

Turned tables

U.S. government
uses criminals'
assets to finance
war against drugs

By Chris Ison
Staff Writer

Timothy Hurley of St. Paul had the perfect summer getaway spot. He owned an island with a year-round cabin on the Rainy River in Canada. In the ground there, he'd buried \$117,000 in drug profits.

He also owned a \$190,000 home in St. Paul, two boats and a Corvette.

But today, Hurley's property is owned by the new tycoon in the drug business — the U.S. government.

Nabbed by federal agents, Hurley saw his property forfeited under relatively new and sometimes controversial laws designed to help fight the drug war. The Justice Department is seizing cash, cars, boats, jewelry — even golf courses and race horses — from drug traffickers and other criminals at astonishing rates. The government has pocketed rent money from seized fraternity houses in Virginia and stud fees from a confiscated race horse in Texas.

In Minnesota, renowned drug kingpin **Ralph (Plukey) Duke** was relieved of six houses and 26 cars after his arrest in 1989. William Ulrich of Orono, a rare coin dealer who pleaded guilty in May to fraud, forfeited his \$6.8 million house on Lake Minnetonka.

Forfeiture continued on page 12A