt to break hunger strike

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Law enforcement officials, in a bid to break a hunger strike among political prisoners by cutting their community support lines, are moving hospitalized detainees into a single facility far from the nation's key cities, authorities said Tuesday.

A spokeswoman for the Detainees Aid Center, a support group monitoring the continuing hunger strikes, called the measure "extremely serious and worrying," noting it would deny the detainees regular access to their families and lawyers.

Law and Order Ministry spokesman Brig. Leon Mellet said detainees on the hunger strike would be moved to the Pelonomi Hospital in a black township near the Orange Free State provincial capital of Bloemfontein, 250 miles southwest of Johannesburg.

He described the facility as "one of the best hospitals in the country," but acknowledged the move was intended in part to break the fasts that have pitted the minority white government's policy of detention without charge against a major campaign by human rights activists and prominent church leaders.

"We don't make excuses for any steps we take to break a hunger strike," Mellet said by telephone. "Fewer people will go on hunger strike, that's for sure, and we're going to be able to control the situation far better. It's as simple as that."

The decision also follows the escape last week from Johannesburg's Hillbrow hospital of four detainees recovering from their fasts. All members of black youth organizations, the prisoners sought refuge at the West Germany Embassy until the government assured them they would not be re-arrested.

A formal announcement that all hospitalized hunger strikers in the country will be moved to Pelonomi is expected this week, but already three activists have been transferred there, ministry spokesman Lt. Peet Bothma said.

Disclosure of the move came a day after the longest participant in the hunger strike, black Natal University researcher Sandile Thusi, 26, suspended his fast on its 38th day, pending further negotiations on his release from nine months of detention.

Hundreds of political detainees, incarcerated without charge under a nearly 3-year-old state of emergency, began hunger strikes on a staggered basis in January to draw attention to their demands to be released or formally charged.

Since the campaign began, according to government figures, release orders for more than 600 detainees have been signed by Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok.

The Detainees Aid Center estimates at least 90 percent of the released prisoners have been served with restriction orders that sharply curtail their political activities.

Audrey Coleman, a spokeswoman at the center, said the decision to move the detainees to Pelonomi was a matter of "great concern."

She said the effect of the transfer would be to deny detainees access to their family and lawyers "so there's no support and no possibility for monitoring what's happening to them." She also expressed concern over the quality of treatment they will receive.

Government sources put the number of fasting detainees presently hospitalized at 20. But Coleman said the total number of prisoners on the hunger strike was more than 60, including 45 at Durban's Westville prison.

CAPETOWN, S. Africa—Archbishop Desmond Tutu leads an Easter procession through the streets of Mbokweni township, about 50 miles from Cape Town, under constant surveillance of riot police in armored vehicles. Hundreds of township residents crowded the small community church to hear Tutu preach during his first visit to the area.

UN troops arriving in Namibia for peacekeeping

WINDHOEK, Namibia - Soviet transport planes landed in Namibia Thursday, carrying a small contingent of Finish and Yugoslavian troops and tons of equipment for the U.N. peace-keeping force supervising independence in Africa's last colony.

"I never thought I'd see a Russian plane landing here," a South African Air Force officer said as the first of two giant Ilyushin-76 freighters of Moscow's Aeroflot airline touched down at Windhoek's airport.

Airport officials and blue helmeted soldiers of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) Kept reporters and photographers away from the planes but allowed them to watch the landing from an observation balcony.

It was the first time a Russian aircraft had landed in the territory, although a Soviet-built jet-fighter piloted by an Angolan air force flier crashed in a corn field north of Windhoek last December and remains in South African custody.

A second transport landing six hours later unloaded 13 U.N. peace-keeping troops from Finland and 25 from Yugoslavia who join the 4,650-strong military component of the U.N. transition group.

The French cargo ship Anga docked at the South African enclave of Walvis Bay Thursday and unloaded 115 Volkswagen cars and 52 mini-buses donated to the U.N. force by West Germany.

The U.N. team must be in place by the April 1 start of the independence plan outlined in U.N. Resolution 435, signed late last year. Under the resolution, South Africa agreed to Namibian independence next year in exchange for the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, just north of Namibia.

The U.N. contingent will supervise the withdrawal of South African military forces from the former German colony, administered virtually as a "fifth province" of South Africa by the Pretoria government since 1915 in defiance of U.N. demands for independence.

The force also will oversee the dismantling of local Namibian paramilitary groups and assist at least 700 civilians in supervising elections of a national constituent assembly in November and full independence next year.

