AROUND THE NATION;

Decline Is Suspected In Illegal Immigration

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Body

United States <u>immigration</u> officials, puzzled by an apparent drop in <u>illegal immigration</u> from Mexico, speculated today that devaluation of the peso might be partly responsible.

Gene Wood, chief of the Chula Vista

National news is on pages

A12-14, B8-15 and B17.

SAN YSIDRO, Calif., July 7 (UPI) -United States <u>immigration</u> officials, puzzled by an apparent drop in <u>illegal</u> <u>immigration</u> from Mexico, speculated today that devaluation of the peso might be partly responsible. Sector of the Federal Border Patrol, said, "Smugglers traditionally insist upon payment in dollars. It now takes more pesos to buy dollars. That may be a factor."

Through June, 171,559 aliens have been arrested in the Chula Vista Sector, which includes San Diego. The arrests are down by 28,212, or 14 percent, from the same period last year, and officials said it could mean fewer *illegal* aliens were trying to sneak into the United States. A comparable *decline* has been noted along the Texas border.

But Mr. Wood cautioned the figures might not reflect a trend."The <u>decline</u> is fairly recent, and may be a fluke," he said.

Classification

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