

national

Technology tightens crossing at border

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The number of illegal aliens being caught by the U.S. Border Patrol is "up dramatically" to 30 percent above last year's rate of apprehensions, Immigration and Naturalization Commissioner Alan Nelson says.

Nelson told a Senate appropriations subcommittee Wednesday the patrol has disrupted some favored entry routes of illegals.

Since last August, he said, the Border Patrol has caught more illegal border crossers each month than it has for the past 30 years.

Nelson told the Senate panel that increased technology is improving the effectiveness of the border watch.

He said helicopter operations have been increased at Chula Vista and El Paso, and the addition of helicopters in the Yuma,

Tucson and Del Rio sectors has improved night surveillance of the border.

In the Chula Vista sector, he said, new infrared nightscopes are being used to spot illegal border crossers. "They rely upon the heat generated by a live body, and are capable of spotting a person in rain, fog and darkness up to three miles," he said.

With more money available, Nelson said, border watches, traffic checks and city patrols have been strengthened in areas where increased crossings are observed or expected.

Such areas have included the Laredo, Del Rio and Chula Vista sectors, he said.

"Illegal activity tends to drop off in these areas during and after such operations, indicating that alien entry patterns have been disrupted," Nelson said.

He said intelligence reports

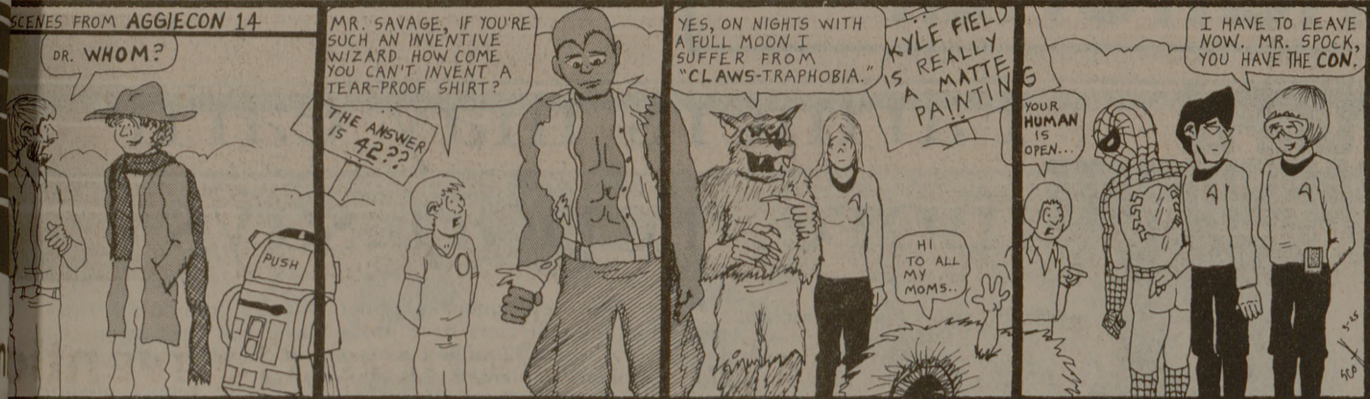
also indicate the smuggling of aliens into the country has been interrupted for several weeks after the additional officers leave.

Nelson said anti-smuggling efforts are being focused on "major violators" rather than on "low-level smugglers." As an example, he cited the breaking up of the "Villasana Organization" — named for its hotel headquarters in Juarez, Mexico.

The operation, he said, made an estimated \$24 million over seven years by smuggling more than 3,000 aliens a year across the U.S.-Mexican border.

Nelson said the Mexican national who headed the organization was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

The INS head testified in support of the agency's \$539.3 million budget request for fiscal 1984, an increase of \$25.7 million over fiscal 1983 funding.



Food, housing costs stable

Prices, spending down

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Prices dipped last month, but so did the spending power of many Americans.

The Labor Department said Wednesday consumer prices dipped 0.2 percent in February, largely because of record declines in fuel prices, while food and housing costs held steady.

President Reagan said the new inflation figure was good news for consumers and urged

Congress to help keep the rate low by holding down "spending and taxes and the growth of government."

But the department also reported blue-collar spending power dropped 1.5 percent last month. This meant the savings brought by falling prices was wiped out by income lost due to unemployment.

It was the worst deterioration in real earnings for any month since April 1979, brought about by a 2 percent decline in the av-

erage number of hours worked.

Gasoline prices dropped 6.7 percent with an average gallon at \$1.17, and fuel oil prices declined 4.7 percent — the steepest one-month decline since the government started collecting monthly fuel data in 1967.

