

World and Nation

SHOE



Unilever attempting takeover

Company virtually unknown

Associated Press
NEW YORK — Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch company that has been pursuing a hostile bid of Richardson-Vicks Inc., is relatively unknown to the public even though it is the world's largest manufacturer of consumer products and the 18th largest industrial company on the globe. But its products are familiar. Perhaps you brush your teeth with its Close-Up toothpaste, wash your face with its Dove soap, use its All detergent to do your laundry, and drink its Lipton tea.

Although most of Unilever's sales throughout the world come from foods, detergents and personal products, the company is also involved in chemicals, paper, plastics, packaging, animal feeds, transport and tropical plantations.

In addition, UAC International, one of Unilever's largest subsidiaries, has substantial interests in Africa and other parts of the world in diverse industrial ventures.

Unilever, which employs about 320,000 people and operates in about 75 countries, had a profit of 396 million British pounds, or \$564 million at the current exchange rate, on sales of 16.17 billion pounds, or \$23 billion, last year.

Sixty-five percent of Unilever's sales are in Europe and about 14 percent are in the United States. The remaining sales are spread around the world.

The British arm of the company is called Unilever PLC and is based in London. The Dutch arm, Unilever NV, is located in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

The two operate as much as possible as single companies. They also operate under an agreement that equalizes the dividends paid to the shareholders of both.

Floris A. Maljers is chairman of Unilever NV and vice chairman of Unilever PLC. Sir Kenneth Durham is chairman of Unilever PLC and vice chairman of Unilever NV.

Unilever U.S. Inc., Unilever NV's New York-based American subsidiary, owns Thomas J. Lipton Inc., which makes foods and beverages; Lever Brothers Co., which makes detergents and other cleaning products, personal products, margarine and some other foods; and National Starch and Chemical Corp., a maker of adhesives, specialty starches, resins and other chemical products.

The U.S. subsidiary said Thursday it was raising to \$60 per share its top offer for all of the common stock of Richardson-Vicks, whose man-

agement has opposed the takeover bid.

Unilever said it was boosting its previous top offer from \$56 a share provided that the offer was approved by the Richardson-Vicks board. It said its offer would remain at \$48 a share if the Richardson-Vicks board failed to approve the offer.

Richardson-Vicks and members of the founding family also have bought sizeable numbers of shares of the company's stock. Family members and trusts they control said this past week that they own 36 percent of the shares outstanding.

As a result of the company's buy-back efforts, Richardson-Vicks has about 17.6 million shares outstanding, making the value of the bid at \$60 a share worth about \$1.06 billion, compared with \$985 million at previous top price.

Unilever's offer is contingent on 51 percent of Richardson-Vicks' shares being tendered to Unilever for purchase. However, a two-thirds vote of shares is required for approval of any merger.

Richardson-Vicks' consumer products are well-known, too. Among them are Vicks cold remedies and Vidal Sassoon hair products.

What would you do if you had \$1 million?

Associated Press
NEW YORK — In an era when lotteries and sweepstakes are flourishing, it has become popular to imagine oneself suddenly rich.

The rules of the game are simple: Gather a few friends together, and provide a sociable atmosphere. Play begins when one member of the party poses the question, "Well now, what would you do if you had a million dollars?"

Recent times have tarnished the fantasy somewhat. Thanks to inflation, \$1 million in 1985 would be pathetically inadequate if you wanted to provide yourself with proper wealth. It would buy you no yachts, no airplanes, no lifelong luxury.

With \$1 million you could scarcely afford a decent country estate in a typical high-prestige locale. And you would have nothing left over to pay the upkeep and the utility bills.

Suppose you took a very cautious approach, and invested your \$1 million windfall in Treasury securities or municipal bonds. That would give you an annual aftertax income of \$80,000 or \$90,000 — enough to provide for a very comfortable, but hardly sumptuous life.

You would presumably be free to quit your job, buy a home computer,

Rioting spills into white areas of South Africa

Associated Press
JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — A mob burned a black man to death Sunday in the second straight day of clashes between rival black groups near Durban, and anti-apartheid violence spilled into white areas for the third day in a row, police said.

An explosion that police believed was caused by a bomb went off in the men's room of a hotel near Durban where about 150 black youngsters were guests at a "children's day," but no one was injured.

The death toll from Saturday's street battles between rival black groups in Umlazi was unclear. Police said four people died, but the independent South African Press Association reported six deaths.

Police said they killed an unidentified black man throwing a gasoline bomb in Dordecht, a small eastern Cape Province town 298 miles south of Johannesburg.

Police have nearly quelled 13 months of rioting in the black and mixed-race townships, but whites have been attacked in the last three days in Johannesburg's suburbs, near Cape Town, East London on the Indian Ocean shore and near Port Elizabeth.

The African National Congress, the banned black guerrilla group trying to overthrow the white government by force, broadcast appeals from radio stations in black-ruled Africa telling blacks to spread unrest into white neighborhoods.

More than 700 people have perished since Sept. 3, 1984, but only seven have been white. None were killed in white areas, although two whites were killed in separate incidents while driving near black communities.

New researcher team shuns traditional data

Associated Press
NEW YORK — When anthropologists venture into the American marketplace, the notes from their journals might surprise even Margaret Mead.

Consider the finding that Southern men take pride in their pot bellies.

Steve Barnett got his doctorate in anthropology at Chicago University, then taught at Princeton, Brown and MIT before joining the consulting firm of Planmetrics.

Barnett has assembled a team in New York of five anthropologists, a sociologist, a social psychologist and a statistician who are called in for the tough jobs, when traditional market research fails. Where other marketers use focus groups, direct questioning and opinion polls, Planmetrics uses direct observation.

The technique, which can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$300,000, appears to be working.

For example, a traditional public opinion survey among maintenance workers for a public utility found the vast majority approved of nuclear power. So the company decided to use the workers

to "talk up" nuclear power with its customers.

When the idea didn't work, Planmetrics put a few anthropologists in the same uniforms as the repair crews to find out what was going wrong.

"We discovered that even a pro-nuclear employee did not take a pro-nuclear stand with a customer," Barnett said.

Planmetrics later was asked to determine what features made certain styles of casual jackets popular with men. "We felt if you looked at how they tried them on, you'd find out what's important to them," Barnett said, so the team put video cameras behind one-way mirrors in the mens' clothing section.

The technique worked and the client was satisfied, but it was one irrelevant observation which fascinated Barnett: In Southern stores, pot-bellied men would choose jackets that looked too tight, then turn sideways and admire their bulging profiles.

"We discovered people were quite proud of having grown that belly," Barnett said. "Rather than get a looser jacket that would hide it, they got one to show it off."

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