

the nation

U.S. records lowest trade deficit since May 1977, government says

WASHINGTON — The United States recorded its lowest trade deficit in 13 months in June, purchasing \$1.6 billion more in foreign goods than it sold overseas, the government said Wednesday.

It was the smallest trade deficit since the May 1977 figure of \$641 million and the first time since last September that the monthly trade deficit fell below the \$2 billion mark.

June's export total of \$12.13 billion was a record, mostly because of increased shipments of coal, machinery and transportation equipment.

Imports fell for the second straight month to \$13.72 billion, about one quarter of the \$270 million import decline was accounted

for by another drop in imported oil, the department said.

June's red ink total represented the 25th consecutive monthly deficit for the United States. However, it was encouraging news to the administration, which has been seriously concerned about the long string of deficits.

Administration officials have consistently predicted the nation's trade balance would begin to show some improvement this summer and fall as growth of the overall economy slows.

The reason is that a more moderate economic growth rate tends to curb the nation's thirst for imported goods.

In addition, the long slide in value of the dollar against foreign currencies — especially the

Japanese yen — makes U.S. exports less expensive in foreign markets, boosting demand for American products overseas.

At the same time, the dollar's decline tends to boost prices of imports in the United States, curbing domestic demand.

The overall export total of \$12.13 billion was the first time in history that exports have exceeded the \$12 billion level and was 3 percent above May, the department said.

Imports were about 2 percent less than in May.

The dollar firmed on foreign exchange markets in London immediately after the announcement. Analysts said the trade figures were better than expected.

For the first half of 1978, the department said, the U.S. balance-of

Massachusetts college fights excessive drinking

Guides set for campus beer parties

AMHERST, Mass. — The beer that not-so-hallowed campus tradition, is under attack at the University of Massachusetts.

A task force of students and administrators, worried about the number of campus parties that are getting out of hand, has drawn up a set of "common sense" guidelines for the use of alcoholic beverages.

"We're trying to cut down on parties where the intent of the host, as far as the guest, is just to get drunk," Dr. David Kraft, senior physician at the school's mental

health department, said Tuesday.

The guidelines, which Kraft called among the most comprehensive in the nation, limit the amount of beer at a campus party to one keg per 40 people — or the equivalent amount of wine or liquor.

That's an average of four drinks per person.

"The myth in our society that you can't get as drunk on beer as you can on whiskey is just not true," Kraft said.

Kraft said the policy was drawn up after several different campus groups expressed concern that existing campus alcoholic beverage policies only protected the school from the bare minimum legal requirements.

"Many of the staff and students were concerned that they might be sued if someone went out and got hurt from a party they've been hosting," he said.

The guidelines apply to all campus parties, including those in fraternities and sororities.

There are no set penalties for violating the guidelines, but repeated violators could be barred from giving parties in future, Kraft said. First offenders will probably just get "a rap on the knuckles," he said.

The policy is designed to educate students to the uses and abuses of

alcohol and "to make sure the planning going into a party is sensible so the chance of things getting out of control are minimized," he said.

Hosts are required to serve attractive food and non-alcoholic beverages to encourage non-drinkers to attend parties, allow drinkers to space out their drinks and slow down the absorption rate of alcohol.

How-to pamphlets, giving tips on how to get a drunk to stop drinking, will be given campus party-planners by dorm resident assistants.

No one killed in plane crash

KALAMAZOO, Mich. — It had the makings of a major air disaster — 43 passengers and crew members, 11,200 pounds of fuel, fog and engine failure. Authorities say it was a miracle no one was killed.

