

Friday, February 1, 1991

The Battalion

## Rise in illegal immigration

# False IDs aid job hunt

AUSTIN (AP) — Illegal immigration across the Southwestern border appears to be rising again following three consecutive years of decline, officials said.

"The word is going back (to Latin America) that if you can obtain, at a minimum cost, a driver's license and fraudulent Social Security card, that's all you need to meet the burden of proof to work in the United States," said Duke Austin, a spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, employers face civil and criminal sanctions for hiring undocumented workers.

But an employer is not required to validate an employee's documents, making it possible for illegal aliens to get work with a fraudulent Social Security card and a driver's license obtained with that Social Security card, Austin said. Austin said black market Social Security cards can be bought for \$25 to \$40.

"If it looks valid, an employer has met his burden," Austin said.

"The word is out that document fraud is the key to getting a job in America ... massive quantities of fraudulent documents are undermining the effectiveness of sanctions," said Dan Stein, executive director of the Federation for American Immigration Reform.

Rep. Lamar Smith, R-San Antonio, a member of the House immigration subcommittee, said estimates indicate that as many as half the illegal aliens in the United States are using fraudulent documents.

"It's an issue today; it will be a crisis tomorrow if we don't address it," Smith said Thursday. "To stop this floating of the law, we need a tamper-proof card of some sort — not a national ID card — but simply making the documents in use tamper-proof."

According to INS figures, apprehensions of people trying to cross the Southern border illegally rose from 854,128 in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, 1989, to over 1 million for the fiscal year that ended this past Sept. 30.

Apprehensions are considered the best measure of illegal immigration. Apprehensions peaked in 1986 at 1.6 million, then fell steadily in fiscal 1987, 1988 and 1989.

Austin said apprehensions also were up 5.4 percent for the past quarter — October through December — compared with the same period a year ago.

"I think the initial impact of IRCA is wearing off," Smith said. "It points out the need to more strictly enforce employer sanctions, particularly the need to eliminate fraudulent documents."

Smith said more law enforcement also is needed on the Mexican border. Although Congress authorized a 50 percent increase in Border Patrol agents in IRCA, the failure to fund those positions has meant the force has only grown from about 3,600 agents in 1986 to around 3,800 to 3,900 agents today. The INS, however, is funded to add another 200 agents.

Cecilia Munoz, senior immigration policy analyst at the National Council of La Raza, said tensions along the border appear to be increasing along with illegal immigration.

"Each year we get more and more documented cases of people getting shot, people getting beaten and deaths at the border at the hands of border enforcement officials," Munoz said. "That situation is absolutely urgent."

Stein said he believes Congress should establish some kind of uniform work verification system.

## Good doggie



KEVIN IVY/The Battalion

Mathew Janne puts his bear aside to pet Reveille during Tuesday's basketball game.

# Lt. Gov. predicts state tax increase

AUSTIN (AP) — Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock predicted a "rather large" tax increase will be required to meet the state's needs over the next two years, while Gov. Ann Richards refused to speculate on the matter Thursday.

"I have no idea, and I'm not going to pre-guess it," Richards said when asked if the state can get by without a tax increase.

House Speaker Gib Lewis called discussion of a tax increase premature.

Bullock said, "I don't see any way around it ... The possibility of not having a tax bill is very, very remote if Texas is going to move ahead in the future."

That's despite a bill passed by the Legislature and signed by Richards Thursday to carve \$139.5 million from state spending and to audit

state agencies to see if more money can be saved.

It was the first bill passed this session, and the first signed by the new governor.

The state faces a projected budget shortfall of \$4.6 billion through fiscal year 1993.

There is an estimated deficit this fiscal year of about \$265 million, mostly in welfare services, that the budget-cutting bill will help cover.

The rest of the immediate deficit could be made up through funds expected to be left in state coffers when the current fiscal year ends Aug. 31, lawmakers said.

The bill includes a 1 percent budget cut for state agencies, with some exceptions, and the transfer of unspent funds from several accounts. It replaces a previous proposal to freeze state spending.

Richards said the bill should assure Texans that "we have done everything that we know to do to make sure that the taxpayers are getting their money's worth."

Before a tax increase is considered, Richards said she would like to see the audits proceed, a state lottery pass and a committee set up to recommend tax changes, particularly in the state franchise tax.

A Texas Supreme Court order to provide more equitable funding to poor school districts makes the question of a tax increase "dicier and more difficult," she said.

Bullock also cited the court order, along with state welfare needs that could demand another \$1 billion and an estimate that 10,000 more prison beds are required.

## Inactives prepare for war

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The first of hundreds of inactive reservists reporting to Army and Air Force posts in San Antonio left civilian life behind Thursday to prepare for wartime military service.

The nationwide activation of thousands in the Individual Ready Reserves is the first major call-up of that reserve category in the Army and Air Force since the Berlin crisis in 1961.

## In Advance

### Parent's Weekend schedule applications accepted

Texas A&M's Student Government and Parent's Weekend committee now are accepting schedule form applications for Parent's Weekend schedule.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. Feb. 22 in 221 Pavilion. For more information, contact Ana at 845-3051.

### LIVE MUSIC

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