

# News Digest

## Congress reconvenes today; deficit to head fall agenda

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress ends its summer recess today with lawmakers seeing red — red ink, that is — as one of their first major decisions will be to either raise the public debt ceiling over \$2 trillion or leave the government unable to finance its operations.

Sanctions against South Africa, trade protection bills and farm programs also sit atop the agenda as the fall session begins.

There's little question Congress will extend the treasury's borrowing power, which could run dry by the end of the month. But the Senate, which will take up the issue first, is braced for an onslaught of amendments from senators tired of approving the steady rise in the debt, which has doubled since 1980.

Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole,

R-Kan., predicts the fight will be "the donnybrook of the year."

"We all know that the debt ceiling has got to be raised. That's not the issue," said Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas. The question, he said, is "are we going to change the system that has failed us."

Gramm said he's prepared a budget reform package to propose as an amendment to the debt ceiling bill. The plan would force the president and the Congress to gradually reduce annual deficits to zero by 1990.

The latest government estimate put the national debt at \$1.819 trillion on Aug. 29, just \$5 million shy of the legal limit of \$1.824 trillion.

The budget Congress adopted Aug. 1 estimated the government's borrowing needs would require a debt limit of

\$2.078 trillion for next year and up to \$2.5 trillion by 1988. Interest on the debt costs \$140 billion a year.

The full Senate won't convene until next Monday, when a vote is scheduled on choking off a conservative filibuster blocking final approval of sanctions against South Africa.

President Reagan reportedly is considering a veto of the compromise legislation, approved earlier by the House. The Republican-led Senate might override such a veto.

The House convenes today with a ceremony to swear in Jim Chapman, a Democrat elected to Texas' 1st District in a special election runoff on Aug. 3. Chapman replaces Rep. Sam Hall, D-Texas, who resigned to become a federal judge.

## Titanic ruins found

Survivors want vessel 'left in peace'

NEW YORK (Reuter) — The Titanic, the world's most famous shipwreck, which was discovered Sunday, is standing upright and almost in one piece in its watery grave, its finders reported Tuesday from their research vessel off the Newfoundland coast.

But the scientists aboard the U.S. Navy oceanographic survey ship Knorr declined to reveal the exact location of the luxury liner that sank 73 years ago and killed 1,513 people, for fear that the news would ignite a deep sea treasure hunt.

Legend has it that a king's ransom of diamonds and gold bullion were aboard the supposedly "unsinkable" ocean liner that struck an iceberg on its maiden voyage and sank on April 14, 1912, as tons of water poured into a 300-foot deep gash.

"They do not want to release the exact location of the Titanic because they want to see it preserved as a marine memorial for the time being," said a spokeswoman for the Woods Hole, Mass., Oceanographic Institution, one of the sponsors of the successful hunt.

That sentiment was echoed by 21 survivors who, now in their 80's, suddenly found themselves reliving the most terrible moment of their lives — as children they were forced into lifeboats as their elders stayed aboard to die in the North Atlantic.

"I think other survivors would agree that the Titanic should be left in peace," said Eva Hart, 82, at her home near London. "I would prefer my father's grave to remain undisturbed."

Hart's father put her into a lifeboat, waved goodbye and drowned with 1,513 others, including millionaires John Jacob Astor and Benjamin Guggenheim, and hundreds of luckless steerage passengers whose names are now all but forgotten.

"I always felt they should just leave it alone. I don't know what's to be gained looking for it," said Marshal Drew, 81, who was eight years old when his uncle put him aboard Titanic lifeboat number 11.

Dr. Robert Ballard, the head of the French-American expedition that found the ship, reported to Woods Hole on Tuesday that the Titanic was found standing upright and almost in one piece by a specially outfitted robot undersea searchcraft called the Argo.

The Argo, about the size of a Toyota, carried with it super-sensitive "swimming-eyeball" cameras and sonar equipment that beamed back pictures to Knorr.

The point of the expedition was to test the Argo and Ballard thought looking for the Titanic would be the ideal way to do that, the Woods Hole spokeswoman said.

There was no immediate word on when those pictures would be released, but the Knorr is scheduled to return to Woods Hole in six days.

Although Ballard would not give the location of the Titanic, he said the ship sunk not far from where original reports of the maritime disaster said it did — about 400 miles southeast of Newfoundland. Ballard also declined to

give the depth of the ship's watery grave, but reliable reports said the ship lay at a depth of about 12,000 feet.

