

✓CP Illegal Aliens rP 6/3/87

# Aliens flood INS office in Salinas

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More illegal aliens applied for legal status at the area legalization center in the last two days than applied all last month.

Federal immigration officials in Salinas said this morning the start of the new Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) program has caused the increase.

The SAW program is geared to help undocumented agricultural workers obtain legal status. The requirements of the SAW program, which opened Monday, aren't as stiff as those of the general amnesty programs, which began May 1.

Monday morning, illegals packed into the Salinas offices

See ALIENS page 7 ►

✓CP Illegal Aliens rP 6/3/87

# ALIENS

► From page 1

of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The center serves Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito counties.

Chief legalization officer Tom Maddry said he had expected some increase — but was surprised at the size of the crowd Monday.

He said his office wasn't prepared to handle the increase.

"On Monday there wasn't any time during the day that we had less than 70 people in the office, backlogged," he said.

Maddry said he's made changes in the way the office is set up and that has helped move things along.

"We still have 15 to 20 people in the office at one time, but we are able to handle them," he said. "That's our aim. We don't want to keep them off the job."

Before the SAW programs began, the center was receiving only a few applications a day, Maddry said. That has increased to close to 100 a day this week.

Illegals still haven't turned out in great numbers for the general amnesty programs, Maddry said.

As of last Friday, the center

had received only about 150 applications back of the thousands it has distributed.

As of today, the number of returned applications has more than doubled.

Maddry said most of the illegal aliens in the area work in agriculture and would naturally find it easier to qualify under the SAW program.

He said most of the applicants are well prepared, but a few have come in with inadequate documentation.

To qualify, illegals must prove their identity, that they have lived in the United States for some time, and that they are admissible to the United States.

"For instance, some people leave a span of time unaccounted for. They have gaps in their documentation that do not show where they resided," Maddry said.

Persons with incomplete documentation are told to gather additional documents and return later.

Maddry said most of the applications have come from illegals who live and work in Salinas, but some have come from Watsonville and a few have been submitted from Hollister and King City.