

Castro frees U.S. prisoners

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Cuban President Fidel Castro ordered the release yesterday of four American prisoners jailed in Havana for more than a decade on political charges. U.S. government sources said Castro's move was in response to President Carter's grant of executive clemency last week to four Puerto Rican nationalists who got a hero's welcome on their return home. State Department spokesman Hodding Carter said the United States was "delighted" by the release of the Americans but did not consider it linked to the freeing of the Puerto Ricans.

Chemical leaks to animal feed

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Workers began dismantling equipment yesterday in a hog processing plant where the banned chemical PCB apparently leaked from a transformer into animal feed shipped to seven Mountain and Western states, a spokesman said. The chemical, used as a coolant and lubricant, has been found to produce cancer in laboratory animals and is poisonous to humans in large doses. Keith Markegard, plant engineer at the Pierce Packing Co., said a Portland, Ore., contracting firm specializing in decontamination was taking apart equipment in that part of the plant that manufactures chicken feed, derived from bones, skin and other hog parts unfit for human consumption. Markegard said it would take about a week to dismantle, check and reassemble all the machinery in the

Fire sweeps San Gabriel brush



This lion is one of the many animals being used in the movie "Roar." The forest fire that blazed through the mountains near Los Angeles forced the evacuation of the animals from the set in the Soledad Canyon.

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"It has been determined no explosives were involved in the accident," Cicarelli said. The plane was being inspected by the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board.

Ray Deffry, a spokesman for the McDonnell Douglas Corp., which manufactures the aircraft, said he couldn't recall a similar malfunction and that speculating on its causes without more information was impossible.

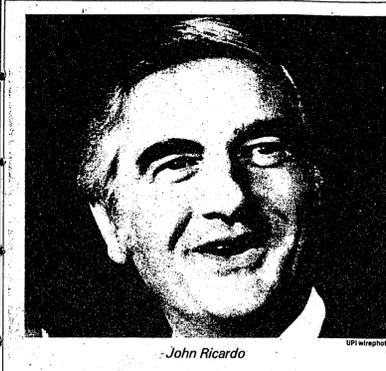
Church-state ruling to wait

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Attorneys for the city and the American Civil Liberties Union agreed yesterday to postpone the question of whether city funds can be used to build a platform for an altar for Pope John Paul II until after the pope's visit next month. City Solicitor Sheldon Albert, who represented the city in negotiations before U.S. District Judge Raymond J. Boderick, said the arrangement was made "so the city can get on with the festival." The ACLU had filed suit Friday in District Court, saying that spending public funds on the platform violated the U.S. Constitution's separation of church and state. Albert and ACLU attorney Henry Sawyer III agreed to delay action on the issue until Oct. 9, when Boderick will preside at a hearing on the matter. Until then, the agreement stipulates that the city can continue to pay for the platform, which is under construction on Logan Circle. Should the city lose the lawsuit, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has agreed to reimburse the city for all platform construction costs, the agreement said.

Powell defends chief of staff

WASHINGTON (AP) — Presidential press secretary Jody Powell said yesterday that White House Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan shouldn't be forced to leave if a special prosecutor is appointed to investigate allegations that he used cocaine. "You cannot allow a public official to be forced from office simply because of allegations," Powell said. Powell said the appointment of a special prosecutor is "a matter for the Justice Department," and that he could not comment on the investigation of Jordan. The Washington Star reported yesterday that the Justice Department appeared likely to seek appointment of a special prosecutor under a new ethics-in-government law. The law requires that the attorney general seek a special prosecutor for allegations of a serious offense by a government official, unless the allegation is clearly groundless.

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John Riccardo

Chrysler chairman to retire this week

DETROIT (UPI) — Chrysler Corp. Chairman John J. Riccardo yesterday said he will retire this week, ending his career as chief executive of the troubled automaker as it began a crisis. Riccardo, 55, said he is stepping aside partly on the advice of physicians and partly out of fear that accusations of past mismanagement would impede government aid for the struggling company. Riccardo had said last Nov. 2 he would recommend to company directors that Chrysler President Lee A. Iacocca succeed him as board chairman and chief executive officer. "In my judgement, Lee Iacocca is one of the foremost automobile men in the industry," he said. "That was my judgement when I brought him in, and that is my judgement now."

UAW approves tentative General Motors contract

DETROIT (UPI) — The International Executive Board of the United Auto Workers Union voted unanimously approval yesterday of a tentative 3-year contract with General Motors Corp. Following that crucial first step in ratification of the contract, UAW officials said they would present the pact today to the GM Council, made up of approximately 400 union officials at GM. The vote of support was cast by the 26-member executive board. "The proposed contract contains outstanding gains for both active and retired UAW members and the IEB fully endorses it," a board resolution said. Details of the contract were withheld, except for the generous gains in pensions both for current and future retirees disclosed by the union when the agreement was announced last Friday. It reportedly continues the traditional 3 percent per year wage increase, improves formulas for calculating cost of living increases, offers blue collar workers a pioneering stock ownership program, and virtually assures UAW representation for workers at new GM plants. Delegates to the GM Council meeting today were scheduled to hear a full presentation of the pact. They will then reject it or recommend that it be forwarded for a general membership vote. The ratification deadline is Oct. 1. UAW and GM bargainers reached the agreement Friday more than four hours before the expiration of contracts covering 780,000 U.S. auto workers. Strikes had been planned at 46 GM installations across the country at midnight Friday. It directly affects GM's 450,000 UAW-represented employees and will serve as a basis for negotiating contracts later this year at Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. If the council approves the contract, the UAW plans to conduct an informational meeting Friday and Saturday in Dallas for another 3,000 local union officials.

Nixon arrives in China

PEKING (UPI) — Former President Richard Nixon returned to China yesterday in a whistle-stop train trip from Hong Kong to Canton, and said Chinese-American friendship is "important for both our countries and for the survival of peace in the world." "The purpose of my visit is to be brought up to date on the relations between the two countries, and to be able to see what progress is being made and will be made in the future," Nixon said on his arrival in Peking. Earlier yesterday, Nixon traveled to Canton from Hong Kong by train, where he told a news conference that the Carter administration should drop its ban on sales of American weapons to the Chinese. Nixon was greeted by Chinese Premier Hua Guofeng (Hua Kuo-feng). U.S. Ambassador Leonard Woodcock also came to greet Nixon, an official guest of the Chinese government. Nixon is expected to hold talks with powerful Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping. (Teng Hsiao-ping) and



Richard M. Nixon

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