

World and Nation

Textile bill gets Reagan veto

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan on Wednesday vetoed legislation designed to toughen curbs on textile, apparel and shoe imports, arguing it would have disastrous effects on the economy at a time when exports are booming.

Only minutes after rejecting the textile measure in private, Reagan went before television cameras in the Rose Garden to sign a bill paving the way for a multibillion-dollar free-trade zone with Canada.

The measure won congressional approval without the two-thirds margin needed to override a veto, and White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater expressed confidence that Reagan's veto would be sustained.

The president lavished praise on the Canadian free-trade agreement, calling it a hallmark of free trade and the antithesis of the textile measure he'd just vetoed.

"It would impose needless costs on American consumers, threaten jobs in our export industries, jeopardize our overseas farm sales and undermine our efforts to obtain a more open trading system for U.S. exports," Reagan said.

"At a time when American exports are booming, the United States must not embark on a course that would diminish our trade opportunities," he added.

With every move that has arisen on Capitol Hill to strengthen textile imports, Reagan has pledged to veto any resulting legislation.

The bill would do the following:

- Freeze textile and apparel imports at 1987 levels this year and limit growth to 1 percent annually starting in January.
- Freeze imports of non-rubber footwear with no provision for increases.
- Impose import quotas on 180 categories of textile products and 30 types of footwear, a system that would be reviewed after 10 years.
- Set up a one-year program under which the government would auction off import licenses and set a special quota for silk neckties.

The House approved the bill on a vote of 248-150 on Friday. Earlier this month, the Senate approved the measure, 59-36.

In both cases, Reagan said he was acting to lower prices for consumers and to ensure jobs for workers.

The textile bill, intended to protect American industries against foreign competition, won final congressional approval last Friday.

But Reagan, in a veto message released by the White House, said, "This bill represents protectionism at its worst."

But the treaty has no force as yet because it is bottled up in the Canadian Senate and its fate depends on the outcome of the Canadian election.

"Protectionism does not save jobs," Reagan said in his veto message. He contended the textile bill would have disastrous effects on the U.S. economy.

The president called the textile and apparel industries the most protected sector of our economy and said they were undeserving of further aid.

Reagan charged that prices would climb and break the clothing budgets of many American families if the legislation took effect.

Communists meet amidst anticipation of policy change

MOSCOW (AP) — The Communist Party's policy-making body will meet Friday to overhaul the country's political structure and make high-level leadership changes, Soviet officials said.

The plenary session of the 300-member Central Committee had been expected by October to discuss amendments to the Constitution and expanding elections to include multiple candidates.

The changes are key to Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev's goal of taking the 20 million-member Communist Party out of the day-to-day management of the economy and having it focus on ideology and policy goals.

The Central Committee session had been planned for a long time, but the specific date had not been set.

When the announcement was made, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze and other Soviet officials rushed back home from trips abroad.

"There will be changes in the working of our political structure," Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov told reporters at the United Nations in New York, where Shevardnadze was attending the General Assembly session.

On July 29, the Central Committee adopted a timetable for overhauling the Soviet political system. The first deadline set was October, by which time the Central Committee said a draft law on amendments to the Soviet Constitution and on multi-candidate elections of legislators was to be completed.

In a speech last Friday, Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev said the Politburo would soon convene to review the draft law.

"He has to cut it short, unfortunately," Gerasimov said. "The plenary will be devoted to reorganization of the party apparatus, including the Central Committee itself."

Soviet media did not carry any reports about scheduled high-level Communist Party meetings or about Shevardnadze's travel plans.

A meeting of the parliament, the Supreme Soviet, will then be convened to discuss the measure, Gorbachev told media executives, ideological workers and heads of cultural and artistic unions. By year's end, the party is to have reorganized.

The Central Committee is empowered to make personnel changes in the Politburo. At the 19th party conference, one delegate suggested that holdovers from the 18-year tenure of Soviet president Leonid I. Brezhnev be eased out of the leadership. The delegate specifically named President Andrei A. Gromyko, 79, and fellow Politburo member Mikhail S. Solomentsev, 76, as leaders who should retire.

In Moscow, two Soviet sources dismissed speculation of an emergency or that the meeting concerned the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. They spoke to reporters at a reception at the U.S. Ambassador's residence.

"There is no crisis," one highly placed source in Moscow said. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Brezhnev era is now widely condemned as allowing rampant corruption and decay of the Soviet economy and making mistakes in foreign policy.

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World briefs

Congress wants cuts in physician fees

BOSTON (AP) — A top-to-bottom reorganization of physician fees, requested by Congress, could raise the pay of general practitioners by 70 percent while cutting some surgeons' income in half, its author said.

If adopted by private and government insurance programs, the long-awaited plan would sharply increase the pay for office visits while reducing fees for surgery and other procedures, such as installing pacemakers.

The plan's architect, economist William C. Hsiao of the Harvard School of Public Health, contends the current system is unworkable

and unfair, short-changing doctors for day-to-day management of their patients while paying them far too much for exotic tests and other highly technical work.

He said his proposed fee structure will change doctors' financial incentives, and this will alter the way they practice medicine and ultimately improve patient care.

"You can predict that under the new system, doctors will be willing to spend a lot more time with patients to examine and counsel them," Hsiao said. "Right now, physicians are being penalized financially for spending time with patients."

Guilty verdict given to drug trafficker

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Mexican drug trafficker was found guilty Wednesday of aiding and abetting the 1985 convicted torture murderer of a U.S. drug agent and his pilot. He was the third person convicted in the case, which strained U.S.-Mexican relations.

Jesus Felix Gutierrez, 38, was found guilty by a federal jury of helping Mexican drug baron Rafael Caro Quintero escape to Costa Rica after the brutal 1985 murder of Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique Camarena and his pilot, Alfredo Zavala Avelar.

Felix's attorney had contended there was insufficient evidence to

convict the former Los Angeles seafood store owner and suggested the government altered evidence.

The key evidence against Felix was the testimony of a government informant who said he heard the defendant discuss his role in arranging Quintero's escape. Prosecutors also showed jurors entries on Felix's passport indicating he had preceded Quintero to Costa Rica and left after Quintero arrived.

Earlier, jurors convicted Renee Verdugo Uruidez and Raul Lopez Alvarez of conspiring and participating in the kidnap-murders of Camarena and Zavala.

Iran jolted by 300th quake in five weeks

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — An earthquake registering 4.6 on the Richter scale shook southwestern Iran, and Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency said Wednesday that it was about the 300th quake to jolt the nation in five weeks.

The agency, monitored in Nicosia, made no mention of casualties or damage in Tuesday night's quake in the town of Mamassani

in southwestern Far province.

But it said seven people have been killed or injured and 2,000 houses destroyed in a series of quakes that began Aug. 23.

Another tremor, registering 2.8 on the Richter scale, shook the city of Garmssar, 60 miles southeast of Tehran, early Wednesday, IRNA said. No casualties were reported.

Officials confiscate radioactive milk

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Officials raided a suburban warehouse in the Manila suburb of Paranaque, said the imported milk was part of a shipment of dairy products returned to Western Europe in 1986 after the accident.

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