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South Africa Promises

Gradual Political Reform

JOHANNESBURG, South

Africa (AP) - The National

Party government has promised

reform after suffering heavy

losses in an election accompa-

nied by protests and political vio-

lence in which 25 people were

reported killed.

If the death toll reported

Thursday is confirmed, it would

be the highest in a 24-hour peri-

od since 69 blacks were shot to

death during a peaceful protest

in Sharpeville township in 1960.

Violence resumed Thursday

afternoon when police with shot-

guns opened fire on dancing and

chanting teen-agers in the

mixed-race Lavender Hill town-

ship, said a journalist at the

scene. Four people were report-

edly killed in the township the

night before.

The Rev. Allan Boesak, a

prominent activist, said the

presidency of F.W. de Klerk

"now sits in a pool of blood."

ttI don't know how people can

become vaguely excited about

these elections when . . . the man

with a new vision has allowed

this kind of massacre to take

place," Boesak said.

The outlawed African Nation-

al Congress, the main black

group fighting white rule, said

from Harare, Zimbabwe: "The

elections . . . were a farce and ir-

relevant to the ANC and the op-

pressed majority of South

Africa),

De Klerk described the elec-

tion result as "a clear mandate"

for his party% gradual political

reforms, which envision bringing

blacks into the national govern-

ment on a limited basis within

five years.

"Seventy percent of the whites

voted for parties favoring renew-

al and reform and granting

political rights? he said, linking

the National Party with the

liberal-minded Democrats.

He now is acting president. An

electoral college is expected to

give him a full five-year term

next week.

In Wednesday's white

parliamentary election, the Na-

tionalists got less than 50 percent

of the vote for the first time since

1953. They lost nearly a quarter

of their seats to an anti-apartheid

party and to a far-right group that favors strict racial segregation.

Police used shotguns, tear gas and whips on anti-election protesters in black and mixed-race townships outside Cape Town.

Essa Moosa and Associates, a prominent Cape Town law firm, said 25 people were killed Wednesday night and early Thursday in seven townships on the sprawling Cape Flats.

Leon Mellet, spokesman for the Law and Order Ministry, confirmed 12 deaths. He said at least seven were related to black factional fighting and the others were being investigated.

South African Press Association, an independent news agency, said the Cape Flats resembled a war zone as residents danced around dozens of burning barricades blocking streets in the area and police fired repeatedly at groups of youths.

A mixed-race lieutenant said police caused riots Tuesday in the Mitchell's Plain area of Cape Town.

Lt. Gregory Rockman said police "were just hitting people. They couldn't care if they were innocent bystanders. It seemed to me that they were enjoying themselves, feasting on the people. You could just see the killer instinct in their eyes."

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