

Pepsi, Coke say Seven-Up caffeine ads misleading

United Press International
ST. LOUIS — The gloves are off. Seven-Up has launched a bare-knuckled attack on the world's cola giants with its new "caffeine-free" advertising blitz. And Coke and Pepsi aren't about to back away from the fight.

"We view Seven-Up's ads as a disservice to the public, since it perpetuates unsubstantiated

health concerns by the use of scare tactics," said Rebecca Goeke, a spokeswoman for Pepsi-Cola in Purchase, N.Y.

"We can only assume that it is motivated by their declining sales," she added.

"Caffeine-containing beverages have been consumed for over 4,000 years," said spokesman Joe Wilkinson of Coca-Cola Co., the industry leader, in

Atlanta "It is our firm conviction, supported by scientific evidence, that the use of caffeine in soft drinks poses no health hazard."

Seven-Up's new television advertisements first aired nationwide March 3. The ads promote Seven-Up as "crisp and clean, no caffeine." New Seven-Up cartons carry the slogan "never had it, never will."

"We are simply offering the consumer a choice," said Seven-Up spokesman Les Zuke at the company's St. Louis headquarters. "That is as far as we go. Pepsi is the one bringing up the issue of health."

Industry observers said cola

companies are jittery because of a growing public concern that caffeine might be harmful, especially to pregnant women.

The cutthroat competition among soda companies has forced down the price of some soft drinks to 1940s levels. One industry analyst said a casualty is Seven-Up, which has lost its customary No. 3 industry position to Dr. Pepper.

Zuke said Seven-Up's 1981 sales of \$432.1 million were 22 percent higher than 1980, but added, "It came as no secret that the company had lost money."

The National Soft Drink Association, based in Washington, said the market share for all sugar-sweetened cola drinks fell from 60.6 percent in 1979 to 54.8 percent in 1980, the latest year for which figures were available.

The market shares of lemon-lime drinks such as Seven-Up and "pepper" drinks such as Dr. Pepper and Mr. Pibb also dropped slightly, the association said. In general, diet soft drinks increased in popularity.

Despite the shift in buying patterns, Steve Price of Beverage World, a trade publication, said the caffeine issue is the industry's major current topic.

"This is the controversy," Price said. "They (cola makers) are miffed. You have two giants, Coke and Pepsi, fighting it out for the top position. All the others are fighting for their own share of space in the market. It's always been that way."

Pepsi also is critical of Seven-Up's owner, Philip Morris Inc. of New York.

Even a non-cola soft drink maker is sniping at Seven-Up. Sunkist Soft Drinks Inc. complained to the television networks, saying Seven-Up's ads incorrectly portrayed Sunkist as a caffeine-containing drink.



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staff photo by Sumanesh Agrawal

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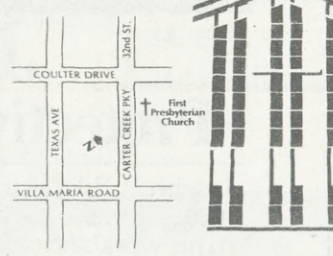
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Space shuttle tiles depend on Irving firm for success

United Press International
IRVING — Keeping the space shuttle Columbia's 40,000 heat-resistant tiles in place during its third mission depends in large measure on the success of a technology partially developed by a small north Texas firm.

Numerical Control Services of Irving develops computer programs that control the manufacture of the critical plates which prevent the orbiter from incinerating on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere.

"Numerical control programming is a programming of metal working machine controllers," said Paul Turley, the transplanted Californian who heads Numerical Control Services. "The (tiles) are made by a machine and we write the programs that control those machines."

Turley, 48, founded NC Services, and describes his firm's

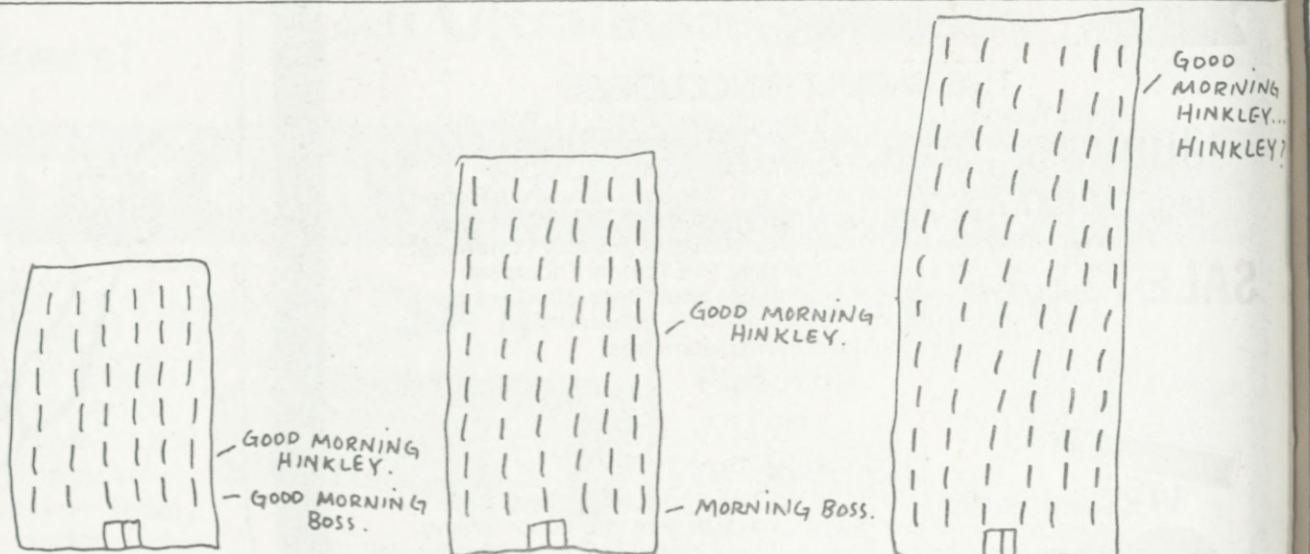
technology as essential not only to the space shuttle but to the manufacture of large jet aircraft.

"Boeing said they couldn't have made the 747 without numerical control programming," he said.

Though Turley is watching Columbia's progress as anxiously as anyone, he appears less concerned with the fate of the administration's proposed defense budget.

Among the projects Turley is hoping the Reagan budget will bring are lucrative contracts for the F-18 jet fighter and the B-1 bomber.

While the NASA contract may be his firm's most dramatic, about 80 percent of the firm's \$2.4 million in revenues last year came from defense-related aircraft contracts similar to those he anticipates for the future.



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