

WORLD BRIEFS

Algeria placed under state of emergency

ALGIERS, Algeria — Cracking down on a growing challenge from Muslim fundamentalists, President Chadli Bendjedid declared a state of emergency today and postponed the country's first multiparty parliamentary elections.

Armored vehicles were sent into the capital in the crackdown, which followed nearly two weeks of violent demonstrations by supporters of the Islamic Salvation Front.

The front had called a general strike that widened this week and suggested voters boycott the elections, which had been set for June 27.

Tight clamp on dissent shows focus on stability

BEIJING — The thoroughness of the government clampdown on the two-year anniversary of the army killings of pro-democracy demonstrators dramatizes the priorities China's leaders have emphasized ever since — "Stability Over All."

That slogan is chanted like a mantra in the state-run media, and government

policy making has slowed to a crawl as officials weigh the possible impact of every move on social stability.

This kind of thinking lay behind the late announcement of the May 14 suicide of the hated widow of Mao Tse-tung, Jiang Qing, who presided over the purges of thousands of people during the radical leftist Cultural Revolution.

Students sentenced to 13 months in drug raid

CHARLOTTEVILLE, Va. — One of 11 University of Virginia students arrested in drug raids on three fraternity houses was sentenced to 13 months in prison with no parole.

The fraternity houses were seized in the March raids, a first for the government.

U.S. District Judge James Harry Michael Jr. sentenced Ernest Brown Pryor Jr. to a federal prison in Morgantown, W. Va., after the 19-year-old pleaded guilty Monday to two counts of drug distribution near a school.

He was accused of selling less than 20 grams of marijuana and about 10 grams of hallucinogenic mushrooms at the Phi Epsilon house to an undercover agent.

— The Associated Press

Highway funding drives controversy

Opposition to Highway Trust Fund results from misperceptions, DOT contends

By Jennifer Williamson
Staff Writer

Officials of the N.C. Department of Transportation said although they were aware of opposition to the Highway Trust Fund, a \$9.2 billion road construction account, transportation was vital to state needs.

Richard Roberson, director of client services in the Department of Economic and Community Development (Commerce Department), said he was not aware of specific UNC student groups opposing the fund, but that he was not surprised there was opposition.

"I suppose there are very programs that please everyone," Roberson said.

Sharon Hodges, a DOT spokeswoman, said the N.C. Highway Trust Fund, which would fund Gov. Jim Martin's Intrastate Highway System plan, was designed to build 3,600 miles of four-lane highways across the state. When the Intrastate System is completed, 96 percent of the state's residents would have a four-lane road within 10 miles of their homes.

Other goals of the program are paving secondary roads and building loops around major cities.

The trust fund will also provide funding for a program designed to build city streets to state specifications.

The fund receives money from the 5-cent-per-gallon fuel tax and 3 percent of the highway use tax levied when vehicle owners transfer registration.

UNC's Committee for Peace and Justice is one campus group that disagrees with the amount of money allotted to the trust fund.

Matthew Stewart, committee member, said, "We think that there is an imbalance of priorities between transportation and higher education."

The trust fund is an example of where state money would be better spent on education, he said. "The (education) system is dropping in excellence; it's a downward spiral."

Bruce Barry, committee member, said state officials should be aware of opposition to the fund. He cited an April 10 student rally in Raleigh against cuts in the state education budget as an ex-

ample.

The rally exemplified opposition to the trust fund specifically, he said.

David Biggs, UNC Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) co-chairman, said he believed that transportation budget cuts were not proportional to education budget cuts. Not enough money has been taken out of transportation and too much has been cut from education, he said.

Hodges said that during the past two years, \$396 million was taken out of the trust fund and put into the General Fund for teachers' salaries.

Rep. Sam Hunt, D-Burlington, said that in the past year, \$22 million was also transferred to the General Fund and spent on driver education programs.

The General Assembly must approve transfers from the Highway Trust Fund to the General Fund, she said.

Graduate students in a UNC public management and leadership class mailed a survey about highway programs to 634 city and county managers and officials of economic development organizations and chambers of commerce.

More than 97 percent of the 61 percent who responded said they supported the trust fund, with 95 percent ranking their support as strong.

N.C. Transportation Secretary Thomas Harrelson said there were misconceptions concerning the trust fund.

Many people believe there is \$9.2 billion in the fund presently, he said. However, the fund is a "pay as you go" program, or when funding is available, it immediately is used, he said.

Hodges said there was a \$10.4 million deficit in the fund now.

She said N.C. Policy and Fund Administration officials projected the negative balance would be corrected this month with the anticipated revenues from the remainder of the fiscal year.

Harrelson said highways, like education, had not escaped budget cuts.

Hodges said it was useless for state services to compete for funding.

