

NEWS IN BRIEF

INTERNATIONAL

Tutu is top candidate to serve on Truth Commission

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Archbishop Desmond Tutu tops a list of 25 candidates for a commission investigating political crimes committed under apartheid. President Nelson Mandela is expected to name the 11-person Truth and Reconciliation Commission this week. The commission is seen crucially important by most black South Africans to uncover the truth of what happened to tens of thousands of people tortured, kidnapped and murdered during white-minority rule. The commission will have the power to subpoena witnesses and grant amnesty to those who testify provided they were not guilty of murder or other serious crimes.

Uneasy Canada awaits word on Bouchard's plans

TORONTO (AP) — Federal leaders and financial markets are waiting uneasily as Quebec separatist Lucien Bouchard prepares to reveal whether he will quit politics or lead another secession battle. All signs suggest he's ready to fight. Were Bouchard to quit, which he has said was possible because of family pressure, it would be deprive the separatists of their most charismatic leader and probably delay the next breakaway attempt. But all the hints from Quebec political circles indicate Bouchard will announce at a news conference today that he is ready to assume the leadership of the separatist Party Quebecois and replace Jacques Parizeau as Quebec's premier.

NATIONAL

Sen. Kassebaum retiring at pinnacle of career

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Sen. Nancy Kassebaum is going home to Kansas next year after three terms in which she won respect as an independent and thoughtful legislator. Kassebaum, one of a shrinking number of GOP moderates in Congress, will depart at the height of her career as chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, with jurisdiction over job training, health, the arts and other issues. She is the only woman who chairs a Senate committee. "My reason for this decision is very simple and purely personal," Kassebaum said Monday, announcing her decision in Topeka, Kan. "I believe the time has come for me to leave the Senate and pursue other challenges, including the challenge of being a grandmother." Kassebaum, 63, has five grandchildren. She and Colorado Sen. Hank Brown are the only Republican senators who have announced plans to retire in 1996. Eight Senate Democrats have said they won't seek re-election next year.



Sen. Nancy Kassebaum

FDA approves first new AIDS treatment since 1987

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Food and Drug Administration approved the first new therapy for use as an initial AIDS treatment in nearly a decade Monday, authorizing the drug 3TC to be used with AZT. When the two drugs are paired, 3TC appears to boost immune systems and lower the amount of the HIV virus in the blood for at least six months, says Glaxo Wellcome Inc. of Research Triangle Park, N.C., which makes both drugs. The combination therapy appears to work best in patients who have never tried AZT alone, prompting an FDA advisory panel to recommend earlier this month that it be offered as an initial therapy.

Judge reluctantly bows to crack sentencing rules

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A judge who has bucked federal sentencing guidelines in crack cocaine cases, arguing they discriminate against blacks, reluctantly obeyed a higher court's instructions Monday. However, U.S. District Judge Lyle Strom apologized and told two brothers as he sentenced them that he would continue working to change the guidelines to allow more lenient terms. Strom sentenced brothers Delano Maxwell, 36, and Hassan Majied, 29, to at least 30 years in prison each for crack cocaine distribution. They and two men sentenced to lesser charges are black. He initially had sentenced them to 20 years each, but after an appeal the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sent the case back to him, ruling he could not give sentences more lenient than the guidelines. Strom has criticized the federal sentencing guidelines because they call for longer sentences for convictions involving the less expensive crack form of cocaine than those required for offenses involving regular or powder cocaine. Strom contends the guidelines are discriminatory because more crack defendants are black.

Mother, stepfather held in torture of teen

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Laine Sumner missed a lot of school. For three days last month, his mother said the 15-year-old boy had the flu. When school officials kept calling, his stepfather finally said he had run away. But the teen-ager had not run away. Instead, authorities contend, the boy was being tortured by his mother, stepfather and others in an effort to recover \$32,000 in drug money they thought he stole. Last week, the boy escaped from his brother-in-law's house in Oklahoma City and told police he was shocked with an electrical device, burned with an iron, and doused with bleach among other things during an eight-week ordeal. Authorities said the boy, who is now in the custody of the state Department of Human Services, had two black eyes, burn marks and other wounds on his body consistent with torture.

