

inter/national news

From Associated Press reports

Clogged filter prevents launch

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

A clogged filter, never refurbished after Columbia's first mission last spring, shattered a near-flawless countdown Wednesday, grounding the shuttle for two days — or longer.

"We're looking at something like Friday. Or Saturday, or Sunday or Monday," said flight director Neil Hutchinson. Bill Jones, the astronaut's trainer, said the delay may be long enough that Joe Engle and Richard Truly would return for rest at home base in Houston.

The decision to scrub came with liftoff 31 seconds away.

The technical problem was with two Auxiliary Power Units — devices that are crucial to Columbia's guidance. Clogged APU filters had been untouched since the shuttle landed after its debut flight in April. NASA's experts thought they didn't need maintenance.

Another attempt at Launch II for Columbia cannot be made until Friday since it takes at least 48 hours to unload and reload the ship's half million gallons of liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen.

Democrat wins Virginia election

WASHINGTON

With a sweep in Virginia and a photo-finish governor's race in New Jersey, Democrats claimed Wednesday that the 1981 elections amounted to an early repudiation of Pres. Reagan. Republicans said it was no such thing.

Reagan had campaigned for Republican candidates in both states, but national GOP leaders were saying Wednesday that the results turned strictly on local concerns.

In New Jersey, where Reagan's economic policies had been at the center of the campaign rhetoric, Republican Thomas Kean clung to a razor-thin 265-vote lead over Democrat James Florio in the governor's race as vote counting continued almost a full day after the polls closed.

And in Virginia, Democrat Charles Robb led a sweep of the

three statewide offices on the ballot, the first gubernatorial victory for his party after 12 years of Republican rule. With the unofficial count completed, Robb had 769,422 votes to 662,788 for Republican J. Marshall Coleman.

Top Polish leaders meet in Warsaw

WARSAW, Poland

Poland's three most powerful leaders met for more than two hours Wednesday in a session that paved the way for new joint talks that could lead to a greater role for the church and Solidarity in solving the nation's crises, the state news agency said.

Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, who is Poland's Communist Party chief, prime minister and defense minister, Lech Walesa,

head of the independent union Solidarity, and Archbishop Jozef Glemp, Poland's Roman Catholic primate, met at a government guest house within sight of the Soviet Embassy.

The Polish news agency PAP said the three leaders discussed Poland's current crisis situation and the "possibilities of creating a front of national understanding, a permanent platform of dialogue and consultation of political and social forces on the ground of constitutional principles."

'Bullet train' service studied

WASHINGTON

The United States, faced with deteriorating highways and crowded skies, should emulate Japan, Western Europe and Canada and develop its own

"bullet train" service between major cities, a congressional panel said Tuesday.

"The construction and operation of a high-speed passenger rail system could play a vital role in reversing America's economic decline," said a report by the Joint Economic Committee.

The 39-page study was released as leaders of the newly formed Japan-United States Rail Congress, comprised of 15 members of the Japanese Diet (parliament) and 15 members of the U.S. House and Senate testified to the committee on their goal of bringing high-speed trains to this country.

Beaverton ranks among top 10 cities

PORTLAND

Beaverton, Ore., and Vancouver, Wash., have been

selected for a list of 10 best small Western cities published in the November issue of Money Magazine.

The list, which did not rank cities in a numerical order, was included in Money Magazine's special report on the West. Cities with populations between 23,000 and 100,000 were considered.

Beaverton was named on the list because of its favorable business climate and closeness to Portland, while Vancouver's busy port helped earn it the honor, the magazine said.

The electronics industry has a bright future in both cities, the magazine reports.

"The electronics explosion nowhere is more evident than in this Willamette Valley town," the article said of Beaverton. "More than 30 technology companies have sprung up or expanded since 1977."

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