

Bombs explode on election eve

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Terrorist bombers struck twice Monday, killing at least 12 people on the eve of the election that will bring blacks to power in South Africa. Political leaders tried to reassure voters and ordered more than 100,000 police to protect the polling.

A car bomb ripped through a taxi stand Monday morning in the eastern suburb of Germiston, raining a firestorm of glass and twisted metal down on mostly black commuters. Ten people died and 41 were wounded.

A caller claiming to speak for a white extremist group claimed responsibility. Police did not say whether the call was genuine.

Monday evening, a bomb exploded at a Pretoria tavern frequented by blacks, killing at least two people and injuring about 30, police said. Witnesses said white youths hurled the bomb from a passing car.

The blasts came a day after a car bomb in downtown Johannesburg killed nine people.

No group claimed responsibility for the Pretoria or Johannesburg attacks. Authorities believed the blasts were linked and said they had detained one person for questioning.

Survivors said they saw whites fleeing the vehicles before they exploded, adding to suspicions that the bombings were the work of right-wingers bent on disrupting the election that will see the sunset of white rule in Africa.

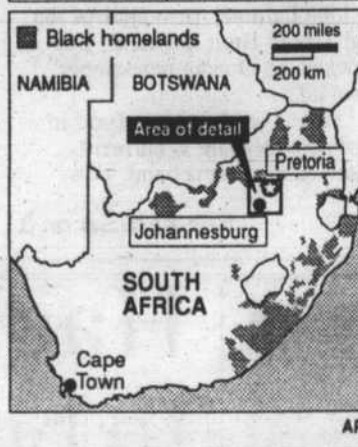
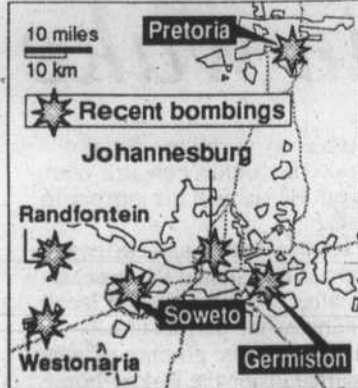
There were at least 10 smaller bombings Sunday and Monday that caused no casualties but escalated the tension. Electric pylons, polling stations and black taxi stands were targeted.

The explosions sparked the biggest peacetime military callup in the country's history, Deputy Law and Order Minister Gert Myburgh said. He refused to give numbers but said in addition to army troops, more than 100,000 police would be deployed at polling stations.

Polls open at 7 a.m. Tuesday for "special voting" for invalids, hospital patients, pregnant women and the elderly. General voting will take place Wednesday and Thursday. The three-day election will be the first time members of South Africa's black majority will be able to elect their leaders.

Nelson Mandela's African National Congress is the overwhelming favorite to win. Mandela will be formally inaugurated as president May 10.

Terrorist bombings near Johannesburg



Officials prepare for Nixon funeral

YORBA LINDA, Calif. — With a paid staff of just two, Orange County's volunteer chief of protocol is scrambling to accommodate an entire world that wants to pay its final respects to Richard Nixon.

"I don't think there will ever be a comparison to this," Gloria Anderson said Monday as she juggled calls from around the world seeking information on Wednesday's funeral arrangements.

There are 79 foreign consulates in Southern California alone, and Ms. Anderson was working with most, if not all.

"You don't want to slight anyone," she said. "But there's always the possibility someone could be overlooked because you have to realize the largeness of this."

Nixon's body was to be flown to Southern California on Tuesday. A closed-casket public viewing at the Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace in Yorba Linda will be held through the night. The nation's 37th president died in New York on Friday, four days after suffering a stroke.

Among the countries sending emissaries to his funeral are China, Japan, Switzerland and Russia, Ms. Anderson said. President Clinton and the four surviving former U.S. presidents also are expected.

About 30 countries had made "firm or semi-firm" arrangements to send representatives by midday Monday, said Jim McCracken, a member of a Nixon Task Force working out of the State Department's Office of Protocol.

"Some countries are curious who others are sending to get a feel for what is appropriate," he said.

Ms. Anderson, Orange County's

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— Anderson, Orange County protocol

unpaid chief of protocol, and her two paid staff members hustled to line up the needed limousine and hotel accommodations for everyone.

Yorba Linda, where Nixon was born, is a quiet suburb of about 56,000 people that boasts Orange County's lowest crime rate. It is 35 miles southeast of Los Angeles.

Secret Service agents roamed the grounds with clipboards. State Department officials conferred with library personnel.

Across the country, the U.S. Army Military District of Washington coordinated the state funeral arrangements, including flying Nixon's remains from Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, N.Y., to the Marine Corps Air Station in El Toro, 15 miles south of Yorba Linda.

Nixon, who will be buried on the library grounds next to his wife, Pat, didn't want a Washington, D.C., funeral. He realized it would serve only as a backdrop for diplomacy and political discussion, said Dimitri K. Simes, a foreign policy expert and Nixon confidante.

Group rates movie popcorn as 'worst food you can buy'

WASHINGTON — Looking for a good scare at the movies? Take a closer peek at the popcorn.

Saturated fat in coconut oil turns popcorn from "the Snow White of snack foods ... into Godzilla," said Michael Jacobson, president of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a nonprofit consumer group.

Theater owners argue that most people go to the movies only five or six times a year, so where's the harm? "It's one of life's little pleasures," said William Kartoziyan, president of the National Association of Theatre Owners.

The consumer group believes moviegoers should know what they are nosing.

