

Thousands in Moscow protest Communist stranglehold

MOSCOW - Hundreds of thousands of cheering protesters filled the broad streets of the capital Sunday to demand that the Communists surrender their stranglehold on power, perhaps the biggest protest in Moscow since the Bolshevik Revolution.

The huge gathering came on the eve of a party Central Committee meeting during which President

Mikhail Gorbachev is expected to propose that other parties be allowed to compete for power, a move likely to spur an intense struggle between hard-liners and reformers.

The crowd waved huge white-red-and-blue flags of pre-revolutionary Russia and held signs warning party officials to "Remember Romania," where a bloody revolt last year toppled

the Stalinist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu.

Harkening to the revolution that overthrew the czar in February 1917 before being swept away by Lenin eight months later, protesters said a new revolution was under way.

"Long live the beginning of the peaceful, non-violent revolution of February 1990!" historian Yuri Afanasiev told the cheering crowd.

Some demonstrators at the head of the rally chanted "Politburo resign!"

Others whistled in derision when they passed the Moscow city council headquarters on Gorky Street.

The march and rally lasted about five hours before participants began to disperse. Police observed the peace-

ful proceedings in the historic heart of the capital, but there were no reports of any disturbances.

According to published reports, party leader Gorbachev will propose to the Central Committee that the party give up the guarantee of power that was written into the Soviet Constitution in 1977.

Mandela awaits agreement with government

PAARL, South Africa - Serious obstacles still block the release of Nelson Mandela and more pressure must be put on the white-led government before he can be freed from nearly three decades in prison, his wife said Sunday.

The government, meanwhile, warned Mandela's newly legalized African National Congress that the world would turn against the group if it continued to wage a guerrilla war.

Mandela met with his wife, Winnie, on Sunday, two days after the government lifted numerous restrictions on the anti-apartheid movement. After the meeting, she appealed for renewed pressure on the government to force the lifting of remaining emergency restrictions.

"Unfortunately, the obstacles that were in the way, which prevented his release on Friday, still exist," Mrs. Mandela said after the four-hour visit at the Victor Verster prison farm.

"It . . . doesn't depend on him

when he will be released," she said. But in answer to repeated questions about the obstacles, she said Mandela still demands the complete lifting of the state of emergency.

President F.W. de Klerk partially lifted the emergency in a historic speech Friday in which he legalized the African National Congress, placed a moratorium on executions and lifted restrictions on hundreds of individuals and scores of anti-apartheid organizations.

De Klerk's actions met many, but not all, of the conditions the ANC and Mandela had set for the start of negotiations to end apartheid and give the voteless black majority a voice in the government.

Under the emergency regulations that remain in effect, the government can detain anyone for up to six months without charge, and the police have wide powers to ban meetings or speeches and restrict television or photo coverage of their own actions in deal-

ing with political unrest.

De Klerk issued a statement through government-run radio Sunday night responding to comments from ANC officials that the guerrilla campaign would continue. If that happened, de Klerk was quoted as saying, "The world would turn against them."

Mandela, 71, was jailed in 1962 and is serving a life sentence for helping to plan the start of the ANC's sabotage and bombing campaign against the government.

De Klerk said the government will free Mandela as soon as possible. He mentioned safety and personal considerations as reasons for what he said would be a short delay.

"The onus is on Mr. de Klerk," Mrs. Mandela told journalists. "We are back to where we have to put pressure on the government."

She said Mandela was preparing a reaction to de Klerk's speech to Parliament, but she didn't know when it would be made public.

Panamanian paper suggests continued American presence

PANAMA CITY, Panama - The U.S. invasion of Panama has once more raised the issue of whether the United States will maintain a military presence beyond the year 2000, when the American bases must close.

President Guillermo Endara has abolished Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega's military, leaving open the question about who would defend the Panama Canal. Endara has made no public statement about the issue of the bases.

The newspaper Panama America recently suggested the U.S.-Panama treaties be renegotiated to allow American payments in exchange for keeping American military bases. The 1977 treaties provide for the possibility of new agreements on defense of the waterway.

Although Panama collects no rent from the United States, the U.S. bases mean nearly \$100 million a year for Panama's economy in services purchased and other expenditures.

Some U.S. military sources say the United States might maintain Howard Air Base, just outside of Panama City, and the Rodman Naval Base.

The treaties did away with the old Panama Canal Zone, a 10-mile stretch across the country along the canal that was U.S. territory, and stipulate that the canal will be turned over to Panama on Dec. 31, 1999, when the last American soldier is to go home.

Daily Nebraskan

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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 Pam Hein, 472-2588.

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.

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