Shuttle astronauts back from Russian space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The shuttle astronauts returned to Earth from Russia's Mir space station on Monday with warm memories of their brief visit and three friends they left behind. "Yeah, we would have liked to stay a little bit longer," commander Kenneth Cameron said after touchdown. "But, I mean, Atlantis has other missions to fly, and we had a mission to carry out. We'd done it." Mission Control greeted Cameron in Russian after he guided Atlantis through an overcast sky and landed at Kennedy Space Center, and complimented the five-member crew on a "great job" on the eight-day docking mission. "A big thank you," Cameron replied in Russian. He added in English: "Good to be home." The noon landing was broadcast live at Russian Mission Control outside Moscow. However, Mir's three cosmonauts, who spent three days with the astronauts while their spaceships were docked, had to wait 1 1/2 hours before receiving official word because of sporadic communications.



Astronauts return

GOP, White House applaud shutdown's end

WASHINGTON (AP) — With a budget truce revving the government back to life, the White House and congressional Republicans pledged Monday to use December talks to champion divergent spending priorities that have so far been irreconcilable. The GOP signaled possible give on its prized tax cut. Democrats and Republicans alike seemed relieved that the longest-ever partial federal shutdown was ending, a six-day ordeal that had both parties fearing retribution by disgusted voters. But there was doggedness, too, and White House spokesman Mike McCurry warned, "We'll be right back where we were" unless the two sides strike a budget deal by mid-December.

Judge strikes down portions of Proposition 187

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A federal judge Monday struck down portions of a voter-approved California law that would deny many public services to undocumented immigrants, saying parts of it conflict with federal law. In a written ruling on Proposition 187, U.S. District Judge Mariana Pfaelzer ruled that undocumented newcomers can't be asked about their immigration status when applying to attend public schools or receive health and welfare benefits. "The state is powerless to enact its own scheme to regulate immigration or to devise immigration regulations which run parallel to or purport to supplement the federal immigration law," Pfaelzer wrote in the 71-page ruling.

Barbara Snelling announces for governor

By CHRISTOPHER GRAFF  
Associated Press Writer

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP) — Saying she feared Vermont was becoming "a low-income backwater that only the rich can afford," Lt. Gov. Barbara Snelling on Monday opened what she termed an uphill battle to win the office of governor.

"I know that I will be the underdog," she said. "Reaching this decision has not been easy, but I'm sure it is the right one."

Snelling wasted no time in seeking to define differences with Gov. Howard Dean, painting him as a proponent of big government who lacks vision and management skills.

"I believe my message is very different than Dean's, especially if you look at his performance,"

Snelling said.

"Every time Dean has looked for a solution to a problem, he has gone for bigger government," she said. "If you look at the total takeover of health care he proposed. He has also been in favor of property tax sharing and the state taking control of the property tax away from Vermonters and away from the towns. That's a big government approach."

Kathy Hoyt, Dean's chief of staff, said it was too early to respond to campaign criticisms, but she called it odd that Snelling was criticizing Dean on his fiscal policies.

"It is hard to think she is tackling the governor in one of the areas where history shows he has been very strong," Hoyt said. Snelling, a Republican,

entered elective politics in 1992 following the death of her husband, Richard Snelling, who was serving his fifth term in office when he died.

Dean, a Democrat, was the lieutenant governor at the time and became governor upon Snelling's death.

Snelling was urged by a number of Republicans to run for governor in 1992, but she opted instead to seek the No. 2 post as her first elective office.

At a news conference in Burlington on Monday she said she decided to run for governor in 1996 because of a growing belief that the state economy was stagnant and Vermonters were over-taxed and overregulated.

"Vermonters deserve a better future," she said.



Barbara Snelling AP Photo

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