

# News Digest

## 'Year of Dragon' to carry a disclaimer on racism

LOS ANGELES (Reuter) — The controversial new film "The Year of the Dragon" will soon include a disclaimer aimed at appeasing Asian Americans who have protested its alleged racist portrayals of Chinese, the distributors said Thursday.

UA-MGM chairman Frank Rothman said at a news conference that a one-sentence disclaimer "will appear at the beginning, right before the lion roars," in prints of the film directed by

Michael Cimino that are shown in New York and Los Angeles. It will state: "This film does not intend to demean or ignore the many achievements of Asian Americans, and in particular Chinese American citizens."

People of Asian descent last week set up picket lines outside Los Angeles and New York cinemas, asserting that the portrayal of New York Chinatown gang activities in the movie was racist.

Rothman credited Los Angeles City

Councilman Michael Woo, the first politician of Asian heritage elected to the Council, with having a prominent role in developing the disclaimer.

Woo said UA-MGM had agreed not to undertake a project involving Asian Americans without first consulting members of that community to ensure authenticity and fairness. Rothman said disclaimers would be inserted into prints in New York and Los Angeles by next Tuesday.

### Genetic cause pinpointed

## Disease research advances

NEW YORK (AP) — Researchers reported Thursday that they have taken a major stride toward identifying the genetic defect that causes the most common form of muscular dystrophy, a deadly, incurable disease.

The work may help lead to development of a treatment for muscular dystrophy, the researchers said.

It also will provide a better test for finding carriers of the defect that causes Duchenne muscular dystrophy and for performing prenatal diagnosis, other experts said.

Some 50,000 to 100,000 boys and young men in the United States are afflicted with the disease, which causes progressive destruction of the skeletal muscles. It usually kills by the time the victim reaches his late 20s.

The disease is caused by a defect on the X chromosome, which carries genes, the basic units of heredity that give bodily cells their marching orders. The disease can arise if a key gene is defective or missing.

The new research, reported in the British journal "Nature" by a team of

Children's Hospital in Boston, greatly advances the search for the defective gene by narrowing the area on the X chromosome to look for it.

"That was a quantum leap to getting to the gene itself," said P. Michael Conneally, professor of medical genetics and neurology at Indiana University Medical Center. The gene may be found within a year, he said Thursday.

Once it is found, researchers can find what abnormal instruction it is issuing, in the form of a protein, that leads to the disease, he said. That knowledge will give leads on treatment, said Conneally who wrote a commentary in Nature on the research.

More immediately, the work has produced a genetic probe that can be used to screen other people in a victim's family to reveal the defect with a high degree of accuracy, he said.

That's important because the Duchenne defect is carried by women who show no symptoms but who can pass the defect to their sons. Women

are generally not affected because they have two X chromosomes, and a normal X chromosome can make up for the defect in the other. Men have only one X chromosome.

Women "really want to know whether they're carriers or not," Conneally said. In addition, the probe can be used for prenatal diagnosis of Duchenne, he said.

The test should provide more accuracy than a version reported earlier this year, being "essentially fool-proof," he said. But he said a test for carriers can prevent only about 70 percent of Duchenne cases, because the other 30 percent arise from spontaneous mutations that are not inherited.

Symptoms of the disease usually appear at age 2 or 3, when muscles in the neck and legs begin to weaken. Most victims cannot walk by age 8 or 9. They usually die by their late 20s because the disease has weakened the muscles used in breathing, making them vulnerable to respiratory failure.

## Report shows farm conditions decline

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Farm credit conditions worsened and farmland values continued to fall during the second quarter of the year, according to a quarterly bank survey by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

Responses from 166 agricultural bankers in the district indicated that most bankers are referring some farm customers to non-bank credit agencies and are requiring greater amounts of collateral on loans.

The survey said the rate of loan repayment at agricultural banks remained slow in the second quarter, and 55 percent of the bankers reported loan

repayment rates lower than a year ago.

The 10th District, which is headquartered in Kansas City, includes all or parts of Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Wyoming.

The report by Mark Drabenstott, research officer and economist for the bank, and Kim Norris, research associate, said farm real estate values continued to fall for the second straight year.

