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for
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World/Nation

Drug seizure in Mexico nets cocaine worth \$150 million

MATAMOROS, Mexico (AP) — More than 1.5 tons of Colombian cocaine with an estimated value of \$150 million was seized from a truck south of this border city over the weekend, Mexican officials said Monday.

The drug was concealed inside 60 paint drums on the bed of a truck about 50 miles south of Matamoros, according to the Mexican Federal Roads Police, which made the seizure.

A dispatcher with the Federal Roads Police said Monday the seizure occurred about 11:15 p.m. Saturday on Mexico's Highway 101.

The truck's driver, 37-year-old Vicente Rezendiz Hernandez of Villa Progreso in the state of Queretaro, was arrested and turned over to the attorney general's office for questioning, said Hector Arguelles, chief of the Federal Roads Police office in Matamoros.

Arguelles said the seizure was made in

coordination with the Federal Judicial Police and was the result of an investigation that began several months ago.

Arguelles said international drug traffickers, mostly from Colombia, have intensified their operations and are hiring the services of Mexican middlemen.

"We have information that these people are operating on a very large scale here," Arguelles said Sunday. "They have been shipping drugs by air, land and sea."

The chief said Rezendiz told authorities that a man from the Mexican border city of Reynosa had paid him to transport a load of paint to the border.

Police said they have the name of the suspect but would not reveal it. They also said they believe the Colombian cocaine was flown into Mexico via Jalisco state, where it was loaded into the truck to be taken to the U.S. border.

Police said when the truck was stopped, they noticed Rezendiz started to get nervous while being questioned.

They searched the truck and discovered that 60 out of 150 paint drums in the back of the truck were stuffed with 55 pounds each of cocaine tightly wrapped

in plastic. The total amount of cocaine seized was about 3,300 pounds, said.

The cocaine, estimated to be 98 percent pure, was turned over to the attorney general's office in Mexico Sunday night.

Congress rushes to finish drug bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — Its election-year antennae in full working order, Congress is aiming to finish fashioning a something-for-everyone anti-drug bill and a \$2.7 billion tax measure this week and then adjourn for the year.

Both measures would satisfy a compelling urge that overtakes lawmakers each election year: to churn out legislation popular with a lot of voters.

Work on both, however, is being influenced by another instinct that becomes unusually potent in Capitol Hill late in even-numbered years: the desire to flee Washington in time to campaign for re-election.

Thus, when the Senate turns to the drug measure, legislators will be struggling to finish their work quickly or going home with no bill at all.

"Ninety-five percent of the good we'll do with this bill is in the core bill," insists one of the sponsors of the drug legislation, Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga. "If members from both sides continue to insist on the more controversial amendments, we won't get a bill."

The drug bill is a two-year, \$2.6 billion collection of programs ranging from an expansion of the availability of treatment programs to a stiffening of penal-

ties for people convicted of distributing drugs to children.

But lawmakers are lining up to offer an assortment of amendments that are so contentious that the bill just might be debated to death.

Senators and their aides spent the long Columbus Day weekend trying to figure out how to slash the number of amendments the chamber will have to sort through, with Republicans ready to offer six to 10 amendments and Democrats poised to introduce more than 70 others.

Among the more controversial amendments are proposals to allow courts to consider illegally gathered evidence that police obtained in good faith; narrow the rights of prisoners to claim they were jailed illegally; require a waiting period for people wishing to purchase handguns and apply tougher sanctions against the apartheid government of South Africa.

An effort may be made to strip from the bill a provision that would allow capital punishment for drug dealers who order killings, for hired killers who commit murder as part of a drug enterprise and for anyone who kills a law enforcement officer during the commission of a drug crime.

Protests raise tension for Communist Party

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Communist authorities put more police on the streets and imposed unspecified urgent measures in Montenegro's capital Monday, but protests fed by economic crisis and ethnic tension did not stop.

Protest has swept much of southern and eastern Yugoslavia in recent weeks. Police used violent tactics for the first time over the weekend to disperse Montenegrin students and workers demanding the dismissal of local Communist Party leaders.

President Raif Dizdarevic went on national television Sunday night to appeal for calm, warning of unspecified emergency measures.

Unrest continued Monday in Titograd, the capital of Montenegro 280 miles southwest of Belgrade, and the regional party leadership held an emergency meeting, the official news agency Tanjug reported.

