

Warped



Proposed cut may injure war on drugs

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Reagan administration wants to cut in half funds for the U.S. Customs Service's airborne fight against drugs and eliminate 2,000 jobs, a Senate Finance Committee source said Thursday.

The move comes at the same time officials are calling for a stepped-up war on drugs.

The cuts were contained in the Reagan administration's budget proposal submitted to Congress earlier this month, said the source, who spoke on the condition he not be named.

The Reagan proposal calls for reducing the fiscal 1987 Customs personnel budget from \$830.1 million to \$803.1 million, the source said.

The proposal would reduce Customs' personnel limit from 15,037 to 13,039 by 1988, with 1,500 jobs cut in 1987, and 500 lost in 1988, the source said.

In addition to those cuts, the source said the Reagan proposal calls for cuts from \$170.9 million to \$86.2 million funds for air support for drug interdiction.

"This is a very serious reversal of where we've been going, coming from a president and administration who've touted their war on drugs," said Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Ariz.

"There's anything here but commitment, seems to me. I hope that some public outrage will cause him to change it or maybe he doesn't know what's going on," said DeConcini, chair of the subcommittee that oversees the Customs budget.

Reagan said in his budget message to Congress earlier this month that under his proposed 1987 spending plan "drug abuse initiatives are continued, while resources devoted to drug law enforcement have tripled since my administration began."

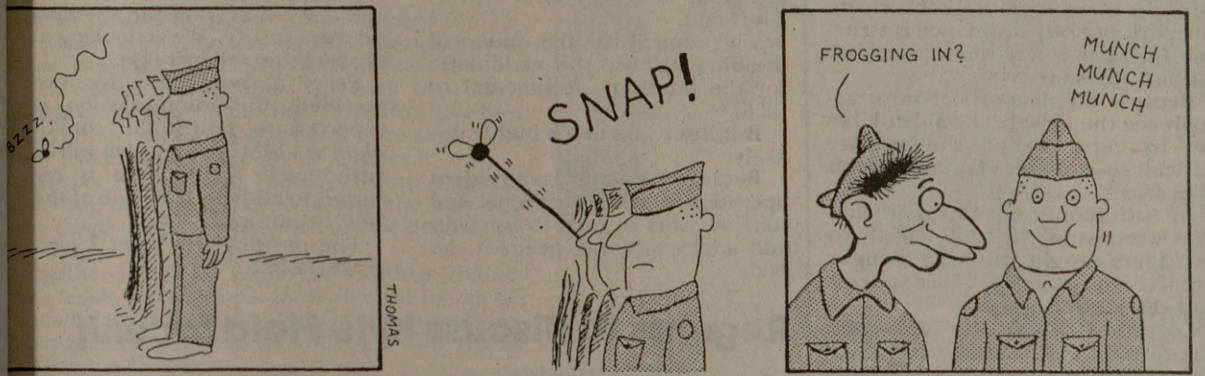
However, under the Reagan proposal earlier this month, state and local drug law enforcement assistance would be cut from an appropriated level of \$225 million in fiscal 1987 to zero in 1988, according to DeConcini's press aide, Robert Maynes.

Money for drug education, set at \$200 million this year, would fall to \$100 million in 1988, while the Customs drug treatment program would lose all funding next year.

Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, chairman of the Finance Committee, in November said he would fight any attempt by the administration to cut Customs' budget.

"In spite of all the problems that we've had with drugs and the great flow of drugs across our borders, you've seen a determined fight by the Budget Office to continue to cut down on the number of Customs inspectors, and it's really dumb because the payoff for the dollars spent in Customs is a multiple of many times," Bentsen said.

Valdo



by Kevin Thomas

Regulatory agencies seek increases in state funding

'Booming' businesses difficult to regulate

AUSTIN (AP) — The private eye industry is probably the most booming business in Texas and requires more money and staff to regulate, the Senate Finance Committee was told Thursday.

The committee, with the Legislature in adjournment, reviewed budget requests Thursday from regulators of private detectives, Texas this month physicians and county jails, as well as other state agencies.

Dale Simpson of Dallas, a member of the Board of Private Investigators and Private Security Agencies, said the agency in 1975 regulated 3,000 individuals with a staff of 30. In 1986, he said, the agency regulated 30,000 persons with a staff of 37.

"The private security business is probably the most booming business in the state of Texas today, and has been for several years," Simpson said.

Simpson and Executive Director Clema Sanders presented the agency's budget request of \$3.97 million for 1988-89. The 1986-87 budget, which is covered by licensed fees, is almost \$2.9 million.

Simpson said the agency has only seven investigators to cover the state,

and in 1986 it handled 6,000 administrative cases.

"We have, we think, more than reached the saturation point," he said.

The board, established in 1969, regulates private investigators, alarm systems, armed and unarmed guards, armored car services, couriers and guard-dog companies.

Sanders said that of the 80,000 persons regulated by the agency, 25,000 are authorized to carry firearms.

The Texas State Board of Medical Examiners asked for 11 more employees in the fiscal year starting Sept. 1 to police the medical profession. Its two-year budget request is nearly \$6.5 million, compared with the 1986-87 budget of \$4.9 million.

James Lively, a board member from Corpus Christi, said the agency had completed the initial phase of board recommendations from last August — training investigators, switching from quarterly to monthly meetings, adding four attorneys and raising renewal fees.

The physician renewal fee was raised to \$84, effective Jan. 1, and would cover the increased budget

requests, Cynthia Jenkins of Stowell, a public member of the board, said.

Lively said that as of Dec. 1, Texas had 41,809 physicians, and that the board would maintain "constant oversight" of the discipline for incompetent physicians or those accused of malpractice.

Robert Viterna, executive director of the Commission on Jail Standards, told the committee his agency was created in 1975 to keep county jails out of the federal courts and had succeeded.

In 1975, Viterna said, 40 percent of Texas' county jails were under federal court order but now only three county jails are under federal court jurisdiction.

He said 170 of Texas' 242 jails had met all commission standards for certification, and "successful lawsuits against jails have dropped off dramatically."

Viterna said the total jail population had grown from 12,000 in 1975 to 20,500 last year. He said the single greatest impact on increased jail populations has been the law requiring jail time for certain drunken drivers.

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