

Japanese firms partial to N.C.

By JAMEE OSBORN
Staff Writer

North Carolina's climate, low taxes, work force and low rate of unionization have encouraged many Japanese businesses to locate here, said Walter Johnson of the North Carolina Department of Commerce.

There are currently 23 Japanese businesses in North Carolina, nine of which are manufacturing companies. Two more businesses are scheduled to open soon. The largest Japanese investment is the \$37 million operation of Ajinomoto in Raleigh, a pharmaceutical company scheduled to open April 1. Takeda Chemical plans to locate a \$100 million facility in Wilmington.

Martin Bronfenbrenner, a Kenan professor of economics at Duke University, said the Japanese plan to bring their own supervisors for the Takeda plant. "They are staying away from the Research Triangle area," he said. "They want a low-wage area, which Wilmington is, and they want a seaport as a base for export."

Bronfenbrenner said the Japanese liked North Carolina because unions are so weak here. "The Japanese are

as anti-union as you can conveniently get," he said. "There are several auto dealerships that have located in Tennessee and Ohio to avoid the United Auto Workers in Detroit."

"They don't want to hire any militants, and the UAW has some."

Bronfenbrenner said the Japanese picture of the American worker is that of an "overpaid lazy bum." This is because American industry is not careful who they hire, and once they hire people, they cannot get rid of them, he said.

Hiroki Nishio, the president of Eslon Thermoplastics in Charlotte, which employs 120 people, said the main reason his company decided to locate in North Carolina was because the land was cheaper than in other states.

Nishio said the concept of employment in the United States is far different than in Japan. "The far biggest difference is that workers in Japan stay with a company for a lifetime," he said.

Kay Sugahara, chairman of the United States-Asia Institute, said recently he wanted to put together a package of \$10 billion to help finance projects creating jobs for Americans. He said he had talked to Japanese business-

men and would convince them to participate in the project. However, the Japanese government said they knew nothing about the project.

"The Japanese Minister of Finance knew nothing about this offer, and he would have to approve it," Johnson said. "I don't know what his goals were or what he had to gain by it, and it is hard to believe."

Johnson said Japan had a trade surplus with the United States, and had worked very hard to get in that position. "The Japanese cannot afford to lose the southeastern market," he said. "To get closer to the market, they have to manufacture in this area."

"This area is very appealing to them," he said. "The work ethic is similar to theirs."

John Sylvester, director of the North Carolina Japan Center at N.C. State University, said the Japanese had already gone heavily into the west-coast market, and wanted to build up their market on the east coast. "We haven't gotten any negative feedback about the Japanese involvement in North Carolina business," he said. "We do a significant amount of trade with them, and there is no resentment among North Carolinians."

Black Experience Workshop

By KYLE MARSHALL
Staff Writer

The third annual Black Experience Workshop, sponsored by the UNC School of Social Work, is scheduled for Friday in the Carolina Union.

The theme for this year's workshop is "The Black Experience: Process and Practice in Communication." Tony Brown, syndicated columnist and host of a nationally distributed television program, will be the featured speaker. He is scheduled to speak at an open forum at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in 111 Murphey Hall.

Several workshops will be conducted on Friday by educators and scholars from across the nation. Prior to the workshops, which run from 10:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., registration and the opening session will take place in the Union auditorium, beginning at 8 a.m. Brown also will conduct one of the workshops, "Social Work and the Mass Media."

The registration fee for Friday's activities is \$10 for students with valid identification and \$20 for all others. There is no fee for Brown's speech on Thursday.

Audrey E. Johnson, associate professor in the School of Social Work, is coordinating the workshop. "Communication was selected as the topic because it's something we don't do very well with each other," she said. "We need to realize that there's a basic process involved in understanding others."

"We hope the workshop will provide a better opportunity for people to be open and to think about what they do in relationships with other people," Johnson said.

Brown has won several awards for his work in journalism, community affairs and race relations. His most recent honor, from Lincoln University, was for a magazine article titled, "You Owe Your Children a Black College!"

