

State and Local

Work would be tough

Prof offered federal position

By TAMARA BELL
Staff Writer

Although a position as assistant director for the National Science Foundation would result in a pay cut, Texas A&M's Dr. William Merrell says he likes the responsibility the position would offer.

"I will supervise a staff of a couple hundred people," says Merrell, associate dean of geosciences at A&M. "I will supervise the dispensing of half a billion dollars to universities in the form of grants and contracts. I'll work with the U.S. Congress in developing budgets and programs for the agency."

"It's a tough job that's not all that great, but it's a responsible job."

Merrell was nominated for the position Sept. 13, although he had been speaking with White House officials about the position since May, he says.

"I'm not sure who nominated

me," he says. "My name came from the office of science, probably from friends. The White House contacted me in May. We agreed on things. But when the FBI started its investigation of me, I knew they were serious about the nomination."

"To fill this post, the government wants a scientist and manager," he says. "There are definite management aspects and I guess I qualified."

"This isn't my first encounter with the NSF. I was program officer the first time I worked with the agency, and I was an executive officer of the International Decade of Ocean Exploration."

The U.S. Senate must first approve the nomination before Merrell can take over his new post. Merrell says he should receive confirmation in about two weeks.

"After a Senate confirmation, I'll be sworn in by either an official at the White House or the

head of the NSF," he said. "I'm taking this one step at a time, though. It's always a possibility that I can be turned down."

The NSF is an agency of the U.S. government that is charged with providing funds for basic research in science and engineering. The agency is divided into three principals. He will be the assistant director of the Foundation for Astronomical, Atmospheric, Earth and Ocean sciences, he says.

Although he has visited Washington, D.C. since the nomination, Merrell has yet to meet President Ronald Reagan.

"I've never talked to the president, although I've talked to people in various offices of the president," Merrell says. "I'll probably get to see him when I'm at a meeting at the White House. But it's not high on my priorities."

CIA spy identified as UT grad

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The former CIA agent accused last week of being a double agent has been identified as a University of Texas graduate Edward Howard.

According to government sources, Howard, 33, was fired by the CIA in 1983 after he refused assignment to Moscow and was implicated by a polygraph test in petty theft of money and in illegal drug use.

In an FBI document made public Oct. 4, FBI agents said Howard met with KGB officials in Austria and sold them U.S. intelligence secrets.

Howard disappeared last month after abruptly resigning from his job at the New Mexico Legislature's finance committee Sept. 20.

"The odds are high there will be spies in other agencies as well," said Bob Inman, a former director of the National Security Agency and a former deputy director of the CIA.

Polish enter U.S. illegally via Mexico

Associated Press

EL PASO — The apprehension of 125 illegal Polish immigrants along the border may have plugged the so-called "Polish Pipeline" from Mexico, federal authorities say.

"We hope we've put a dent in it," said Joseph L. O'Bryant, a supervisory special agent with the U.S. Border Patrol's anti-smuggling unit in McAllen.

Since Jan. 1 officials say they have caught 125 Poles who entered the U.S. illegally from Mexico. In addition, there have been several recent convictions of those accused of smuggling.

The Polish Pipeline, authorities say, shows that illegal immigration is not just a Hispanic problem.

"Many of the world's poor and destitute are seeking refuge in the United States," John Belluardo, a spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Los An-

geles, said. "Literally, it's an economic invasion by the rest of the world."

Last year, the Border Patrol in El Paso seized 2,121 citizens from 78

The 'Polish Pipeline' stretches from Warsaw to Havana to Mexico City to the streets of Chicago and New York

— Joseph L. O'Bryant, U.S. Border Patrol special agent.

nations other than Mexico.

But that number still represents only about 1 percent of the more than 212,000 illegal immigrants arrested last year.

Nationwide, only 5.8 percent of the record 1.2 million people apprehended in fiscal 1984 were non-Mexicans, government figures show.

Still, border agents are becoming more adept at spotting fair-skinned Anglos who don't quite fit in at the Mexican border.

"Our agents are pretty savvy," Silvestre Reyes, Border Patrol chief in McAllen, said.

"You can tell through nervousness, the way they dress, they don't make eye contact," he said.

An agent in Marfa adds: "Someone's going to get suspicious if you see six or seven Anglos who don't speak English sitting out under a tree near the border."

The 125 Poles INS officials have detained this year compares with 91 stopped at the border in 1984; 35 Yugoslav arrests compare to one Yugoslav in 1984.

Agents said they have uncovered

a sophisticated smuggling network that stretches from Warsaw to Havana to Mexico City to the streets of Chicago and New York.

"We call it the 'Polish Pipeline,'" O'Bryant said.

Last year, federal officials announced a series of indictments in Chicago aimed at plugging the "Belgrade Pipeline."

Until recent years, such arrests of Europeans along the border were "practically non-existent," O'Bryant said.

But now, says Polish-born businessman Tony Pogorzelski, Mexico has become a popular point of entry.

Pogorzelski, a resident of Harlingen who sometimes serves as an interpreter for immigration authorities, says, "The word is spreading in Poland that it's easy to go through Mexico."

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