

Nader fights for air bags

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A move in Congress to overturn the proposal that all cars be equipped with air bags or automatic seat belts is "doomed to defeat," Ralph Nader said yesterday.

He made the prediction at a news conference called to announce the formation of a coalition of 20 labor, consumer, insurance and public interest groups which will try to keep Congress from interfering with Transportation Secretary Brock Adams' decision.

Resolutions offered in both houses would automatically veto Adams' plan, and President Carter would have no say in the matter should the resolutions win approval.

Nader, still upset that Adams did not order air bags or automatic belts earlier than the proposed September, 1981, starting date, said the coalition is sufficiently broad-based to head off those who think "Americans have a right to die in their cars" despite technology which can save them.

"The resolutions introduced by Rep. Bud Shuster, R-Pa., and Sen. Robert Griffin, R-Mich., are 'doomed to defeat,'" Nader said. He again attacked Adams' decision, saying the plan might be jeopardized because it could well come to a head under a different administration by the time it takes effect in 1984.

There is "no conceivable justification," Nader added, for the small car buyer having to wait until 1984 for air bags.

Adams announced last week that large cars would be equipped with air bags or other automatic restraints by the 1982 model year, with other cars to be phased into the same requirement during the following two years.

Expert speaks at Hanafi trial Hostage shot 'at close-range'

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A police firearms expert told the Hanafi Muslim murder-kidnap trial yesterday that a shotgun blast which left a hostage at the District Building paralyzed was fired from a range of six feet or less.

Raymond S. Voorhees was asked his opinion of the buckshot wound sustained by city hall aide Robert Pierce in the takeover of three buildings and 149 hostages last March. A surgeon who operated on Pierce described the wound as "about the size of a silver dollar."

Voorhees, working with a chart of shotgun patterns and a silver dollar handed to him by prosecutor Martin Linksy, testified that the range which would produce such a wound "could be no greater than six feet or two yards."

A major question at the prolonged trial is whether Pierce sustained his wound from a shot fired by Abdul Muziker, one of the 12 defendants, or from police fire from a distance away.

Two fellow hostages testified last week they saw Muziker turn and discharge his weapon in the direction of Pierce and several others lying down on the floor.

George Porter, an assistant corporation counsel for the City Council, said Pierce, lying beside him, said he had been hit immediately after a burst of automatic rifle fire by police.

According to Porter, the bullets from the automatic began coming into the room over his head at least 15 minutes after he had heard the last of four shotgun blasts.

Solar electricity viable alternative

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Departing from past assessments, congressional researchers said yesterday that solar energy must be taken seriously as a source of electricity as well as heat for individual homes, apartment buildings and offices.

The report by Congress' Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) said small devices supplying electricity, heat and hot water for a single building offer an important — but often ignored — replacement for conventional sources of energy.

The two-volume report, described as the most exhaustive analysis to date of small-scale solar devices, differed sharply from past government studies that discounted the promise of solar electric generation for individual homes.

It said federal research programs so far have slighted development of home-size solar electric generators and have overemphasized big, centralized solar stations comparable to conventional utility power plants.

Urging reversal of the trend toward centralization, the office said the sun potentially can provide economical total heating for apartments in 5 to 10 years and partial home generation of electricity within one or two decades.

The report called for more emphasis on small, on-site solar electric systems and suggested major revisions in administration energy policies — including incentives for manufacturers, prizes of \$50,000 to \$100,000 for inventors and tax breaks for users — to boost all types of solar development.

Chilean hijackers give up for asylum

LIMA, Peru (UPI) — Four Chileans who hijacked a domestic airliner and forced it to fly to Lima surrendered yesterday afternoon and accepted political asylum in the Venezuelan Embassy.

The agreement was negotiated by the Peruvian ministers of foreign relations and the interior in hours of talks with the hijackers.

The hijackers, three men and a woman ranging in age from 18 to 30, calmly walked from the plane carrying in their pockets the handguns with which they forced the crew of the airplane to fly to Lima.

They were taken to the Venezuelan Embassy in the cars of the two Peruvian ministers.

The hijackers had forced a cabin steward at gunpoint to lead them into the cockpit during a flight by the Boeing 727 of Ladeo Airlines between Arica, Chile, and Santiago, the Chilean capital.

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