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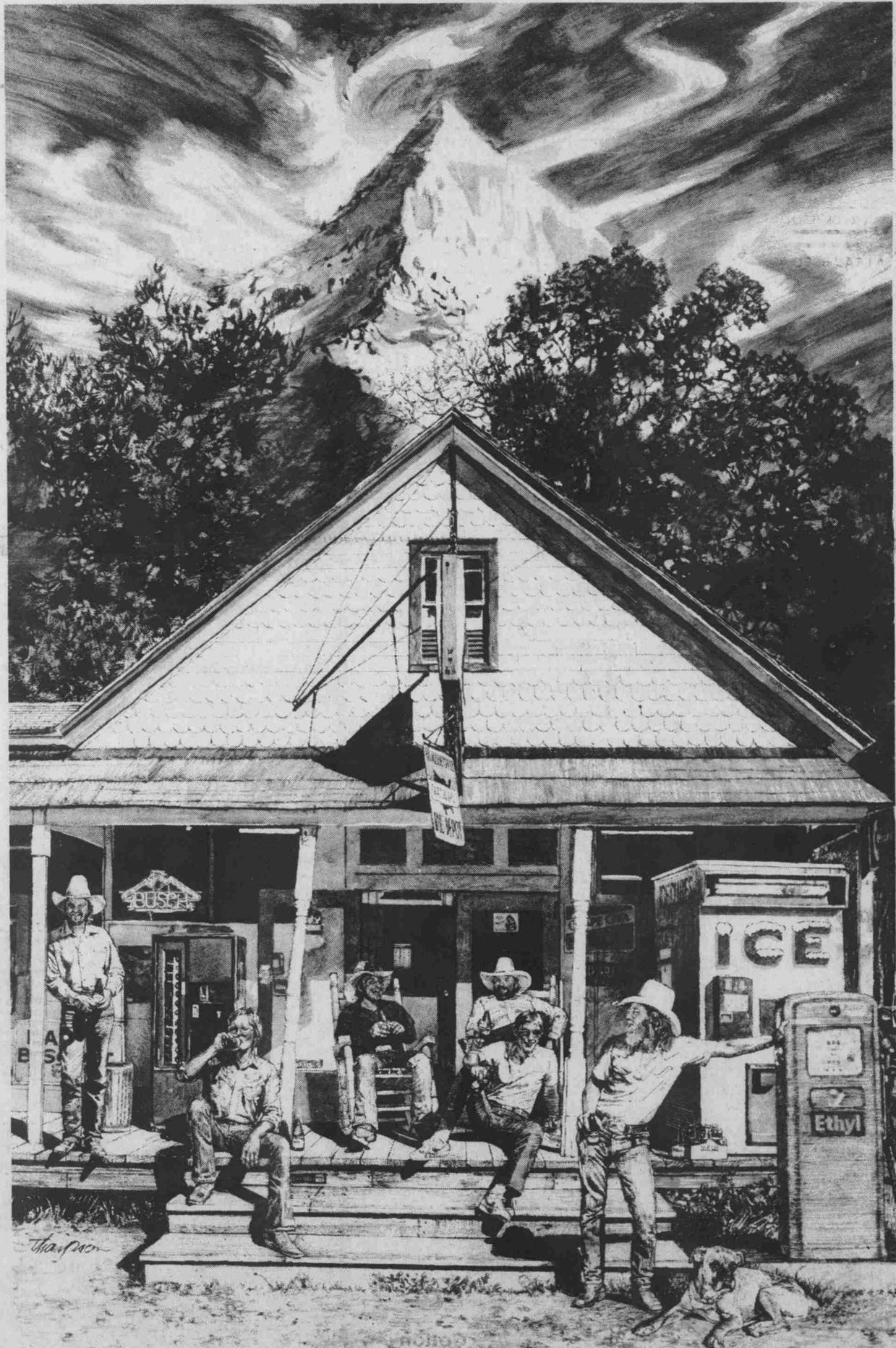
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