February's Consumer Price Index was down for only the second time since August 1965, the department said.

The department's report said

February's gross average weekly earnings in 1977 inflation-adjusted dollars increased more slowly than the cost of living, declining \$2.57 to \$168.47 for full time and part time production workers.

Since February 1982, despite the relatively low inflation rate, spending power has eroded by 0.3 percent after changes in wages and changes in the length of the average workweek were figured in, the report said.

House passes new jobs bill

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The fear that thousands of jobless people might go without unemployment checks was brought to an end Thursday with the congressional approval of a jobs bill providing for \$5 billion in loans to state unemployment funds.

Before the House signaled its approval, sending the bill on to President Reagan's signature, four states ran out of money. Eight more are expected to run out of funds by the end of the day.

President Reagan is expected to quickly sign the \$4.6 billion jobs and recession relief bill that carries with it the \$5 billion in unemployment money.

The bill, laced with "pork barrel" construction programs for districts of Appropriations committee members who wrote the measure, provides about \$9 billion in public works projects, most of it directed to areas of high unemployment for building or repairing federal facilities from parks to prisons. The biggest single block of money, \$1 billion, will be spent on community development grants, money for states and cities to use on public works programs. Half of it can be used for public service jobs, aiding men shut out from the heavy construction tilt elsewhere in the bill.

It spends about \$550 million

on humanitarian aid to hungry and homeless recession victims, and \$217 million in job training for the young, the old and the "dislocated" whose line of work has disappeared.

The bill also provides \$50 million for a college work-study program, \$200 million in grants and loans to communities with which to attract new business and \$225 million in social service grants.

It also provides \$126 million to extend jobless benefits 10 weeks for laid off rail workers with less than 10 years seniority.

Nobody knows how many jobs the bill would create, but estimates range from 200,000 to 500,000.

The final dispute was over how to distribute the money. The House wanted more of it targeted to localities, the Senate to states.

The compromise version combines elements of both plans, with \$1.275 billion aimed at localities with 9 percent unemployment and \$1.5 billion for states, divided according to three different formulas.

One part of the Senate mix would send \$750 million to states on the basis of formulas described in the bill for each program, \$500 million based on a number of unemployed in a state compared to the national total, and \$250 million to the 21 states with unemployment above 9.4 percent.

Good friends will help you study angles when all you can think about is curves.



Social Security bundle OK'd

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Senate approval of a \$165 billion Social Security rescue package has moved Congress within striking distance of its Friday deadline, but first the bitter issue of covering federal workers must be settled.

A conference committee Thursday was to try to resolve differences between the House and Senate bills, in hopes Congress can send a bill to the White House before the Easter recess begins Friday afternoon.

The Senate voted 88-9 Wednesday night for payroll tax hikes, a six month pension freeze, a first-ever benefits tax and, next century, raising the retirement age and trimming the basic benefit.

Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia, referring to the bill's distasteful individual provisions, said he wished he did not have to vote on it.

"But when confronted with the alternatives — the destruction of the Social Security System, bankruptcy of the Social Security system — I was left with no choice," Byrd told his colleagues after the vote.

The Senate and House bills' short-term provisions are similar — except on the issue of covering new federal employees, which government unions lobbied heavily against.

The Senate rebuffed a compromise, 50-45, then agreed on a voice vote not to force newly hired federal workers to join Social Security until Congress approves a supplemental pension plan to give them the same level of benefits current employees get. The House voted to cover new federal workers Jan. 1, 1984.

Mandatory coverage would mean \$9.3 billion in new revenue by 1990 and wipe out one-seventh of Social Security's long-term deficit.

The amendment's sponsor, Sen. Russell Long, D-La., said federal employees should be covered "only when we live up to our part of the bargain" — passing a supplemental plan.

There are two other major differences between the versions of the bill:

—The Senate bill raises the retirement age to 66 by 2015, first affecting Americans born in 1938, and cuts the basic benefit 5 percent for new retirees as of 2008. The House bill hikes the retirement age to 67 by 2027 but leaves benefits intact.

—The Senate bill, but not the House measure, requires officials to reduce the annual cost-of-living increase when Social Security's trust funds dwindle, but to warn Congress in advance so lawmakers can find alternate funding.

It didn't take a genius to tell your mind wasn't on your studies. But it did take a couple of smart roomies to do something about it.

So out came the calculators. And the doughnuts. And they started drilling you until you knew physics as well as you know yourself.

When it was all over, you showed them that there was one more thing you knew something about — gratitude. Tonight, let it be Löwenbräu.



Löwenbräu. Here's to good friends.

