

Yeltsin rally draws thousands of Soviets

MOSCOW -- Supporters of political maverick Boris N. Yeltsin, the former Communist Party boss of Moscow, rallied Wednesday against a privileged bureaucracy and vowed to turn in their party cards if they see any cheating in the legislative election.

Several hundred ardent Yeltsin supporters gathered in an intermittent rain and waved a large Soviet flag at the base of a statue to Moscow's medieval founder, Yuri Dolgoruky, across from city council headquarters. A crowd of up to 5,000 onlookers bulged into busy Gorky Street and pressed against a police line separating them from traffic.

Authorities did not grant permission for the demonstration in the final days of campaigning before Sunday's election of members of a new legislature. Busloads of police were present but did not try to stop it.

Across town at Moscow State University, members of the Academy

of Sciences considered a new election after a rebellion against old guard candidates gave new life to the candidacy of human rights activist Andrei D. Sakharov.

More than 1,200 academy members approved only eight of a list of 23 candidates presented by its leadership. A new election must now be held in two weeks to fill the other 12 vacancies.

"The vote yesterday was necessary," Sakharov told reporters at the gathering. "Now we can choose 12 new people. This was a result of a great grassroots movement of the scientific intelligentsia. If they choose me to be a candidate and a deputy, I will not refuse."

While Sakharov is among the candidates for the new 2,250-member Congress of People's Deputies from the Academy of Sciences, Yeltsin is running in a geographical district that encompasses all of

Moscow.

"Yeltsin is strongest in the struggle with bureaucracy and dishonesty in society," said Olga Ulitova, a former medical worker who has been a Communist Party member for 27 years.

"He is the only one in 70 years of Soviet power who did not take the privileges offered by his high position," she added.

"He struggles for the party, for a clean party!" Moscow worker Valery Reptov shouted to the crowd.

Yeltsin ran Moscow as its Communist Party chief until he was sacked in November 1987 for his criticism of the party's style of leadership and warning that a Stalin-like cult of personality could develop around President Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

He has remained popular with many Muscovites and has become an anti-establishment symbol in his campaign against Yevgeny Brakov,

director of the giant ZIL factory that produces limousines and household appliances.

Both as Moscow party leader and in his campaign Yeltsin has lashed out at special privileges that top party and government officials receive. They include cars and chauffeurs, and continuing access to special stores where they can buy hard-to-find food and consumer goods at a time when the city's stores are emptier than they have been in years.

Pulling out her red-covered party membership cards, Ulitova said she and many others were ready to turn them in if they believe Yeltsin is cheated out of election.

Yeltsin and his supporters accuse party officials of waging a campaign to discredit him that included formation of a commission by the party's policy-making Central Committee last week to review whether his views are at odds with party policies.

Yeltsin did not appear at the rally,

which was quieter than a march Sunday that ended with a rally on the same spot and drew criticism from police. The crowd grew from several hundred to several thousand in 90 minutes, but many people watched quietly from the edges and did not join in.

Sakharov, a nuclear physicist who also won the 1975 Nobel Peace Prize for his human rights activities, had criticized an election process that narrowed a list of 121 nominees to 23 for the 20 Academy of Sciences seats as undemocratic.

He and other leading proponents of reform such as space scientist Roald Sagdeev and economist Nikolai Shmelev were eliminated.

Their names were resubmitted Wednesday by supporters, but academy President Gury Marchuk said it would have to form a new electoral commission and have it approved by Soviet officials before any action to fill the 12 slots could be taken.

Practical steps urged for peace

TUNIS, Tunisia -- U.S. diplomats told the PLO in a 4 1/2-hour meeting Wednesday to take "practical steps" to ease tension in the Israeli-occupied territories, the head of the U.S. delegation said.

In the first formal talks since President Bush took office, the two sides got down to weighty subjects in detail, according to the leaders of the U.S. and Palestine Liberation Organization delegations.

U.S. Ambassador Robert H. Pelletreau, who headed the three-man American team, said after the meeting that there was a "new dynamic" in the Middle East "of which this dialogue is a part."

Pelletreau said U.S. concerns about terrorism were discussed as well as "practical steps that can be taken in the occupied territories to reduce tensions."

He did not detail those steps, nor did the leader of the three-man PLO side, Yasser Abed-Rabbo, indicate what the U.S. side has asked of the Palestinians.

Abed-Rabbo said progress was made, but he emphasized that the PLO believes the only road to peace is an international conference involving the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and all parties to the conflict, including the PLO.

The talks in suburban Carthage followed a 90-minute get-acquainted session Dec. 16, the first announced formal meeting between the two sides in 13 years.

Police guarded surrounding streets and rooftops.

The meeting was held amid a swirl of confusing Middle East news. One report quoted PLO spokesman Basam Abu Sharif as saying the PLO would accept deployment of U.S. troops in the West Bank and the Gaza

Strip. A U.S. Embassy official briefing reporters on condition of anonymity dismissed the report with a gesture of incredulity.

Another report spoke of a two-tiered U.S.-backed Israeli peace plan accepted by the PLO, including as a first step elections of representative Palestinians in the territories.

Neither issue was mentioned in the statements after Wednesday's talks, although Abed-Rabbo reiterated the PLO's rejection of elections in the territories while they are still occupied by Israeli troops.

