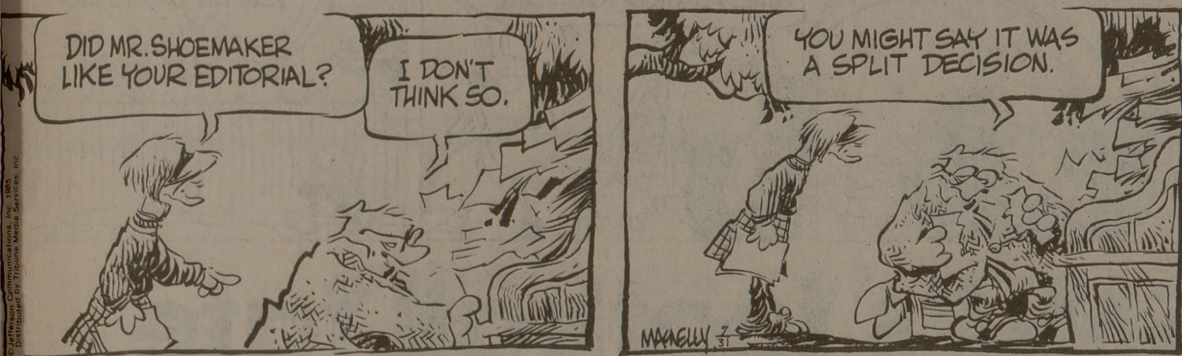


WORLD AND NATION

SHOE

by Jeff MacNelly



IRS

Agency to improve customer service

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service, embarrassed by massive problems in processing tax returns this year, is shifting priorities away from increased audits to improving dealings with taxpayers.

The House Appropriations Committee has voted to restore that money and add another \$147 million.

Although Egger is concerned that the agency is auditing too few tax returns, Egger said that "is no longer our first priority."

Increasing audits and concentrating them on tax-shelter and upper-income returns has been one of Egger's top goals since he took over the IRS more than four years ago.

Egger calls this filing season the

"When we get the same complaints . . . something needs to be corrected." — IRS Commissioner Roscoe L. Egger Jr.

where returns are processed, the IRS found problems not only in the computers but also in the complex instructions that run them.

The end result was delayed refund checks; perhaps one-third of the nearly 68 million refunds mailed so far this year were late.

Those delays triggered letters from taxpayers, congressional investigations, a backlog of unanswered correspondence that only now is being reduced to manageable proportions and a spate of rumors about IRS employees shredding returns.

The worst problem was at the Philadelphia service center, which last year had failed to post \$300 million worth of business tax payments. That foulup led to reports — none ever substantiated, Egger said — that some returns were deliberately destroyed to reduce the work backlog.

Taxpayer suspicions were fed by disclosure that a supervisor in the Austin service center had ordered documents, not tax returns, destroyed. The supervisor was fired.

The National Treasury Employees Union, which represents IRS workers, said the Reagan administration's budget cuts have been a bigger factor than computers in this year's problems. Those reductions have slashed the agency's processing work force by over 5,000 slots since 1980, even though the number of tax returns has grown by 41 million during the same period, the union said.

worst ever for the agency.

The agency, faced with 3.5 percent more returns than last year, had the choice of sticking with its 15-year-old computer equipment, but Egger said the risk was too high. The cost would have been far too steep, and the personnel were not available, to run the old system and the new one simultaneously until the bugs were removed, he said.

The new system was tested beforehand at the Memphis service center. But when the switches were thrown in the other nine centers

Many of those complaints this year dealt with refund checks that were delayed because of problems with a new computer system.

As of July 12, the IRS paid \$17.1 million in interest on 1.29 million refunds because the agency was late in processing them. A year earlier at that time, about 895,000 refunds included interest totaling \$14.5 million.

Egger said that although this year's return-processing problems caused great unhappiness within the agency, he sees the snafu as an opportunity to focus on quality control — in processing, auditing, collections and certainly in dealing with taxpayers.

While Egger is seeking to improve customer relations, the Reagan administration has proposed reducing the IRS budget for the 12 months beginning Oct. 1 by \$30.4 million and 1,254 job slots.

Auto, oil imports push June trade deficit over \$13 billion

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The United States suffered a \$13.4 billion trade deficit last month, the second highest on record and a big jump in demand for passenger cars and foreign oil added to the country's trading woes, the government said Tuesday.

The Commerce Department said the merchandise trade deficit climbed 5.6 percent in June from the May level of \$12.7 billion. The red ink included a record \$4.57 billion monthly deficit with Japan.

The deteriorating trade performance has led to a growing push in Congress for trade barriers aimed at saving American jobs. In an effort to ward off those efforts, the Japanese on Tuesday announced a three-year trade program to open up more Japanese markets to foreign goods by streamlining the country's import procedures.

For the first six months of the year, the U.S. trade deficit — the difference between what America imports and what it sells abroad — to-

taled \$70.7 billion as the country seemed assured of far surpassing last year's record deficit of \$123.3 billion.

Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige, assessing the latest bad news, said the dollar was still too strong compared with other currencies for American industry to be able to compete in world markets.

A strong dollar hurts export sales and opens the country to a flood of cheaper imports. While the dollar has declined by about 12 percent from its record highs in February, it is still 40 percent above its 1980 average.

The battering U.S. manufacturers have taken from foreign competition is cited for the sluggish performance the overall economy has turned in this year. The gross national product has advanced at a barely discernible 1 percent annual rate in the first six months of 1985.