For all land categories, values averaged 6 percent below the first quarter of 1985, 22 percent lower than the same

period a year ago and 40 percent below market highs reached in 1981.

The report said rural businesses have been hurt by the financial stress on farmers.

"District bankers reported that 23 percent of the rural non-farm businesses in their trading areas were having severe financial problems. That was slightly above the percentage reported six months ago and substantially higher than the 13 percent reported a year ago. The rate of rural non-farm business closings in the first half of 1985 was about three times higher than bankers considered normal," the report said.

## Newsmakers

### A roundup of the day's happenings

Police stormed the home of Pakistani dissident leader **Benazir Bhutto** on Thursday and put her under house arrest for three months. Bhutto heads the banned Pakistan Peoples Party. She arrived in Karachi last week after 19 months of self-exile, and urged the government to stick to its pledge to lift martial law in Pakistan by the end of the year. . . . Top-seeded player **John McEnroe** bounced back from a first-round scare and is back on the track with a second-round U.S. Open win. . . . The president of the National Farmers Organization, **Devon Woodland**, told a group of Montana farmers that production pooling and collective bargaining by masses of farmers are the only "safety net" that can save individual farmers from extinction. . . . In what promises to be one of the most sensational court cases in West German history, two former cabinet ministers and an erstwhile captain of industry went on trial on charges of corruption in a political bribery affair. It is expected to focus on allegations that in the past, all main political parties in West Germany have peddled favors for funds. . . . **Harold Stassen**, 78, the last survivor of eight Americans who signed the United Nations Charter in 1945, said the U.N. needs a new weighted voting system to give large, powerful nations a greater say instead of giving all states equal vote. . . . Former President **Gerald Ford** is in Hamburg, West Germany, for a private visit with former Chancellor **Helmut Schmidt**. . . . A sniffer dog led police to 37 pounds of heroin hidden in the suitcases of three Portuguese travelers at Rome airport. . . . Japan's Health and Welfare Ministry is examining two brands of domestic wine following a report that they had been found to

contain a toxic anti-freeze chemical, the same chemical was found in an Italian wine in Hong Kong. . . . Air Line Pilots Association members have voted to increase dues to set up a \$100 million "war chest" and continue funding a 23-month strike against Continental Airlines. Said the Union: "This is a message, in foot-high letters, to all airlines. We've got the desire, the determination and now the money to protect the professional airline pilot from the onslaughts of deregulation and anti-unionism." . . . Former U.S. astronaut **James Irwin** came down from Turkey's Mt. Ararat empty handed after his fourth attempt to locate the remains of Noah's Ark. . . . In Bunol, Spain, 5,000 people pelted each other with 60 tons of tomatoes in a traditional annual fiesta called Tomatina, which cost the city hall and private sponsors more than \$4,000. . . . **Patti Davis**, daughter of President and Nancy Reagan, has written a fictionalized account of her life called "Home Front." Davis reportedly received a sum totaling six figures for the book — her first. . . . The new class of 1,387 freshmen at Rhode Island's Brown University includes actress Jane Fonda's daughter, Vanessa; 1984 Democratic vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro's daughter, Laura; former President Carter's daughter, Amy, and socialist Claus von Bulow's daughter, Cosima. Educational cost each: \$16,000 for the year. . . . Israel's education Ministry is organizing shooting matches in an effort to improve the ability of teachers to fend off Palestinian guerrilla attacks. About 7,000 teachers now are licensed to carry guns at work.

From News Wires

## In Brief

### U.S. wins trade meeting battle

GENEVA, Switzerland — The United States has won a battle to force major trading nations to discuss this year the convening of world trade talks, official sources at the 90-nation GATT trade group said Thursday.

Forty-nine countries have backed the U.S. move to require senior officials to meet this fall to discuss holding world trade negotiations to fight restrictions which are choking the trading system, the sources said.

At a full council meeting of the GATT in July, Washington invoked a previously unused procedural tactic to demand the meeting. Approval by a majority of GATT members was needed before the end of this month to pass the initiative.

