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# Economy experiencing 'midwinter boom'

**United Press International**  
 WASHINGTON — The economy is growing at a strong 7.2 percent rate in the first quarter this year, topping the 5 percent increase in the final months of 1983, according to a government report released Tuesday.

White House Council of Economic Advisers. "I'm not worried about overheating at this time since a large part of the increased output is going into inventory accumulation and price pressures remain under control."

The latest economic figures, expressed in seasonally adjusted annual rates, were contained in a "flash" report — a tentative forecast of the gross national product that is prepared four times a year by the Commerce Department.

The gross national product is

the value of all the nation's goods and services. Almost all the figures associated with it are up, except for trade data showing the United States is continuing to lose production to overseas firms.

The latest GNP projection marks the first quarter of 1984 as the strongest since last year's third quarter, when the GNP grew at a 7.6 percent annual rate. Last year's second quarter was the recovery peak, with the GNP expanding at a 9.7 percent rate.

Losses were reported by fi-

ancial firms ranging from insurance companies to banks, but heavy industry, including automakers, showed a profit.

Analysts explain the surge in several ways: buyers returned to stores in January, builders restarted the housing boom, and auto plants sped up production.

However, February was a slower month than January and March carries an additional burden of higher interest rates, with Monday's half point increase in the prime rate raising it to 11.5 percent.

Tuesday's report showed a mild increase in inflation for the year to 4.4 percent so far in 1984.

"It certainly is a midwinter boom," said private economist Roger Brinner, speaking for the Data Resources Inc. analyst firm.

The economy is now in its fourth consecutive quarter of above-average growth, well ahead of the 4 percent "breakeven" point that is considered necessary to shrink the unemployment rate.

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# Libya threatens to shoot U.S. aircraft

**United Press International**  
 BEIRUT, Lebanon — Libya threatened Tuesday to shoot down U.S. AWACS surveillance aircraft sent to Egypt and

warned the leaders of Egypt and Sudan that former leaders "shortened their lives" by accepting American help.

In Cairo, however, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak warned that his country was prepared "to do anything" to defend itself and would not stand by "with folded arms" if Libya violated Egyptian or Sudanese borders.

The war of words in the region came just one day after two U.S. AWACS radar surveillance planes arrived in Egypt to help track Libyan planes.

Mubarak told reporters in

Cairo the unarmed radar planes would initially fly only in Egyptian air space. The AWACS — an acronym for Airborne Warning and Control System — are usually escorted on their flights by jet fighters and interceptors.

The planes, with their circular domes, are able to stay within friendly air space while their radar, with a range of up to 350 miles, tracks planes across the border. It was the third time in 13 months the planes have been sent to Egypt.

Sudan and Egypt, which are linked by a mutual defense pact

signed in 1976, have accused Col. Moammar Khadafi of a game of a bombing raid from a suburb of the Sudanese capital that killed five people and injured 14.

The raid by a Soviet TU-22 bomber missed Sudan's only radio station, which was an apparent target.

Libya, the only country in the region flying the TU-22, denied it was responsible for the attack, claiming it was by dissident Sudanese air force officers, and warned it would react to any American air activity.

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# Snowplow hits taxiing plane, damages wing; nobody hurt

**United Press International**  
 KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A Continental Airline pilot taxiing his airplane for takeoff Tuesday struck a snowplow and damaged his wing at Kansas City International Airport, authorities said.

None of the 71 passengers on Flight No. 335 bound for Denver were injured, authorities said. But the city worker driving the snowplow was treated and released at an nearby hospital.

The incident occurred at

11:15 a.m., said Cliff Trainer, city manager of the Kansas City Continental office.

The airplane remained at the airport until maintenance and engineering crews were flown in to assess the amount of damage, he said. All the passengers were given other flights to get to their destinations.

"It (snowplow) backed into us," said Continental spokesman Bruce Hicks in Houston.

"We had a flight that had been released from the gate by tower ground control. As we

were taxiing out from the area, a snowplow, which we'll be off to our left, suddenly started in reverse at high speed."

Both the airplane and snowplow were damaged, Hicks said.

"Our captain tried an evasive maneuver to try to swing wing out of the way and snowplow clipped the wing," Hicks said.

Icy rain and snow had covered most of the Metropolitan area for several days, leaving constant gray skies and limiting power out to many residents.

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1.9	.60	.342	43%
2.0	.60	.36	40%
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2.2	.90	.396	56%
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