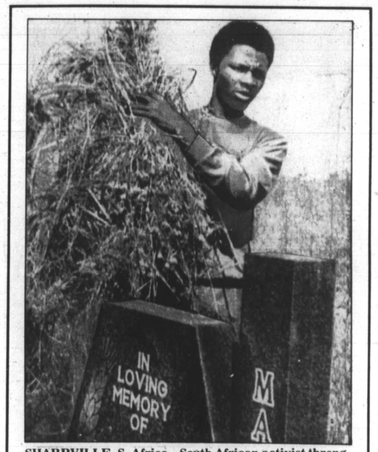
U.N. officials, meanwhile, asked the organization's New York headquarters to slow down the influx of civilians in the international force.

"We have up to four officials in one hotel room," transition group administration chief Adbou Ciss said.

"We are finding it difficult to get adequate rooms in hotels so most of our colleagues are doubling up," the Senegalese official told a news conference.

About 100 civilians and 500 troops drafted into the multinational U.N. force already are in place in the territory, Ciss said.

About 600 more civilian administrators, three battalions of Malaysian, Finnish and Kenyan infantry, Italian and Spanish air units and logistical support companies will arrive in the next three weeks to complete the force.



SHARPVILLE, S. Africa—South African activist thronged the Sharpeville cemetery south of Johannesburg to clean the graves of victims of the Sharpeville massacre of March 21, 1960. On that day, police shot dead 69 and wounded 180 demonstrating against apartheid race laws.

AID makes appeal for help in Sudan

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Agency for International Development, in a race against time and starvation, appealed Friday for a massive international relief effort to take advantage of a cease-fire in Sudan.

Warring government and rebel forces have agreed on an unofficial cease-fire - a "month of tranquility" - during which food supplies can be shipped to refugee centers. The cease-fire in the war-torn East African country was to begin April 1.

About a month later, the rainy season will render roads in the area impassable. Last year, when there was no agreement to allow food shipments, an estimated 250,000 Sudanese people died during the rainy session, mostly because of starvation.

AID officials believe that 100,000 people risk starvation deaths this year if the emergency food shipments are not sent to the refugee centers by the end of April.

Julia Taft, director of AIDs Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, said officials want to deliver food supplies to about a dozen refugee centers, where some 300,000 displaced people are concentrated.

"The United States has been the primary force bringing to bear pressure for the international relief effort," she said. "I don't see many other donor countries out there."

The U.S. government will contact traditional food donor nations in Europe, Canada and Japan. She said the Soviet Union also might be asked to contribute.

Taft noted that 90 countries contributed some $70 million to Soviet earthquake relief last year after the Armenian disaster. She noted, "I don't see 90 countries lining up in Sudan."

Taft is spearheading the AID effort to raise some $138 million in food or funds to buy additional food. It is possible, she said, that another $40 million might be required for airlift and other transportation.

During the last year, the U.S. government has contributed $72 million in cash or food to Sudan. She and a small congressional delegation plan to fly to East Africa this weekend to work on details of the relief operation.

Asked why the threatened famine in Sudan had not captured world sympathy in the manner of the disaster in Ethiopia, Taft said: "It's because there are no pictures of starving children."

Currently, she said, there are adequate food stocks in most of Sudan but the big danger will occur during the next six months when those stocks are depleted.

"We're talking about death prevention," she said. "We have six weeks to get the word out and the food shipped in."

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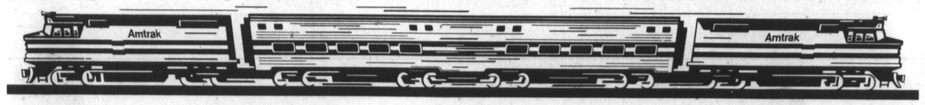

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D.C. Mayor Marion Barry fights back with heavy hand

WASHINGTON

District Mayor Marion Barry is fighting back with a heavy hand although his detractors keep raising questions about his ability to effectively govern the Nation's Capital.

The mayor has gone to the public in numerous upbeat news conferences in the past week to let the nation know he is still in control and that Washington is a safe city to live,work and visit.

The mayor, at a press conference at the Capital Press Club Monday night, waived his usual opening remarks and jumped into the fray taking questions immediately from the audience.

Embracing the black press, Barry said that "The black press looks at life in the city from a different perspective. Their filters are different than the majority of the white media.

"The media has a responsibility to get the message out. Downtown is safe, the economy is booming. Drugs are the problem not Mayor Barry. I urge the media to assist us. Mayors in all the major cities have similar problems with drugs. However, the media in New York, Philadelphia, etc. cheer for the hometown. That doesn't happen here," the mayor continued.

