

Temperatures plunge

'Siberian Express' hits East

United Press International

An advancing surge of deadly cold slammed into the East Sunday, plunging temperatures as low as 40 below zero. Much of the rest of the nation warmed up from the winter's "Big Chill II," which has killed nearly 40 people.

Records cracked like icicles across the East. The mercury dropped to 33 degrees below zero at Concord, N.H., breaking a record of 23-below set in 1961. It was 23-below in Elkins, W.Va., eclipsing the 17-below set in 1970.

The deep freeze extended to Mississippi, where a 10-below surpassed the record of 13-below set in 1940. The nation's morning cold spot was at Chester, Mass., where the mercury reached a teeth-chattering 40-below.

"We're accustomed to temperatures below zero," said National Weather Service observer Dave Parrett, who noted the chill enveloping Chester was the fourth 30-

The 'Siberian Express'

Concord, N.H.	33 degrees below zero
Elkins, W. Va.	23 degrees below zero
Chester, Mass.	40 degrees below zero
Canaan, Vt.	36 degrees below zero
Old Forge, N.Y.	36 degrees below zero
Dulles Airport, Va.	18 degrees below zero

below reading this year. "But that's getting cold, even for us."

Other cold spots included Canaan, Vt., and Old Forge, N.Y., where temperatures dipped to 36 below zero. The 18-below at Dulles Airport in Loudoun County, Va., broke the record low of 14-below set on Feb. 18, 1979.

The cold wave — dubbed the "Siberian Express" — moved east from the southern Plains and Midwest after killing at least 37 people since Tuesday. Temperatures over the western two-thirds of the

country rose to more humane levels.

It was to reach the 30s in Indianapolis, and most cities in Nebraska were reporting readings in the 20s. A radio announcer in St. Louis urged listeners to get out and wash their cars while temperatures were in the mid-30s.

Ice fisherman Tim Holtan in Mankato, Minn., said temperatures in the 20s made it an ideal day for ice fishing.

"It's a lot easier to drop a line in the water when it's above zero," he said. "I've been fishing when it's 60-

below. This certainly makes for much more pleasant fishing, no question about that."

A Pacific storm brought rain to western Washington and western Oregon, with snow and freezing rain further inland. Gale force winds slapped the Pacific Coast. Nearly an inch of rain fell at Quillayute, Wash.

In Salmon, Idaho, frigid flood waters from the ice-packed Lemhi and Salmon Rivers subsided from residential areas Sunday but moved to agricultural areas in the north part of the city.

Volunteers tried to re-route water through city streets. About 250 people have fled their homes since the water started rising Thursday. Near Kalispell, Mont., nine people were killed and 18 injured Saturday in a fiery crash on icy U.S. Highway 2 of a tanker truck and a school bus carrying a high school wrestling team.

Aides say Union address will please conservatives

United Press International

WASHINGTON — In a State of the Union address this week that will set the stage for his expected re-election bid, President Reagan will declare, "We've done a good job" on the economy and reassure conservative backers by promising a new push on tuition tax credits, school prayer and abortion, aides said.

Reagan will make the speech at 10 p.m. Wednesday before a joint session of Congress. It will be the 197th State of the Union address. Just four days later, he is expected to declare his candidacy for re-election.

He is not expected to announce major new initiatives or programs in his State of the Union speech, except to propose funding for a manned space station.

"The speech will be an overview — in terms of his philosophy — what he came to Washington to do and how it has worked out so far," an aide said, adding that Reagan thinks his administration has "changed the way the government relates to the people."

Aides said the president has worked on several drafts of the speech "building on the theme that consistency has been the hallmark of this administration — staying the course. He will

emphasize together we have made progress, but there is much more to be done."

Reagan plans to announce he will "redouble efforts" to win approval for school prayer, restrictions on abortion, and tuition tax credits for parents of children in private schools.

On the economy, aides said, Reagan will tell Congress, "we've done a good job" of pulling America out of a deep recession. But he will not be specific on budget or deficit figures, since those will be in his proposed budget for the 1985 fiscal year, which will be delivered to Congress Feb. 1.



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Congress begins second session

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Congress returns to Washington this week with such major issues of interest to the region as natural gas, immigration and wilderness protection still unresolved.

But the second session of the 98th Congress is expected to be dominated by election-year politics — with all House members and half the senators facing voter tests — and debate over U.S. policy in Lebanon and Central America.

Both the House and Senate convene Monday, but little business is scheduled before lawmakers take a 10-day recess in February for annual speech-making.

This year, the lawmakers are expected to make early efforts to pass legislation linking aid to Central America to human rights progress, an immigration bill to tighten restrictions on illegal aliens and employers, and a bill to revise bankruptcy laws. But it's an election year, when Congress generally does the

minimum necessary to keep the country running — including approving another round of appropriation bills that include Army Corps of Engineers, Interior, defense and other projects of interest to the region.

Natural gas legislation is a major issue still unresolved, with heated battles going in both the House and the Senate. The Reagan administration wants to decontrol all gas by 1985 but there is major consumer opposition to the decontrol of "old gas."

Before their Nov. 18 adjournment, senators overwhelmingly rejected two diametrically opposed, and the most comprehensive, plans to change natural gas price controls. House Energy Committee Chairman John Dingell of Michigan, meanwhile, stopped debate in order to shut off amendments that could lead to decontrol of gas discovered before 1978.

Senate-passed Simpson-Mazzoli immigration reform bill will make it to the House floor this year.

