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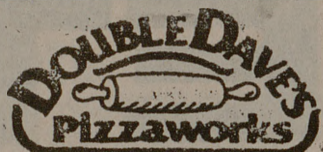


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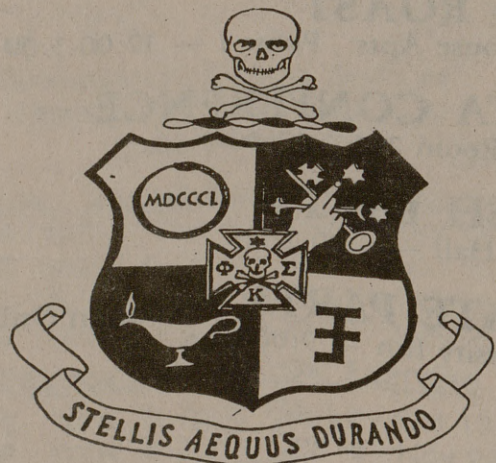


DoubleDave will be wandering around the A&M Campus.

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World and Nation

International drug crackdown creates new high in teamwork

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than 1,200 people were arrested this month in a 30-nation drug crackdown unprecedented for its international teamwork, Attorney General Richard Thornburgh said Tuesday.

The operations, centered in the United States and South and Central America, led to the seizure of 11 tons of cocaine and the destruction of 244 tons of marijuana, 118,000 coca plants and 13 cocaine laboratories, Thornburgh said.

Authorities also demolished seven

hidden airstrips and seized \$3.8 million in cash, he said.

The Aug. 1-28 campaign involved a variety of operations, including intensified border searches, the discovery and destruction of chemical stores, and increased patrols of airports, highways and rivers known to have been used for illicit drug shipments.

In Florida, Arizona and Texas, about 100 members of the National Guard helped inspect over 6,000 vehicles, leading to the seizure of marijuana.

Thornburgh, revealing the operation at a news conference, said "The statistics are not as important as the signal that has been sent to the drug kingpins. Henceforth they will increasingly face the combined fury of law enforcement agencies of all nations whose people they victimize."

He called the international cooperation an "important milestone" and the "first type of operation of its kind" on the war against drugs. Regional operations, those involving more than one or two countries, have not been tried before, he said.

The participating countries, all members of the International Drug Enforcement Conference, shared resources and intelligence and, in a few cases, staged cross-border operations. Officials insisted that the United States did not orchestrate the effort.

John C. Lawn, head of the Drug Enforcement Administration and president of the conference, said in a statement that several European nations and Canada stepped up monitoring of aircraft, boats and cargo arriving from South America. Lawn was in Bogota, Colombia, Tuesday for a conference meeting.

DEA officials said there was no central director for the dozens of operations carried out around the Western Hemisphere. Instead, each country drew up and carried out its own plan, sometimes in cooperation with other countries.

For instance, Panama and Costa Rica worked together to seize chemicals used for cocaine at points along the border.

Panama participated in the operation as a member of the conference but did not receive any "central intelligence" from the United States, Thornburgh said.

Panama's military dictator, Manuel Antonio Noriega, has been indicted by two federal grand juries in Florida on charges of drug trafficking and money laundering. Washington has sought his ouster since early this year, applying economic sanctions that have hurt Panama's economy.

Charles Gutensohn, chief of DEA's cocaine investigations, said the simultaneous operations were important because they added pressure on the traffickers and often lead to valuable intelligence.

Many of the drug traffickers were caught together, ignoring national boundaries, he said. He pointed to the seizure of military authorities seized cocaine laboratories used by members of the powerful Medellin and Cali drug cartels, based in Colombia.

By destroying the labs in the Huallaga Valley, authorities have sidetracked the Colombian dealers, he said. Cocaine labs were seized in Colombia, as well as Bolivia. In Colombia and Venezuela, military officials in both countries operated along a joint border.

As a result of information obtained in the operation, Gutensohn said authorities in New York seized two tons of cocaine and some \$3 million this month.

Dukakis: Bush fails test of leadership

Michael Dukakis said Tuesday that George Bush flunked a key "test of leadership" in the Iran-Contra affair and questioned whether his Republican rival has the judgment needed to deal with the Soviet Union. Bush shot back that Dukakis favors "unilateral cuts" in U.S. defenses.

The two contenders for the White House swapped charges in their escalating war of campaign words as their top aides met in Washington without agreeing on a schedule for presidential debates this fall.

Bush campaign chairman James A. Baker III said the Republicans would accept two presidential debates and one confrontation between vice presidential contenders, but nothing before Sept. 22.

Dukakis aide Paul Brontas said he favored a more extensive schedule.

"We want more debates, they want fewer," Brontas said. "We want to start them earlier, they want to start them later. We want to continue them up until the election takes place. They would like to end them much earlier," he added. The two sides will meet again on Thursday.

Dukakis bargained through aides with Bush over debates as fresh reports surfaced of lingering tensions with Jesse Jackson. An anonymous source said Jackson met with top Dukakis aides last week and was angered when he was handed a list of states to avoid during the fall campaign.

But Dukakis spokesman Dayton Duncan called the report about the list "absolutely false."

Dukakis, who has sharpened his rhetoric in the face of widespread published reports that he has lost the campaign offensive, said Bush was a failure as a crime fighter and misguided on defense matters, and he resurrected the Iran-Contra affair as a campaign issue.

