

Senate panel votes for nuke safety rule

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Senate committee voted Thursday to shut down in six months all nuclear power plants operating in states without a government-approved emergency evacuation plan.

Officials said the move could force the closing of 41 reactors in 16 states that lack Nuclear Regulatory Commission-approved plans. There are 70 commercial nuclear reactors now in use in the country.

At the same time, the Environment and Public Works Committee voted to deny operating licenses to reactors now under construction in states without the NRC-approved plans.

Committee aides said that as many as a dozen plants nearing completion could be affected.

The panel agreed to the proposals, made by Sen. Gary Hart, D-Colo., as it approved legislation authorizing NRC programs for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

Hart's recommendations, passed 6-4, need approval by both houses of Congress and must be signed into law by Pres. Carter before they could take effect.

The committee's vote provided fresh evidence of a mood in Congress to strengthen the government's grip on the commercial nuclear industry in the wake of the March 28 accident at the Three Mile Island reactor in Pennsylvania.

The House Interior Committee voted Wednesday to delay federal construction permits for six new nuclear reactors.

"It's an absolute anomaly that you can operate a nuclear reactor in this country without an emergency plan," Hart told the Senate committee as it debated his proposals.

Officials said 12 of 28 states which have operating reactors have government-approved plans. Almost all the states have some form of evacuation plan, even though they are not government-sanctioned.

The committee, which called for a \$400,000 study of the accident at the Pennsylvania reactor, also approved several other steps designed to deal with Three Mile Island-type accidents of the future. They would:

- Require the NRC to draft legislation giving the government sole authority to operate a reactor during an emergency.
- Require establishment of a hotline between the NRC and operating nuclear facilities for use in an emergency.
- Require the NRC to place its own full-time inspectors at each of the nation's operating nuclear plants. Currently, there are NRC officials at 22 of the 70 plants in operation.
- Require the NRC to develop for congressional consideration a plan for continuous monitoring of "the principal control-room safety instruments" in nuclear plants.

making the news

From Associated Press reports

PEKING — An agreement paying Americans for property confiscated by the Chinese Communists 30 years ago will be signed Friday in the Great Hall of the People, U.S. officials announced.

The agreement removes the last major block to full economic relations between the United States and China.

It provides that China pay the United States \$80.5 million to satisfy claims of American banks, corporations and individuals whose property was nationalized after the Communists took over.

The United States agrees to free an equal amount in frozen Chinese assets.

WASHINGTON — With Senate leaders of both parties noncommittal about the new arms curb treaty with the Soviet Union, Pres. Carter argued Thursday its rejection would cause the United States to be "looked upon as the war-monger."

Carter also told a White House breakfast for retailers that if the Senate does not ratify the pact, this country would suffer a serious loss of trust among NATO allies, and efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons would be undercut.

Contending ratification would be "the most important single achievement that could possibly take place during my lifetime for our nation," Carter declared.

Carter, continuing a personal lobbying effort with Senate members, met during the day with senators from both parties.

SAN FRANCISCO — Dan White killed Mayor George Moscone on an uncontrollable "primitive impulse" and shot Supervisor Harvey Milk moments later while his mind was on a deadly "automatic pilot," a defense psychiatrist testified at the former supervisor's murder trial.

"Once there is a breakthrough of a primitive impulse, it facilitates another breakthrough," Dr. George Solomon, a specialist in studies of stress and violence, said Wednesday.

"In lay terms, he was sort of an automatic pilot" when he left Moscone's slain body and headed toward the office of Milk last Nov. 27 on the other side of City Hall. "He was in an explosive rage."

White, 32 felt a "sense of betrayal" towards Moscone, who initially told him that he would appoint him to the Board of Supervisors seat White had resigned Nov. 10, but later decided to name someone else, the psychiatrist said.



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