

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Earthquake hits California

Impact kills at least five, cracks buildings and freeways

LOS ANGELES — A severe earthquake and 15 major aftershocks jolted the area Thursday, cracking buildings and freeways and setting off dozens of fires. At least three people were killed and more than 100 injured.

The U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colo., said the quake registered 6.1 on the Richter scale, making it the strongest tremor to hit the Los Angeles area since the 6.4 Sylmar quake of 1971 that killed 64 people.

The quake was recorded at 7:42 a.m. local time, centered about nine miles south-southeast of Pasadena at the north end of the Whittier-Elsinore Fault. Over the next three hours, at least 15 aftershocks measuring 3 or more on the Richter scale followed.

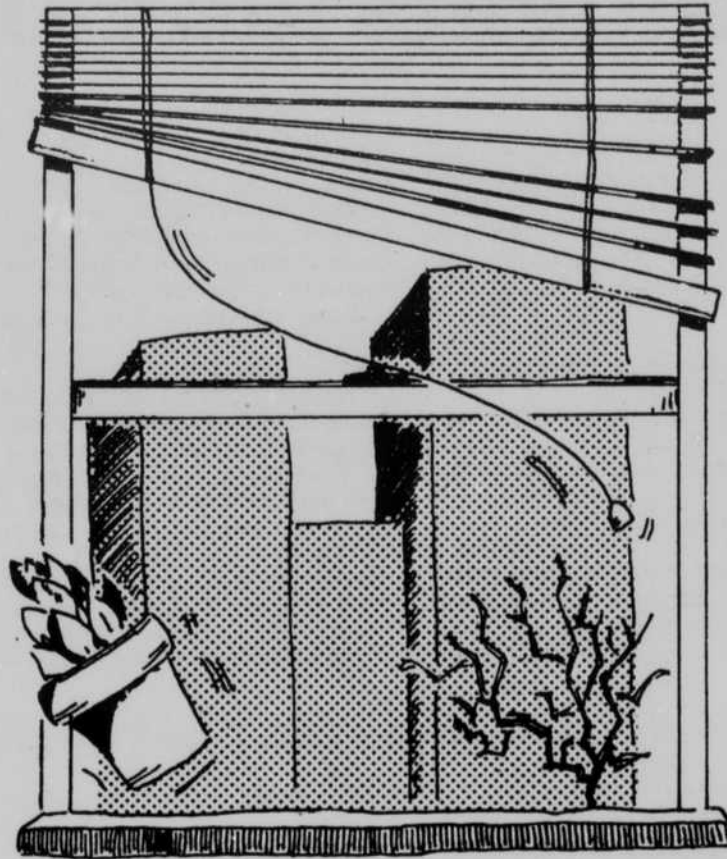
Damage appeared to be worst in Whittier, the closest suburban area to the epicenter. Marsha Andersen, a spokeswoman for Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, said 60 people had been treated for earthquake-related injuries.

"Our uptown area has suffered considerable damage. It's been closed off," said Whittier police Officer Mike Willis.

City personnel director J. Sonny Morkus said officials estimated eight to 10 buildings had been destroyed, none of them homes.

In the older residential neighborhoods, porches collapsed onto lawns, chimneys toppled, windows were shattered and most residents sat outside on chairs, afraid to return inside.

The quake was felt as far away



John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan

as Las Vegas, Nev., 250 miles to the northeast. It knocked dishes off shelves in the Victor Valley, 70 miles to the northeast, and shook the ground in El Cajon, in San Diego County to the south.

In downtown Los Angeles, hundreds of people were evacuated from swaying buildings, where windows shattered and elevators

became stuck as power was knocked out for nearly an hour.

"All at once there was a whoosh of wind, and I walked over to a brick wall until everything stopped shaking," said Gerald Livezey, a security guard at one downtown building. "I was outside, and I mean it was really shaking. I thought it was the biggie."