"Making tough decisions is a test of leadership. George Bush endorsed the decision to sell arms to Iran and in doing so he failed that test," Dukakis said.

Referring to the Iran-Contra affair, dealings with Panama's indicted leader Manuel Antonio Noriega and Bush's support during the early 1980s for ousted Philippines President Ferdinand E. Marcos, Dukakis said, "And he's talking about judgment, about negotiations, about taking risks. I would be very concerned about someone with that

kind of judgment negotiating with the Soviet Union."

Bush kept up his own steady drumbeat of criticism as he campaigned in North Carolina. "We should not gamble America's future on another liberal governor coming out of nowhere," he said, likening Dukakis to former President Carter.

Later, Bush said Dukakis wants "to make unilateral cuts in our strategic systems, the MX, the Midgetman, no testing, get rid of two (aircraft) carrier groups, as well."

The vice president also cautioned against complacency in dealing with the Soviet Union. "I'm glad there is change in the Soviet Union," he said. "But we'd better not let our guard down."

Economic indicators' decline most drastic in eight months

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government said Tuesday its chief forecasting gauge of future economic activity suffered the steepest drop in eight months in July, but few analysts expect a substantial slackening in growth anytime soon.

The 0.8 percent decline in the Commerce Department's Index of Leading Economic Indicators was the biggest since last November, when the index dropped 1.0 percent in the aftermath of the October stock market crash.

However, economists noted that the index posted an exceptionally strong increase in June and cautioned against reading too much into a one-month downturn.

In a separate report, the Commerce Department said orders to U.S. factories for manufactured goods plunged 3.5 percent in July, the worst decline in 18 months. But that drop followed a very strong showing in June and was heavily influenced by a wide swing in orders for military equipment.

The economy, as measured by the gross national product, grew at a 3.3 percent annual rate in the three months ended in June and at a 3.4 percent pace in the first quarter.

White House spokesman B. Jay Cooper, in California with the vacationing President Reagan, said, "The data suggest continued economic growth in the months ahead, although at a more moderate pace than in the first half" of the year.

However, the very strength that dispelled financial markets' worries about a recession is fueling concern that the economy is expanding at a too-rapid pace that will lead to faster inflation.

In an effort to ease inflationary pressures, the Federal Reserve Board has been attempting to dampen economic growth by pushing up short-term interest rates since late March. On Aug. 9, it took its most dramatic inflation-fighting move by raising the discount

rate, its key bank lending rate, by a half percentage point.

Lawrence Chimerine, chairman of the Welfa Group, a Bala Cynwyd, Pa., economic forecasting firm, said Tuesday's reports should help encourage the Fed to hold off on any further tightening moves unless there is evidence of inflation surfacing.

However, bond and stock traders had been anticipating the declines and the markets showed little reaction in trading Tuesday.

In July, the weakness in the leading indicators was widespread, with seven of the available nine components registering declines.

The biggest drain came from an 11.3 percent drop in unemployment claims. Without that, the overall rate of the index would have been only about 0.1 percent.

Other negative factors, in order of severity, were drop in new orders for consumer goods; a decline in building permits; a speedup in business deliveries considered a sign of slackening demand; a drop in Standard & Poor's index of 500 stocks; an inflation-justified contraction of the money supply; and a drop in plant and equipment orders.

One indicator, a rise in prices for raw materials read as a sign of economic strength. The length of the average work week was unchanged in July.

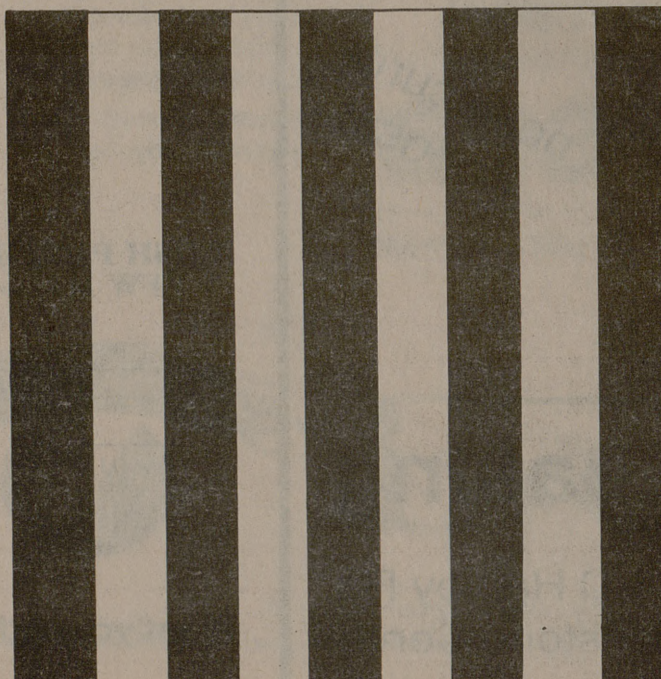
The 0.8 percent overall decline left the index at 192.1 percent of its 1967 base of 100.

The dip followed a 1.4 percent jump in the index in June, the biggest since December 1986. The index had a revised 0.7 percent in May.

Economists use the leading index as an advance signal of a recession. It has declined three times in six to nine months in advance of all eight recessions since 1948. However, on four occasions the index declined three months in a row and only slower growth but no recession, followed.



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