

ILLEGAL ALIEN EXPULSIONS SPIKE UP IN 4TH QUARTER

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Body

WASHINGTON Immigration authorities said yesterday that 18,988 illegal aliens were deported in formal proceedings in the last three months of 1996, a 24% hike over the same period a year earlier.

More than half the aliens were deported because of criminal records. Immigration and Naturalization Service General Counsel David Martin said an expansion of INS detention facilities helped increase the removal of criminal aliens by 31%.

The INS said another 20,866 aliens gave up fighting deportation before their cases reached a formal conclusion and left voluntarily during the period.

Martin said stepped-up enforcement "will make a substantial dent in the growth" of the illegal alien population, which the INS estimated at 5 million.

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