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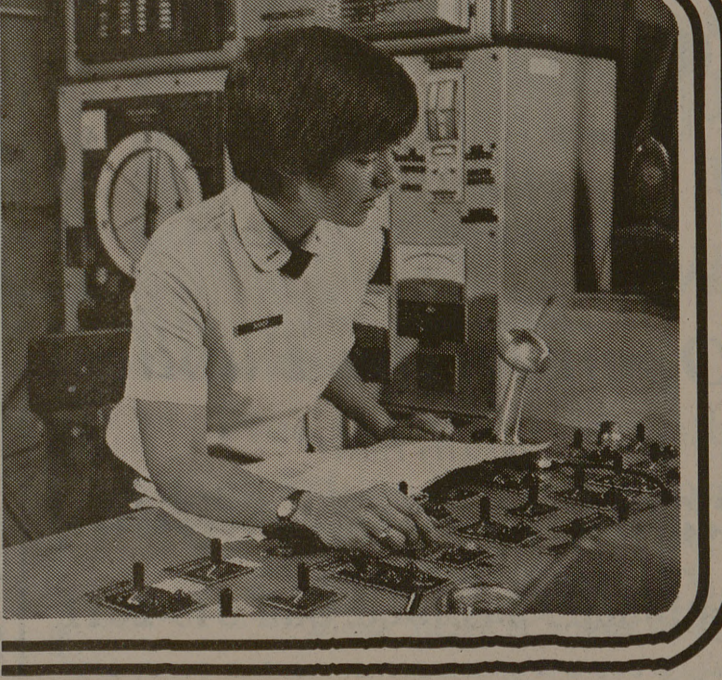
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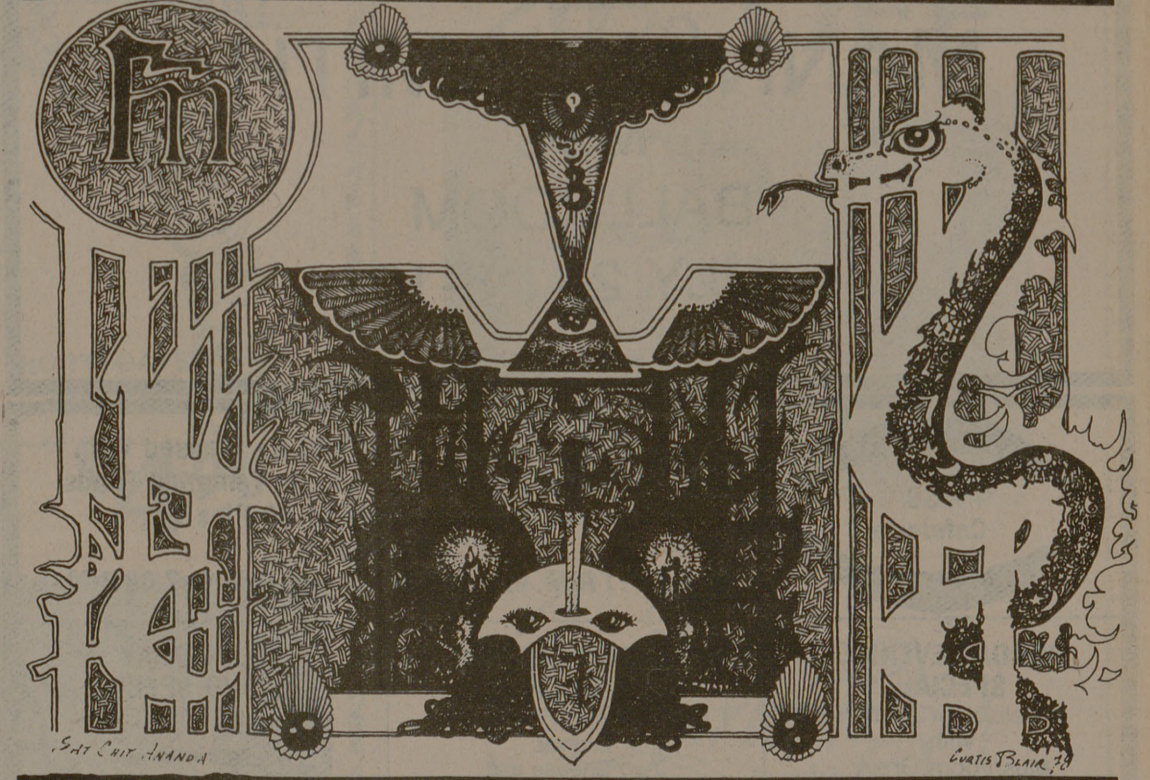
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