Because of the weak growth, the Reagan administration on Monday was forced to lower its forecast for

growth for the whole year to 3 percent. However, many private analysts say this estimate is still too optimistic.

"The dollar has not declined enough to get us out of the competitive hole we have gotten ourselves into," said Jerry Jasinowski, chief economist for the National Association of Manufacturers.

Jasinowski said growth in the current quarter will be "substantially weaker than the administration expects because of the continuing drag of the trade deficit and the unwillingness of businessmen to build up inventories because of what has been going on."

While Jasinowski predicted the economy would begin to turn around in the last three months of the year, David Levy, an economist at Levy Economic Forecasts, a private consulting firm, was far more pessimistic.

"Miami Vice's" third showing gets high rating

Associated Press
NEW YORK — How hot is NBC's "Miami Vice?" So hot that the third broadcast of its two-hour opening episode ranked No. 3 in the ratings last week and performed better than when the show was first repeated last January.

Figures released Tuesday by the A.C. Nielsen Co. showed "Miami Vice" only trailing repeats of NBC's "The Cosby Show" and "Family Ties" and leading the network to its 10th consecutive prime-time victory and 13th in the last 14 weeks.

NBC researchers say since Nielsen has been measuring national ratings in the last 25 years, the network has never won 10 weeks in a row.

Since the end of the traditional prime-time season April 21, NBC has won every week except for CBS' victory in May when "Dallas" ended its season with the death of Bobby Ewing.

Last week's Top Ten illustrated viewers' summer preference for comedy and action reruns. Seven of the favored shows were comedies.

High technology goes into vegetable fields

Associated Press
CINNAMINSON, N.J. — High technology has ventured into the vegetable fields as scientists try to put more snap and sweetness in carrots, find the perfect tomato and create celery with no strings attached.

In the laboratories and greenhouses of its sprawling headquarters, DNA Plant Technology Corp. applies plant genetics to develop vegetables with desirable characteristics such as resistance to disease or improved texture and flavor.

Using nutrients to promote cell growth in tissues placed in laboratory dishes, the scientists can obtain up to 10,000 plants from a single leaf, and then identify and breed the ones with superior traits.

The company's process, called "somaclonal variation," is similar to the centuries-old use of crossbreeding to obtain a variety of plants but is much faster and has a somewhat different aim in mind.

John Marsden, the company's executive vice president, said, "Most of the plant breeding in the past was for the benefit of the farmer, improving things like crop yield. Our work is mostly for the consumer."

The company plans to put its first product on the market early next year, packages of celery and carrot sticks called "VegiSnax." Marsden

said the scientists tailored the vegetables to consumer preferences by making carrots sweeter and taking the annoying strings out of celery.

VegiSnax will be test-marketed under an agreement with Kraft Inc. and will be sold in packages designed to give the snacks a shelf life of five weeks, company officials said.

DNA Plant Technology started in 1981 when a pair of enterprising scientists trading the security of regular paychecks for the chance to test their skills in the marketplace.

When William R. Sharp and David A. Evans submitted their resignations to Campbell Soup Co., their bosses were more intrigued than upset. Campbell invested heavily in the new company, providing a 32-acre site for its headquarters in exchange for stock and signing a \$2.4 million dollar contract for researchers to develop improved tomatoes.

While the bulk of the new company's research has involved improving plants for customers who like to keep their projects confidential, Campbell has been quite open about what it wants from the laboratory — tomatoes that can be grown all year with consistently good flavor and color.

DNA Plant Technology officials say their process is natural and involves no splitting of genes or cloning of cells.

Tough Stuff Inc.
CASUAL FURNITURE

Solid Wood, No-Fills Furniture for Today's Lifestyle

Bryan/College Station
1623 Culpepper Plaza
(409) 696-4489

Sales & Rental

VISA master charge

STAR TEL
Long Distance Telephone Service
LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED

If saving money rings a bell...

AGGIE SPECIAL	Whoop!
NO SET-UP FEE!	Up to 50% SAVINGS
Whoop!	

1313 Briarcrest Dr. Call STAR TEL! 779-2830 Bryan, Tx.

**** "Chilling performances by Cole Slaw and Potato Salad"

**** "Potatoes and Gravy...a smash hit!"

**** "You'll want to laugh. You'll want to cry. You'll want to EAT!"

**** "Boss Bird is Magnificent! You'll love him in his stunning rolls."

**** "The best drumsticks since the Rockettes."

"THE BEST BIRD THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN"
starring **BOSS BIRD**

Also starring LIGHT 'N CRISPY CHICKEN • FRESH BAKED YEAST ROLLS. Cameo appearances by COLE SLAW • POTATO SALAD • FRENCH FRIES • FRESHLY BREWED TEA • CORN-ON-THE-COB • MASHED POTATOES • CREAM GRAVY • JALAPENO PEPPERS
Produced and Directed by DAVID TINSLEY

H HEAVENLY SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES	© 1985 Coyote-Crow Productions. All rights reserved.
---	--

Tinsley's Chicken 'n rolls

ADMIT ONE	\$4.44 FAMILY MEAL • 8 pieces of Chicken • 8 Rolls Offer expires 8/7/85. No Substitutions	ADMIT ONE
ADMIT ONE	\$1.44 MEAL TICKET • 2 pieces of Chicken • Roll • Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Offer expires 8/7/85. No Substitutions	ADMIT ONE

NOW SHOWING AT THESE LOCATIONS
705 Texas Avenue 512 Villa Maria Road 1905 Texas Avenue

Battalion Classified 845-2611