As the lawmakers return, some are unsure whether the

House Speaker Tip O'Neill last year exercised his power over the calendar and blocked it, saying Hispanics opposed it and he feared President Reagan would veto any bill that passed Congress to garner support among Hispanics. However, O'Neill said during the recess he might let his House colleagues consider it this year. The Hispanic Caucus, meanwhile, has been working to come up with an acceptable counter-proposal.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Romano Mazzoli, D-Ky., and Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., would penalize employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens and give amnesty to aliens already in the country.

Not one wilderness proposal from the region has managed to

receive final approval from Congress, but lawmakers will try this year to protect acreage in

Arkansas, Colorado, Missouri, New Mexico, Texas and Wyoming. Only Missouri's Irish wilderness has made it out of both houses, but a conference committee needs to negotiate the differences in acreage involved in the respective bills.

The problems faced by farmers when grain elevators go bankrupt — a situation brought to national attention by Puxico, Mo., farmer Wayne Cryts — still have not been solved by Congress.

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., has sent the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Peter Rodino of New Jersey, a blistering letter urging him to conform legislation that has passed the Senate five times since the Spring of 1981.



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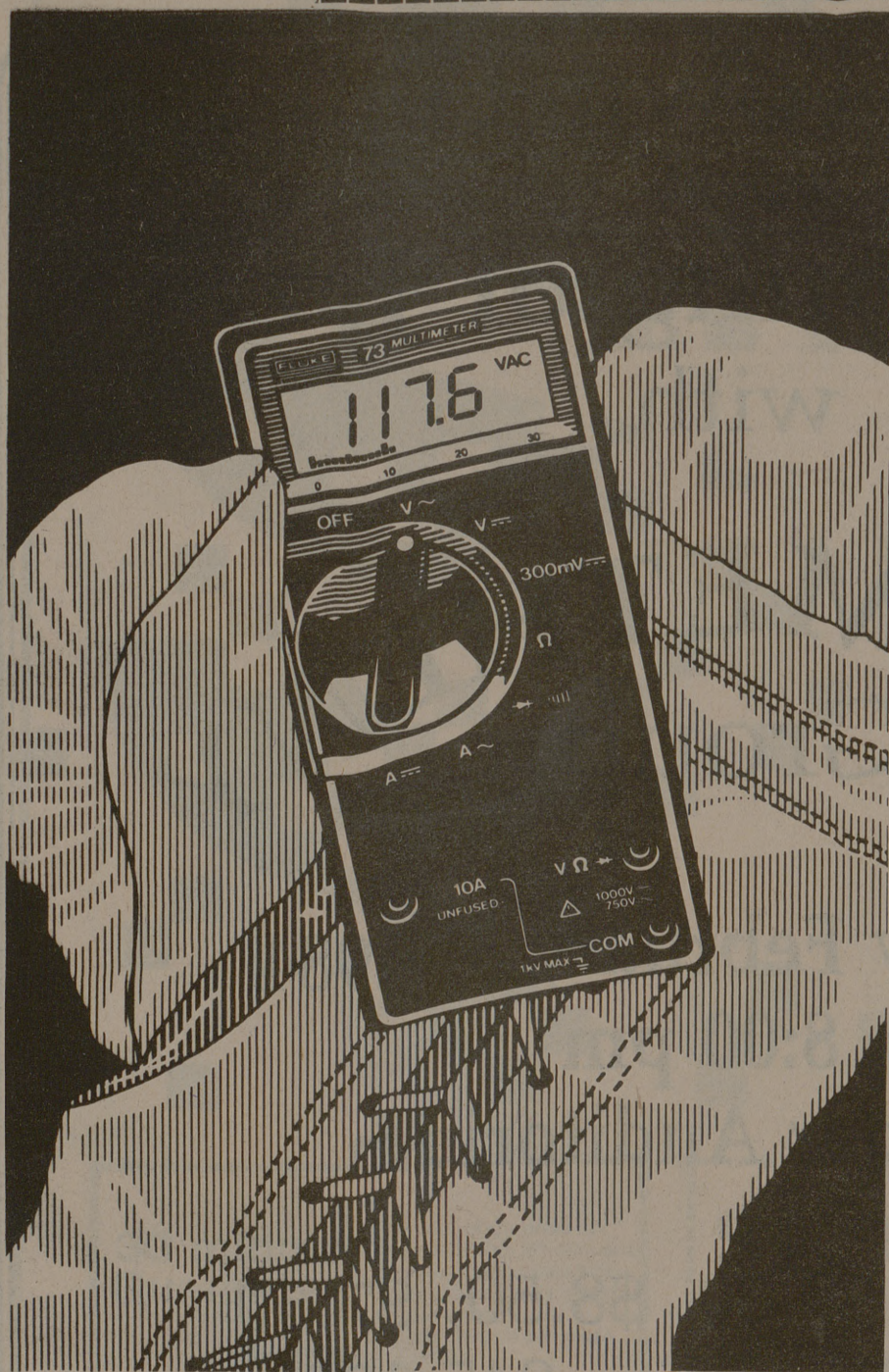
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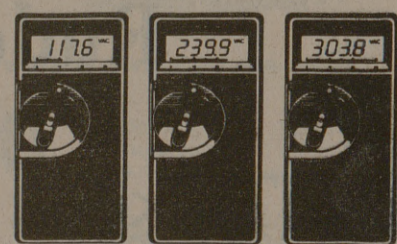
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