



**'SNO FUN FOR THE QUEEN**—Earl Purdy of Dodge Ridge, Calif., presents bouquet (left) to Darlene Cowden, 21, after he crowned her Miss Snow Fun. At right Darlene, who is a member of the Palo Alto Ski Club, thaws out. Seven lovely contestants paraded in bathing suits in a snow storm while the temperature read an uncomfortable 27 degrees. Hundreds of skiers, bundled in parkas and furs, watched the novel contest.

**A Nichol's Worth of . . . Comment On This and That**

By **HARMAN W. NICHOLS**  
United Press Feature Writer

Washington — (U.P.) — A defective for the Bureau of Customs has to have the usual six senses, plus a lot of horse sense on the side.

"We catch a lot of professional crooks," said George Coffelt, information officer of the Bureau of Customs here. "That is what we look for mostly."

He admitted that an honest looking tourist may sometimes slip through — if he's the gambler-type who's willing to risk his reputation and a heavy fine to escape an import duty.

A traveler may be bringing back an extra fifth of cognac or champagne, above the one gallon of beverage he is allowed duty free. The customs men may look into only one bag, if you have an honest eye. If the extra bottle is not in that bag, the tourist has managed to cheat Uncle Sam out of a few cents. If it is in the bag — well, he's been caught smuggling.

**Valued Possessions**

When I went through customs after a trip to Paris, the man asked what was in this and that bag, and I told him. He asked me to open only my duffel which contained only dirty underwear and some carbon paper. Maybe I could have sneaked in a trinket or two. But how did I know which bag he would ask me to open? I'm glad I didn't try any petty larceny.

You generally are allowed only \$500 worth of goods per person duty-free when returning from a foreign country. President Eisenhower asked Congress this week to raise that to \$1000.

During the last year, there were more than \$17,000 investigations, both civil and criminal. There were 615 arrests and 388 convictions. There were about 1000 seizures of goods worth over \$15,000,000. Fines of over \$1,300,000 were levied.

Coffelt opened his files. One party was caught with the inwards of \$10,000 worth of Swiss watch movements concealed in the false bottom of a box containing X-ray equipment. This fellow was caught, fined and jailed.

"Ordinarily," Coffelt said,

"when a crook is coming in we are tipped off in advance by our agents overseas. It's a simple matter to greet him when he docks."

**Many Tricks**

People will try anything to get away with cheating. Women tie things like drugs and jewels under their girdles. Or they hold diamonds under their tongues.

(These are dumb and get caught when they are asked questions.)

A lot of big folks travel with heavy loads. If they are legitimate, the customs people see that the stuff is inspected ahead of time. Their gear is looked into and sealed under government bond — to speed up operations.

Back in the early 30s when the late MGM movie director W. S. Van Dyke was about to leave for Africa to film "Trader Horn," he had gathered tons of equipment for a seven-months journey into the Dark Continent. Since most of the equipment was to be returned to this country, the customs people checked it out in advance and put it under bond to ease their burden when it was returned.

Sometimes folks get caught for not knowing what they can bring back and what they can't. Everything brought back must be declared. One passenger recently thought he was smuggling a bunch of saffron (yellow coloring) into the country. He had gone to a lot of trouble to conceal it.

He caught himself a penalty for concealing things. Plain truth was, it could have come in duty free.

**Salem Thread Mill Will Move Factory**

Salem — (U.P.) — The Miles linen thread company here has announced it is liquidating its operation and moving equipment to other factories.

David L. Malcolm Jr., vice-president, said equipment would be transferred to plants at Chicago, Baltimore and Paterson, N.J. The company employed about 50 persons.

The spinning mill was the second in Salem to close in recent months.

Salem — (U.P.) — Gov. Paul L. Patterson said he has reappointed Robert T. Mautz of Portland as a member of the State Racing Commission.



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AND TO  
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