Missiles tested north of Hawaii by Soviets

WASHINGTON — Despite U.S. protests, the Soviet Union conducted two tests this week of a new long-range, nuclear-capable missile by targeting an area of the Pacific Ocean about 500 miles north of Hawaii, the Pentagon and State Department said Thursday.

One of the tests was an apparent failure, but the second ended with dummy warheads splashing into the Pacific Ocean closer to U.S. soil than ever before, officials said.

"We protested this," said State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley, explaining the Soviets had informed the United States on Sept. 26 through diplomatic channels of their plans.

Fred Hoffman, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, said the Soviets had originally indicated an intent to "bracket" the Hawaiian Islands with their test shots.

The Soviets warned ships to stay away from a large trapezoid-shaped target area about 500 miles northwest of Hawaii and from a smaller, circular area only about 360 miles southwest of Hawaii.

If the Soviets had fired a missile toward the second target area, it would have actually flown over the 50th state, Hoffman said.

"That did not happen, and we do not know whether or not that was a result of our expression of concern. We have never test-flown any ballistic missile in the direction of or over Soviet territory. This would have been unprecedented if the Soviets had done so."

Hoffman refused to say precisely when the two tests occurred, beyond saying one was on Tuesday afternoon and the other on Wednesday afternoon Hawaiian time.

The first test, Hoffman said, "was an apparent failure. The second, Wednesday afternoon Hawaiian time, appears to have been successful."

"Both missiles, fired from Tyuratam (in the southwestern Soviet Union), carried multiple (dummy) warheads," the spokesman said. "The Soviet Union has announced that this series of tests is over and that shipping can move safely though that area."

Florida police warned as gun law takes effect

MIAMI — Worried police departments issued special warning to officers Thursday as the state's first 100 concealed weapons permits rolled off the presses under a new law allowing most Floridians to carry sidearms.

"I think it's a very stupid idea, a very stupid law, and they should reconsider it," grumbled Miami Officer Frank Pichel before he went on patrol Thursday, the day the law took effect.

The law, which was passed in April after lobbying by the local chapter of the National Rifle Association, eased restrictions on gun permits, allowing anyone to carry a concealed weapon unless they are convicted felons or are incapacitated.

The new law also dropped an "open carry" provision that had prevented people from wearing guns in plain view. Lawmakers disputed whether that was an oversight, but there is little sentiment in the Florida Legislature for changing the law.

In Tallahassee, the state printed its first 100 concealed weapons permits Thursday, with authorities predicting 60,000 Floridians will eventually be licensed.

A spot survey found few incidents or gun confiscations Thursday.

In Tampa, at one minute after midnight, police received a call about a possible robbery in progress at a drug store, said police spokesman Steve Cole.

When police arrived, they found a man with a .45-caliber automatic tucked into his pants.

He said he'd heard about the new gun law, and since it was after midnight, he decided to take his gun out shopping with him," Cole said. Police asked him to put the gun in his car because it made people there nervous, and the man obliged.

Robertson declares GOP presidential candidacy

NEW YORK — Longtime television evangelist Pat Robertson declared his candidacy for the 1988 Republican presidential nomination Thursday, saying "I am stretching forth my hand to all Americans."

"This will not be the campaign of a small, well-organized minority. It will be a campaign to capture the hearts of the American people,"

Robertson said. He announced his candidacy in front of the three-story brownstone house in an inner-city neighborhood where he lived briefly 27 years ago as a young minister.

Several hundred supporters cheered Robertson and some held aloft signs reading, "Robertson for God and country."

Protesters stood on the edge of the

crowd with signs that read, "AIDS kills black people. Pat doesn't care." They chanted, "Bigot, bigot, bigot."

Earlier, Robertson spoke on the "700 Club," the Christian Broadcasting Network show he hosted for years. Robertson, who two days ago severed his ties to the Baptist ministry and CBN, described his candidacy as "a big move for me."