A typical small bag of theater popcorn contains almost an entire day's recommended allowance of saturated fat, the kind that causes heart disease, the center said.

A medium-sized bucket with "butter" has 56 grams of saturated fat and "trans" fat, both blamed for clogging arteries, the group says.

That's more artery-clogging fat than you get from a whole day of eating high-fat foods: a bacon-and-eggs breakfast, a Big Mac and large order of fries, and a steak dinner with sour cream, combined.

Theaters could eliminate most of the saturated fat by switching to air-popped popcorn, he said. Or they could reduce the fat significantly by popping with corn oil.

So why do theaters use coconut oil? Some say it improves popcorn's taste and creates the aroma that wafts through movie-house lobbies.

"Most people ask us why they can't get their home popcorn to taste as good as theater popcorn. The answer is the coconut oil," said Howard Lichtman, executive vice president of marketing for Cineplex Odeon.

Some theaters have taken note of moviegoers' interest in healthy eating advertising "healthier" popcorn made with canola oil.

Jacobson said that does reduce saturated fat, although the ads are misleading. Most of those theaters actually use canola shortening, not oil, he said, and the shortening is high in "trans" fat, a substance also linked to heart disease.

The center used an independent laboratory to analyze popcorn samples from 12 theaters in San Francisco, Chicago and Washington, D.C., representing six theater chains. The samples were mixed together by type, so the results vary slightly from the popcorn served at any one theater.

One surprising finding: Compared to popcorn, candy is dandy.

"The smallest unbuttered popcorn is worse than or as bad as the very worst candy bar that is offered at the concession stand," said Jayne Hurley, who wrote the center's report.

In addition to sugar, some theater-sized chocolate bars have almost a full day's worth of saturated fat.

Serbs continue Gorazde evacuation

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Bosnian Serbs blocked a U.N. aid convoy headed for Gorazde on Monday despite pledges to allow free access, but appeared to be moving heavy weapons further away from the Muslim town as demanded by NATO.

U.N. helicopters evacuated 91 more wounded people from the besieged Muslim enclave for treatment in Sarajevo.

The Serbs mostly halted their assault on Gorazde on Sunday, more than a day after NATO threatened air strikes if they did not immediately cease fire and withdraw armor and artillery 1.9 miles from the town center.

NATO commanders sought U.N. permission to conduct air strikes Saturday, but the chief U.N. official for former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, refused. U.N. officials said Monday he had just worked out a truce agreement with the Serbs and did not want to jeopardize that.

Although NATO and U.N. officials reportedly had heated exchanges over the refusal, officials at NATO's headquarters were satisfied Monday. They said the alliance had received

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— Vinet, U.N. spokesman

assurances its warplanes would be allowed to stage bombing runs if Bosnian Serbs ignored ultimatums.

"We have good news from Gorazde," U.N. spokesman Maj. Guy Vinet said. "The situation is quiet. ... There's some sporadic small-arms fire, but it's very little."

Cmdr. Eric Chaperon, another U.N. spokesman, said that "all heavy weapons are believed to be out" of the exclusion zone. He said "a number" of Serb infantrymen were still on the right bank of the Drina River, which divides Gorazde, but it appeared they would withdraw.

Chaperon said there also were indications the Serbs were pulling farther back to meet NATO's demand that their troops be at least 12.4 miles from Gorazde by early Wednesday.

The Bosnian Serb army said in a statement that it was completing the pullout of its heavy weapons from the 1.9-mile exclusion zone. It claimed troops of Bosnia's Muslim-dominated government were violating the truce with sniper fire.

As they pulled back Sunday, the Serbs burned houses and blew up a water treatment plant, but U.N. officials said they were.

NATO demanded Friday that all U.N. personnel have unrestricted access for humanitarian convoys to Gorazde, Sarajevo and four other Muslim enclaves that the United Nations has designated "safe areas."

About 350 peacekeepers moved to Gorazde over the weekend and a humanitarian convoy delivered 90 tons of aid Sunday.

Bosnian Serbs blocked a second aid convoy at the Yugoslav border Monday, claiming it had no clearance, aid workers said. The convoy planned to try again Tuesday.

Clinton consoles families of crash victims

FORT MYER, Va. — Facing pews of weeping family members, President Clinton spoke softly Monday of sacrifice and grief at a solemn military service for the men and women killed by friendly fire over northern Iraq.

"We share your grief, we honor their lives. We pray for you and for their souls," Clinton said.

Clinton paid homage to the 26 — 15 Americans, three Turkish officers, two British officers, one French officer and five Kurds — who were killed when U.S. warplanes mistakenly fired on two Army helicopters over Iraq.

the grief, the pain, the questions," Clinton said.

Two Air Force F-15 fighter planes shot down the Army Black Hawk helicopters after mistaking them for Iraqi Hind helicopters. The jets were enforcing a no-fly zone established in northern Iraq after the Persian Gulf War to protect the Kurds. The helicopters were carrying a United Nations relief mission.

The ceremony revolved around the risk assumed by the military, the grief borne by survivors, the noble purpose of their relief mission and the need to find out what went wrong.

Defense Secretary William Perry

pledged to the 36 relatives representing six of the Americans killed in the April 14 accident that the Pentagon would find the answers.

"I have no malice in my heart" toward the F-15 pilots, said Eileen Thompson of Fayetteville, N.C., whose husband, Col. Jerald L. Thompson, was co-commander of the relief forces. "Those poor young men must be suffering terribly."

Thompson, a 26-year Army veteran who saw combat in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War, was two days away from leaving what he promised his wife would be his last assignment away from home.

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