The 49 votes backing the U.S. move have arrived by mail at the offices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

A number of developing countries, led by India and Brazil, have blocked efforts so far to launch a round of trade talks.

### Nigeria lifts curfew; opens ports

LAGOS, Nigeria — Nigeria's new military authorities Thursday lifted a dusk-to-dawn curfew imposed on major cities after Tuesday's coup and reopened all sea ports. A senior police official also said the new government started freeing on bail some of the scores of people who were jailed for months without charges under the old government.

### Exon says farm crisis serious

HARTINGTON — Sen. J. James Exon, D-Nebr., told more than 250 people attending a farm crisis rally that the present farm situation is comparable to the Great Depression for farmers.

"I'm not sure the president fully understands the difficulties agriculture faces today," Exon said. "Never before have we been in more serious farm crisis than we are now." When asked about the potential for passage of a farm-relief bill put together by the Farm Crisis Committee, Exon said, "The chances are nil that they (congressmen) will pass the bill. I don't think they will even get out of committee," Exon said. Exon did say, however, "I think we are near to where we can do something..." to help the struggling farm community.

### Seat belt extenders available

OMAHA — Spokesmen for two automobile manufacturers said they will provide free seat belt extensions to Nebraskans whose size will make it difficult for them to comply with the mandatory seat belt law.

"We do offer extenders," said Tom Jacobowski, manager of public relations with Chrysler-Plymouth in Detroit. "They are free to people who need them."

Guy Buentz, public relations manager for General Motors Midwest region in Chicago, said GM owners can go to a GM dealers and get an extender.

The problem of fitting seat belts has been reported in other states with mandatory seat belt laws, Buentz said.

The state's seat belt law requires all front-seat passengers, ages 18 and older, to wear belts. Drivers can be ticketed if children ages 4 to 16 don't wear seatbelts. Nebraska law requires children under 4 to wear seat restraints.

### More than 200 die in China floods

PEKING — Floods in northeast and south China have killed more than 200 people and trapped nearly half a million others, the official China Daily reported Thursday. Officials in northeast China said there was a high probability that the fourth and latest flood peak surging down the Liaohe River would burst through dikes protecting the surrounding plain. Also, three million acres of farmland had been inundated and about 1.5 million acres of farmland are under water in southern China.

### Gulf Coast hurricane warning issued

MIAMI — A hurricane warning was issued Thursday for a 400-mile stretch of coast from Louisiana to Florida after forecasters upgraded a tropical storm in the Gulf of Mexico to a Hurricane. Hurricane Elena, packing winds of up to 75 miles per hour, was 475 miles southeast of New Orleans Thursday morning. Traveling at about 20 miles per hour, it was following a northwesterly path through the Gulf, and was expected to strike sometime early today.

### Chrysler calls for pay freeze

DETROIT — Chrysler Corp. wants to link payments for its American workers to its overall financial performance, freezing wages in bad times, the automaker's chief labor executive said Thursday.

Chrysler vice-president Thomas Miner said management gave the United Auto Workers its first proposal on a new contract covering 70,000 employees, most of whom are paid an hourly wage. The current contract expires Oct. 15 and the UAW leadership is polling members for authorization to call a strike if talks, which begin again Wednesday, fail.

### American caught on PLO ship

JERUSALEM, Israel — Israeli forces have arrested an American and an Australian aboard a yacht carrying Palestinian guerrillas who planned to attack northern Israel, Israeli officials said Thursday.

The officials said the men were paid to transport the Palestinians to the south Lebanese port of Sidon. The yacht was intercepted by Israeli gunboats and escorted into Haifa port. The military has said the guerrillas planned to land in Sidon and infiltrate overland into northern Israel.

### Federal judge indicted for corruption

WASHINGTON — U.S. District Judge Walter Nixon was indicted Thursday on charges of accepting illegal payments and giving false testimony to a grand jury. He is only the third sitting federal judge ever to be indicted.

If convicted, Nixon, chief judge of the Southern District of Mississippi, faces a maximum of 17 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine. He was appointed to the bench in 1983 by President Johnson.

From News Wires