"We need to work on education, but not by putting state service against state service," she said. "Education already receives about four times the amount of highways."

Balance between education and highway funds discussed on NCPT's Stateline

By Jennifer Williamson
Staff Writer

A television panel on N.C. Public Television's "Stateline" discussed Tuesday whether too much priority was being placed on highway funding.

Stateline's opening report focused specifically on the N.C. Highway Trust Fund. The panel was asked whether the trust fund could be used for non-highway needs such as education.

The \$9.2 billion trust was created to fund the Intrastate (highway) System for a 10-year period, but because of low fuel and vehicle tax collections the project could stretch over 20 years.

However, the ink was barely dry on

the plan before lawmakers began diverting trust fund money to the General Fund, said Bob Garner, the panel moderator.

During the past two years, \$396 million has been transferred from the trust fund to pay for teachers' salaries, and \$22 million for driver education.

Sen. Bill Goldston, D-Eden, said using trust fund money for non-highway projects was a betrayal of public trust.

"The bill has to adhere to those highways that we promised those people," he said. "The roads have to be built no matter how far we stretch them out."

Rep. Mickey Michaux, D-Durham, said money should be transferred to provide for the needs of education.

"Let's use that money for the better-

ment of the people. We've got a long time to build a whole lot of roads."

Goldston argued that it was unconstitutional for the state to promise funding for one thing, in this case transportation, and take it away for the purpose of another, education.

Rep. Sam Hunt, D-Burlington, said state funding should provide for all the needs of the public.

The northeastern part of the state, the poorer region, was left out of the federal interstate highway system, he said. By using the trust fund for Gov. Jim Martin's Intrastate System, all portions of the state could be reached, and the northeast could prosper, he said.

Every dollar spent on highways re-

sults in \$20 in private investment in the area, he said.

Rep. Larry Justus, R-Hendersonville, proposed House Bill 1158, which would allow the General Assembly to borrow from the Highway Trust Fund to balance the General Fund.

Justus said this bill would be better than raising the state sales tax by 1 cent per dollar, which would take \$500 million out of an economy in recession.

Rep. Paul Luebke, D-Durham, said he favored using trust fund money for education. An educated labor force should be a high priority, he said.

"If we have to establish priorities, then doing more for education would be a better way to go," he said.

Growth in state AIDS cases recorded

By Lauren Chesnut
Staff Writer

State and local officials say the proliferation of AIDS in North Carolina should be taken seriously by state residents.

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome is spreading "at a record rate" in

North Carolina, The Associated Press reported last week. The statistics it cited were from "HIV/AIDS Surveillance," a monthly publication of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

The Chapel Hill Herald subsequently published a news article featuring state critics of the AP story, who said its figures were meaningless and suggested the AP story could create a climate of homophobia and increased fear of AIDS.

"I didn't exactly mean that — meaningless," said Wayne Bobbitt, branch head of North Carolina's human immunodeficiency virus/sexually transmitted disease control program. Bobbitt was quoted in The Herald as saying the figures "don't mean a whole lot."

"AIDS is still a very serious, high-priority disease in this state," Bobbitt said. "Our data show it's up at least 25 percent over last year, and even with

that, we do not have complete data even from reporting ... I don't want to minimize anything that would say to anyone that AIDS is not a serious, important disease in this state, because it is, and we consider it epidemic."

According to the most recent issue of "HIV/AIDS Surveillance," the number of people reported with AIDS in North Carolina increased 36 percent between May 1990 and April 1991, growing from 1,342 cases to 1,825.

In New York, by comparison, while the number of people reported with AIDS increased 26 percent over the same period, the total number of cases was much higher, growing from 29,296 to 37,079, the CDC report stated. As a percentage of the total populations of each state, new AIDS cases occurred in New York at a rate almost six times that of North Carolina.

But N.C. experts said the state's comparatively low numbers were no reason for complacency or rationalization.

"It's a serious problem, and it's a growing problem in many different as-

pects," Brinkley Sugg, HIV counselor at the Orange County Health Department, said of AIDS in the state.

"It's serious in terms of its spread, it's serious in terms of the increased burden on the health care system," Sugg said. "It's particularly serious in the Triangle because we have some of the best medical facilities in North Carolina, and people from all over the southeast(ern) United States come to Duke and to UNC Hospitals for treatment."

"Anyone who is sexually active and is not using protection or anyone who is sharing needles is at risk."

Regarding the AP story, Sugg said, "I think that there needs to be more public education, and if this is a way to encourage and motivate public education, then ... that's a good outcome from what I'm not sure is necessarily responsible journalism."

"I don't know if scare tactics are always the best thing to use ... but I do think it is a growing problem, and maybe this will heighten people's awareness."

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