Robertson outpolled Vice President George Bush and Senate GOP leader Bob Dole in a straw poll at a fund-raising event in Ames, Iowa.

He stunned Bush and Rep. Jack Kemp of New York in the summer of 1986 when his supporters recruited a majority of the candidates to fill thousands of Republican precinct delegate slots in Michigan.

In Brief

State closes Security State Bank of Oxford

The state Department of Banking and Finance closed the insolvent Security State Bank of Oxford Thursday, but state Banking Director Cynthia Milligan said the bank will be reopened under new ownership today.

The closing was the first bank failure in Nebraska this year, the second in Furnas County since 1985 and the 26th in Nebraska since the national depressions in agriculture and energy started trouble for banks in 1983.

Judge orders stop to public tours of tree house

MINNEAPOLIS — A judge has ordered a man to stop further construction on a seven-story tree house he is building for his children and to stop giving public tours of the \$7,000 structure.

Mark Tucker has been fighting city officials since May, when inspectors questioned the structural integrity of the tree house and said it violates building codes. Tucker insists the house is structurally sound and has been holding open houses at the tree house to raise money for his legal defense.

Iraqi, Iranian attacks continue; Australian killed

MANAMA, Bahrain — Iraqi warplanes fired a missile Thursday at a shrimp boat in the Persian Gulf and killed its Australian captain.

Earlier Thursday to Iranian speedboats opened fire with machine guns and rockets on a Pakistani tanker less than 24 hours after attacking two Japanese supertankers. No casualties were reported in the attacks, and damage was minimal.

Surrogate mother bears her own grandchildren

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — A 48-year-old woman gave birth Thursday to her daughter's test-tube triplets, becoming the world's first surrogate mother of her own grandchildren.

Pat Anthony agreed to bear the children of her daughter, Karen Ferreira-Jorge, whose uterus was removed after complications from the birth of her first child three years ago. Eggs from Ferreira-Jorge were fertilized with sperm from her husband, Alcinio, in a laboratory. The four eggs were implanted in Anthony's womb.

Normally, only one embryo develops in the process, but in this case three of the fertilized ova began growing.

Milkweed as a crop

Farmer grows it for absorbent floss

PAXTON — Milkweed is just what the name implies — a weed. Yet some farmers in Ogallala, Paxton and Minden are growing it as a crop.

Paxton farmer Ralph Holzfaster has been involved in an experimental milkweed project for about 2 1/2 years. He is working with Standard Oil of Ohio to produce milkweed floss as an alternative crop.

"To grow something that somebody else is growing and of which there is an oversupply already doesn't help solve the problem," he said.

But he cautioned, "It's going to take four or five years and a lot of hard work if the thing is going to go." Why would anyone want to

use milkweed? For the floss found in abundance in the seed pods, Holzfaster said.

The floss can be used as insulation in garments and could compete with down, he said.

Kimberly Clark Corp., which produces disposable diapers, is interested in the floss because of its absorbency.

"Milkweed floss will absorb about 70 plus percent of its own weight in moisture when it is treated and has the natural oils taken off of the fiber," Holzfaster said.

And a field of milkweed has enough pollen for a bee to produce about 200 pounds of honey from it, he said.

Opposition paper reopens

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Nicaragua's only opposition newspaper resumed publication Thursday after a 15-month forced closure with a banner headline saying, "Triumph For The People."

La Prensa, once Nicaragua's most popular newspaper, resurfaced after the leftist Sandinista government on Sept. 19 approved the reopening.

"We're ready," said an editor, Juan Navarro, as he cut and pasted stories for the afternoon paper. "Everyone is

excited."

President Daniel Ortega said the move was in line with the new regional peace plan, which calls for restoration of democratic freedoms. Publisher Violeta Chamorro said Ortega assured her the newspaper would be allowed to print without censorship.

The 62-year-old paper was shut down June 26, 1986 following U.S. congressional approval of \$100 million in aid for the Contra rebels.

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