The Argo was able to delve through wreckage the size of five football fields and scientists aboard the Knorr declared they were delighted at the results.

Their work has temporarily halted Tuesday because of rough seas. The Woods Hole spokeswoman said there were no plans to raise the Titanic, but there were plans to return to the area next year and conduct even more detailed surveys, using even more advanced equipment.

The French-American team had asked the Navy to take them to the area where the 40,000-ton vessel sank.

In a ship-to-shore telephone conversation with Canada's CTV network Monday night, Ballard said, "We came on it (the Titanic) early this morning. It was just bang, there it (the Argo) was right on top of it. . . . We went smack-dab over a gorgeous boiler."

He added, "To a lot of us who had researched it for so many years, the Titanic has taken on more than a shipwreck. It's a true disaster and to finally put those souls to rest was a very nice feeling."

With its double bottom and watertight bulkheads, the Titanic had been regarded as unsinkable. Its vaults are believed by some to contain millions of dollars in gold, diamonds and other jewels. But Titanic expert Russ Lownds of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax, Nova Scotia, said Tuesday reports of a treasure probably were a myth.

## In Brief

### Ramirez, 25, charged in slaying

LOS ANGELES — Richard Ramirez, a drifter arrested in the "Night Stalker" serial slayings that terrorized California, was charged Tuesday with murder and seven other felony counts including burglary, robbery and sexual assault.

The 25-year-old Ramirez was charged with the May 14 murder of William Doi, 66, who was shot in the face in his suburban Monterey Park home, and the sexual assault of Doi's wife.

Ramirez answered "yes" three times in a loud and clear voice as he confirmed his identity, waived his right to enter a plea and waived his right to a preliminary hearing in 10 days.

"We've had only the briefest period to discuss with Mr. Ramirez the defense of his case," Deputy Public Defender David Meyer said in asking for a delay in entering the plea.

Municipal Court Judge Elway Soper ordered Ramirez to appear Sept. 9 to enter a plea. There is no bail in the case.

### 32 injured in emergency landing

ABILENE, Texas — Thirty-two passengers suffered minor injuries Tuesday after an apparently malfunctioning engine fire warning light resulted in the emergency landing of an American Airlines DC-10. The jet, carrying 190 passengers and crew, was flying from El Paso to Dallas-Fort Worth when an activated engine fire warning light in the cockpit forced the pilot to land at Dyess Air Force Base near Abilene. An inspection of the jet after it landed showed no evidence of a fire in its three engines. Most of the injured were treated for cuts and bruises caused by their evacuation through inflatable chutes.

### 1,068 transnational firms in S. Africa

UNITED NATIONS — A total of 1,068 transnational corporations had affiliates in South Africa in 1984, according to a U.N. report published Tuesday. Of these, 406 were from the United States, 364 from Britain and 142 from West Germany, it said. Most of the other firms were listed as from Australia (24), Canada (21), France (20), Netherlands (17), Sweden (18) and Switzerland (32).

The report was published in advance of a hearing to be at U.N. headquarters later this month on the activities of transnational corporations in South Africa and the South African-administered territory of Namibia (South West Africa).

These firms were either concentrated in, or essential to the operation of the modern sector of the economy. And because benefits from these sectors accrued almost exclusively to the whites, "it can be said that transnational corporations are of particular importance to the preservation and growth of the white minority economy," the report stated.

### Pentagon seeks advice on refunds

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is seeking advice from U.S. defense contractors on a policy that would provide refunds to the government for over-priced military spare parts, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger said Tuesday.

The plan was prompted in part by congressional pressure over published reports of equipment such as \$600 toilet seats and \$7,500 coffee-makers on military aircraft.

Six firms — General Dynamics, General Electric, Boeing, Grumman, McDonnell Douglas and Raytheon — have offered to provide unquestioned refunds or credits if parts and equipment are returned within a limited time after purchase.

### Arson blamed for N. Jersey blaze

PASSAIC, N.J. — An arson inspector said Tuesday that children may have started a trash bin fire that spread to dozens of factories and houses, destroying the jobs of 2,200 people and the homes of up to 400.