Barry downplayed his difficulties and hammered away at his administration's accomplishments. He listed the summer job program, construction, and the restoration of business to the downtown area as some of the positives of his administration.

"Not only is Washington safe, but business is booming," said Barry. "Not only do I say it is safe, but so does the Washington Hotel Association; the Restaurant Association; the development community; the Conventon Center Board; the Washington Visitors and Convention Bureau and a number of other business and civic organizations."

Last week, Barry spent several hours answering questions from members of the media at the National Press Club after giving a half hour speech on national television.

Questions were asked on every subject from drug test for city employees to whether the mayor has a rift with his police chief. The mayor answered that the drug tests were controversial and that few city employees had been arrested for drugs. On the latter he said that there was no rift. "We work and do business," said the mayor.

Barry's latest problems, however, stem from an interest free loan he allegedly secured from real estate developer Jeffrey N. Cohen after the two became partners in a business venture in Massachusetts. Barry has said he followed the advice of his tax consultant and lawyer.

A Grand Jury investigation into the mayor's visit with Former City Employee Charles Lewis, who now is in custody for drug violations; the failure to gain the upper hand in the District's war on drugs; and alleged mismanagement in The Virgin Island Personnel Project have given the white media a field day.

There is also a growing move by long time enemies of the mayor on Capital Hill to federalize the District police department and prison system. Despite the mayor's protest that "60 percent of the city's open air drug markets are in two police districts" and that "80 percent of the murder victims knew their assailants."

Barry also said that 60 percent of the guns found in DC come from Virginia and 15 percent come from Maryland. He also said that drugs are a Federal problem since 90 percent of the cocaine destined for America:: gets here.

Poor hardest hit by cancer

By Olive Vassell
AFRO Assistant Editor

WASHINGTON

The poor must be targeted in the fight against cancer regardless of their race, and they must be given equal access to information and treatment for the disease, according to President of the American Cancer Society, Dr. Harold P. Freeman.

"It does not make sense to target one racial group. It is the poor that are in the most urgent need of help," Freeman said in a recent interview.

Blacks have a disproportionately high cancer rate, but they are also disproportionately poor, accounting for one-third of the nation's poor, although they only make up 12 percent of the population.

"There is no evidence that (cancer) is related primarily to race," Fletcher said, citing a study conducted by the ACS in Baltimore City from 1949-51 and 1979-81. According to the study, "income exerted an effect independently of race," and "at identical middle and upper income level for both racial groups, the mortality rates (from cancer) for the two groups converged."

Freeman added that the ACS would be conducting hearings in seven U.S. cities to "identify the concerns of the poor," in cancer prevention, detection and treatment. The results of the hearings will be revealed in July report.

In addition to education there must be access to diagnosis and treatment for the poor, who are often uninsured and do not seek treatment until it is too late.

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Metro Crime Stoppers

The unidentified suspect pictured in this drawing is wanted for seven armed robberies of various banks in the area, one of which was the Signet Bank at 36 South Chares Street that took place on January 25, 1989 at 1:00 p.m. He is described as a black male, 28 to 33 years old, 6' 2" to 6' 4", about 185 pounds, medium build, and dark complexion with facial hair and mustache. At the time of the Signet Bank offense he was wearing a denim blue cap, blue denim stonewashed jacket, and blue jeans. The suspect is also wanted for the attempted robbery of the Provident Bank at 250 West Pratt Street. Baltimore police need your help in locating this wanted man.

If you have any information about these wanted felons you are urged to call the Metro Crime Stoppers 24 Hour Confidential Hotline at 276-8888. No names are taken, calls are not recorded, and you could earn up to $1,000.00 in cash.

Hilary Darlene Murray is wanted for the shooting of Michael Holcomp in Hampton, VA. on September 15, 1988. She is 33 years old, weighs 220 pounds, and is 5' 2" tall. Her nickname is "Peaches" and her last known address is the 700 block of East 43rd Street. She is probably armed.

Charles Wilson Chester is wanted for the armed robbery of the First American Bank of Maryland at 25 Crossroads Drive in Owings Mills on November 23, 1988. Chester is also suspected of 12 other bank robberies, and is wanted for the 1987 murder of his wife Aster Belaynek Chester. He is 47 years old, 5' 11" tall, weighs 180 pounds, has black hair, brown eyes, and a mustache. His last known address is the 7800 block of Burton Drive in Glen Burnie. Chester drives a black 1970 or 1971 Cadillac with a torn white vinyl top. He should be considered armed.

Hilary Darlene Murray

Charles Wilson Chester

Unidentified Suspect

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