

Friday, November 6, 1981

THE FEI

DATA BASE: GASOLINE CONSUMPTION

Unleaded, June, 1981	3,351,000 barrels per day
Unleaded, 1977*	1,976,000 barrels per day
Leaded, June, 1981	3,502,000 barrels per day
Leaded, 1977*	5,201,000 barrels per day

Source: Energy Department. *Monthly average for year.

The Federal Triangle

The Ship Of State Is Full Of Leaks Again, Drat It

The Reagan administration's efforts to stop news leaks go far beyond the White House. Career officials report that Reaganites in top federal agency positions have mounted tough campaigns to crack down on dissent within the ranks.

Bureau of Land Management Director Robert Buford laid things on the line in a Sept. 23 memo to all his employees: "It is inappropriate for a bureau employe to express personal opinions . . . if they differ from the administration position." Commerce Department information chief Mary Nimmo told her agency's people late last month: "Contact me or Deputy Secretary [Joseph] Wright before talking to the press—otherwise, he will contact you afterward." (Both of these memos were leaked to the press immediately.)

Labor Department economists say they've been told bluntly not to return calls from reporters or congressional staffers. Environmental Protection Agency analysts say they've been warned that Administrator Anne Gorsuch is "fed up" with research that undermines administration proposals. One EPA careerist was ordered to write an "apology" after issuing a water pollution study that angered the brass.

In a classic Keystone Kops scene at Commerce last month, Secretary Malcolm Baldrige's aides chased a network camera crew down the halls to block a scheduled interview with a career bureaucrat. Baldrige's office feared that the employe would say something "embarrassing and damaging to . . . the White House," information chief Nimmo explained in the memo.

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BUT NO KETCHUP . . . While the Agriculture Department raises prices and cuts portions in the school lunch program at home, it has just agreed to provide, free, 28,000 tons of surplus milk, butter and cheese to the Polish government, for use in a pre-school lunch program.

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FRIGHT . . . In the belief that fear is a great motivator, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration plans to open its crash tests to the media and the public. The theory is that color footage of the tests, in which cars are smashed into walls, trees and other cars with devastating results, will scare people into using seat belts.

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STRIKING BACK . . . Interior Secretary James G. Watt was advised by aides to meet with media people to improve his public image. So Watt addressed a big editors' convention, and came out with a "distortion" in accounts of his ac-

Treasury Takin

By Mary Thornton
Washington Post Staff Writer

After months of rumors and high-level meetings, the Treasury Department is expected to announce within the next week that it is eliminating the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) to save money.

Sources at BATF and on Capitol Hill said they had been told that Treasury Secretary Donald T. Regan decided Wednesday to abolish the agency and that the announcement could come at any time.

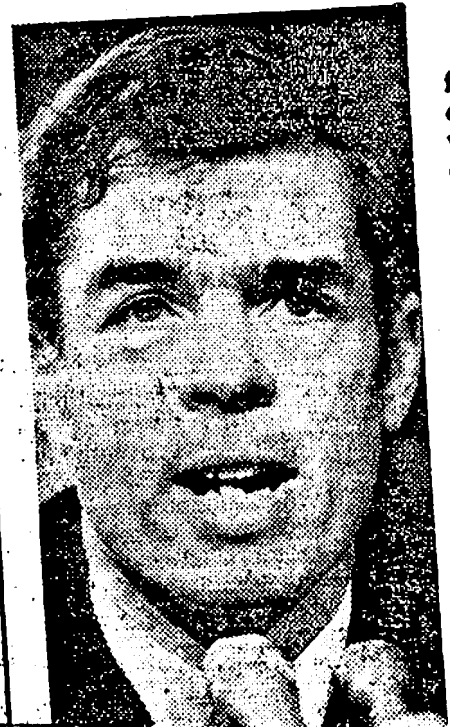
But Marlin Fitzwater, a spokesman for the Treasury Department, said the final decision probably will not be made until next week.

Word first leaked in September that the administration had decided to eliminate BATF, which enforces federal gun laws, along with 30 to 40 other agencies, boards and commissions.

The administration had recommended that the bureau's budget be cut to \$120 million this fiscal year, down from last year's \$150 million.

But there have been accusations, both from

Department of Agriculture Task Force Gives



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