The uprising in the West Bank and Gaza has claimed more than 400 Palestinian and 17 Israeli lives since it began in December 1987.

"The (uprising) will continue until the day the Israelis evacuate our homeland," said Abed-Rabbo, a leader of the Marxist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, one of the most radical factions in the PLO.

The future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, home to 1.7 million Palestinians, "should be discussed in an international conference," he said.

Pelletreau indicated recent Palestinian guerrilla raids, which had been the subject of a number of informal contacts between him and PLO officials, were also discussed.

"The PLO is very aware of our very strong view on violence and terrorism," he said.

The Israelis strongly oppose Washington's discussions with the PLO, which Israel considers a terrorist organization.

The United States reversed its policy of not talking to the guerrilla organization after PLO chief Yasser Arafat in December renounced terrorism and recognized Israel's right to exist.

America's oldest teen steps down from rockin' Bandstand

LOS ANGELES -- Dick Clark announced Tuesday that he's stepping down as host of the "American Bandstand" after 33 years so someone new can lead the music variety show into the 1990s.

The show, which helped pioneer rock 'n' roll and the Motown sound, is currently syndicated nationwide, and will premiere on cable's USA Network on April 8.

Clark, who turns 60 this year but is known as "America's Oldest Teen-Ager" because of his youthful looks, will turn over the "Bandstand" microphone to David Hirsch, 26, who was discovered at Dick Clark Productions in Burbank.

Hirsch, a Detroit native, was working as a segment producer for "USA's Camp Midnight," a late-night talk show on USA network.



John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan

Cartel leaders indicted in cocaine case

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. -- An associate of Bahamian Prime Minister Lynden Pindling and reputed leaders of Colombia's Medellin cocaine cartel were charged with drug trafficking in a federal indictment unsealed here Wednesday.

The indictment also accuses alleged cartel leader Pablo Escobar Gaviria of organizing the assassination of Colombian Justice Minister Lara Bonilla in 1984.

Other major figures among the 30 indicted were Everett Bannister, a close friend of Pindling's, as well as reputed cartel kingpins Jose Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, Jorge Ochoa Vasquez, Fabio Ochoa Vasquez and Gonzalo Mejia.

U.S. Attorney Robert W. Genzman said the indictment covers 1974 to the present and involved the importation of 44,000 pounds of cocaine.

The prosecutor refused to answer questions about continuing allegations that Pindling himself was involved in the drug operation.

The document charges that Barry Seal, an informant for the Drug Enforcement Administration, was killed at the direction of Fabio

Ochoa, Escobar and other cartel members.

Also indicted today was Jack Carlton Reed, co-defendant of cartel leader Carlos Lehder Rivas. They were convicted here last year of conspiring to import cocaine, and Lehder is serving a life sentence.

"The case was investigated after the trial of Carlos Lehder, who is named as a co-conspirator in the indictment as a follow-up to the trial," said Genzman.

The indictment accuses many of the defendants of running a continuing criminal enterprise - punishable by a maximum life sentence - and conspiracy to import drugs.

Bannister, who lives in Nassau, is charged with receiving bribes to allow the cartel to use islands just off Florida as a way station for drug shipments.

Genzman said the United States would seek extradition of Bannister. As for the cartel leaders, he noted it had taken six years to get Lehder to the United States and expressed belief the others would eventually be brought to justice.

Gorman Bannister, Everett Ban-

nister's son, is a protected federal witness who testified in the Lehder trial.

During the trial, Bannister characterized his father, chairman of Bahamas World Airlines and a consultant to Resorts International, as an influence-peddler who took protection payoffs from drug smugglers and regularly supplied Pindling with money.

Several witnesses in the Lehder trial testified that they had made payoffs to high Bahamian officials.

The chief prosecution witness, Edward Ward, said he gave Bahamian cabinet minister George Smith and Everett Bannister \$100,000 that was supposed to go to Pindling.

George William Baron III testified in Lehder's trial that he paid bribes to Pindling. He said he handed a briefcase containing \$400,000 in a crowded casino lounge in September or October 1980 to Pindling.

Pindling has since denied the allegation. In 1984, the Royal Bahamian Commission cleared him of any wrongdoing concerning allegations that he took payoffs from drug smugglers. Pindling, first elected in 1967, was re-elected in 1987.

New bugs to wage war against pests

WASHINGTON -- A century after an Agriculture Department scout found an Australian beetle that saved California's citrus crop, the government on Wednesday announced an escalation of its bug-vs.-bug program of biological warfare against nature's pests.

The department said agreements had been reached to send American

scientists to China and the Soviet Union this summer to search unexplored areas for natural enemies of destructive insects and weeds.

Taiwanese-born pathologist Yang Shaw-Ming will go to Inner Mongolia in search of a fungus that can destroy the leafy spurge, an aggressive weed which drives grazing cattle

and horses away from rangeland at a cost to ranchers that he estimated at \$50 million.

At the same time, five Agriculture Department scientists will go to the Soviet Union to look for enemies of the Russian wheat aphid, a pest that was appeared in Texas three years ago and has spread into 15 states.

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE. Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during summer sessions. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-1763 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, contact Tom Macy, 475-9868. Subscription price is \$45 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, NE. ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1989 DAILY NEBRASKAN