The fire, declared under control at 1 a.m. Tuesday, caused an estimated \$400 million in damage to more than 40 acres. One firefighter died of a heart attack, and others suffered minor injuries.

The blaze dealt a staggering blow to this blue-collar city of 55,000 residents and the neighborhood of Hispanic and Polish immigrants, some of whom lost both their jobs and their homes.

### Unisex contraceptive vaccine studied

GLASGOW, Scotland — A unisex contraceptive, a vaccine successfully tested on monkeys, will be available for use by humans within five years, a British scientist said.

Dr. Dennis Lincoln said the vaccine works by producing antibodies to sperm and has been tried successfully on marmoset monkeys in Edinburgh.

"It rendered them infertile for periods of more than one year without disturbing other aspects of their reproductive cycle or behavior. They then became fertile again," he said.

Lincoln said the vaccine's main potential use would be to offer contraception for several years for women, adding, however, that there was no reason why it should not also be given to men.

### Post-hurricane cleanup under way

BILOXI, Miss. — Thousands of Gulf Coast residents, held hostage for four days by prowling hurricane Elena, returned home Tuesday to survey the destruction inflicted by 125-mile-per-hour winds and surging tides.

Preliminary damage estimates ran as high as \$500 million, but coastal dwellers were thankful that Elena did not live up to its billing as a potential killer hurricane.

Three deaths — two by heart attack and one by a felled tree — were blamed on the storm.

On the Gulf Coast, the main danger has passed, and a massive cleanup effort is underway. In town after town along a stretch of coastline from Louisiana to central Florida, returning residents were stunned by the scenes of destruction.

## Newsmakers

### A roundup of the day's happenings

The Nigerian press was told Tuesday by the country's new military authorities to exercise its regained freedom — with restraint. On taking power after an apparently bloodless coup last week, Nigeria's new president, Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, said he is repealing a decree that made it an offense to publish stories the government deemed inaccurate or embarrassing. . . . Two years ago this week, Americans couldn't pour Russian vodka down the drain fast enough to show their outrage at the Soviet downing of a Korean Air Lines jet and the loss of 269 lives. Today, Stolichnaya, the only Russian vodka imported in the United States, is the top-selling imported vodka in America. Its suppliers are scheduled to run a full-page ad in the New York Times today to apologize for not being able to meet the demand. . . . A green tooth containing the world's oldest dental filling has been found in the skull of a Nabatean warrior who died 2,200 years ago in southern Israel. . . . Art Schlichter, free of the compulsive gambling habit that led to a year's suspension by the NFL, marked another milestone in his comeback with the Indianapolis Colts when Coach Rod Dowhower promoted him to starting quarterback. . . . Pakistani drug agents have burned more than 7.5 tons of narcotics that had been seized in Karachi during the past year. The haul was reported worth \$100 million. . . . President Reagan leads the list of the 10 best-mannered people in the country, says etiquette expert Marjabelle Stewart. Her "Encyclopedia of Etiquette" will be published next spring. . . . Teachers at Concord High School in New Hampshire said goodbye to colleague Christa McAn-

liffe, 37, who begins training next week for her flight in January 1986, aboard the space shuttle Challenger. She was chosen in July from more than 10,000 teachers to be the first teacher in space. . . . Princess Anne, daughter of Queen Elizabeth, is the first leading member of British royalty to take part in a radio call-in program, answering questions about her childhood, her nervousness and her sometimes thorny relationship with the press. . . . Brazilian forensic experts are carrying out further tests at the request of the U.S. government on the skull of the man they are certain was Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele. . . . One of the best parts of a meal at Peking's new Longevity Restaurant in China, is looking for the fried ants among the sesame seeds. The ants, a special large breed native to northeastern China are prized for their medicinal qualities. They're just one of the attractions at the restaurant, which proclaims "medicine is food and food is medicine". . . . An attacker believed linked to a Palestinian guerrilla group hurled two hand grenades into a Greek hotel, injuring 18 British tourists, including a dozen deaf-mutes. . . . The port packing industry has too few hogs and too many workers, forcing most companies to hold the lines or cut wages to stay in business, a Chicago analyst says. . . . Vietnam veteran Bob Wieland, 38, has spent nearly three years making his way across the nation to fight world hunger, propelling himself with his arms to demonstrate that the loss of his legs in Vietnam is no excuse to stop caring.

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