Workers and 2,000 students at Niksic, 30 miles north of Titograd, rallied outside a government building and in a steel mill where 2,800 workers were on strike for a second day, Tanjug said.

Police used clubs and tear gas to break up weekend crowds in Titograd and disperse marchers in Niksic who were on their way there.

The Titograd rally was an explosion of anger about hardships resulting from the austerity program the government imposed in May because of a \$21 billion foreign debt and high inflation, which has soared to an annual rate of 217 percent. The unemployment rate is about 15 percent.

Tanjug reported, without details, that urgent measures were imposed Monday in Titograd. It said later 1,000 construction workers called off a strike after local party leaders promised to consider their demands.

Clocks symbolize growing changes for Baltic republic

TALLINN, U.S.S.R. (AP) — When Soviets set their clocks ahead next spring for an extra hour of daylight, Estonia won't switch with them.

The tiny Baltic republic will no longer tick to the time in Moscow, 500 miles to the south, but to the time in Finland, 50 miles to the north.

Thus, even the clocks will reflect the new spirit of independence among Estonians.

Long viewed as one of the most progressive of the 15 Soviet republics, Estonia is trying in many other ways to set its own course. Its leaders hope to use their independence to demonstrate the effectiveness of President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's social and economic reforms.

With the blessing of the republic's Communist Party, officials are planning to open trade offices abroad, enter joint ventures with Western companies without Moscow approval, return to family farming, and even issue their own currency that, unlike the ruble, could be traded on world markets.

"The Communist Party of Estonia can be regarded as one of the front-rankers of the reconstruction drive. Estonia has been the initiator of many reforms," Estonian party chief Vajino Vyalys said.

Vyalys, a Gorbachev protege, appears to have his blessing. But he and the Estonian activists leading the reform drive have been careful not to go too far, as they say the Armenians have done in their campaign for annexation of a region in the republic of Azerbaijan.

"At the bottom of our hearts, all Estonians want secession," said Ulo Kaevats, head of the auditing commission of the People's Front, a grassroots organization pushing for reform. "But if we did put forward this question, we would have martial law, and we all know that very well."

The group's blue, red and green emblem can be seen on posters, flags and buttons throughout Tallinn, Estonia's ancient seaside capital. State-run radio broadcast the front's organizing conference live Oct. 1-2, and newspapers reported it on their front pages.

Even in Moscow, the centrally controlled press, which has branded other such groups as "anti-socialist," carried generally sympathetic reports on the People's Front.

The group, which formed in April and claims a membership of 60,000 in Estonia, approved a platform at its conference that, in effect, calls for Estonia to establish its autonomy from Moscow in all matters except defense and foreign policy.

The People's Front demanded decolonization and seeks local control of agriculture, industry and businesses without interference from

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— Vajino Vyalys

Moscow. The group also wants Estonian to be the republic's official language and proposes curbs on the employment of non-Estonians, who make up 40 percent of the republic's population.

The group also is after political power. It has fielded candidates in local elections and plans to put up in legislative elections next spring.

So far, however, it has been careful not to challenge the Communist Party directly.

About 28 percent of its members also belong to the party, and Vyalys, the party's Estonian first secretary, sat through most of the front's organizational congress, leading it to a sure of official backing.

In a Sept. 9 speech, Vyalys, the Estonian party's Central Committee that he endorsed the front's demands for economic self-management, "restoration of historical truth," creation of Estonian citizenship, and preservation of Estonians as the ethnic majority in the public.

To compensate for what is a mistake of history, the front wants Moscow to renounce the non-aggression pact with Germany that led to the Soviet takeover of Estonia and the other Baltic states, Lithuania and Latvia. Unlike smaller citizens' group called the Estonian Independence Party, however, the People's Front does not call for return of Estonian sovereignty.

Giving Estonia a measure of independence is not without risk. The Soviet Union has more than 100 nationalities and ethnic groups, all with their own concerns. The central government must perform a constant balancing act, showing tolerance for national and ethnic goals while holding the union together.

The experiments could mean rewards for the republic if Estonian agricultural production increases, foreign trade grows and if consumer goods appear in stores.

But they also could benefit Gorbachev, who is trying to prove his responsibility and incentives will prove life more than the method of central planning he blames for stagnation and political repression.

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