

## Three aftershocks rattle Northern California

SAN FRANCISCO -- Three strong aftershocks rattled a jittery Northern California on Thursday, and rescuers who found fewer cars than feared under a collapsed freeway said the World Series may have reduced the rush-hour traffic.

"Maybe we got lucky because of the game," Oakland police Sgt. Bob Crawford said. "Normally at 5 o'clock in the afternoon this area would be bumper-to-bumper. Maybe the World Series saved our lives."

Power and commuters returned to much of downtown San Francisco as a tentative city tried to recover and regroup following Tuesday's earthquake, which claimed an estimated 270 lives and \$2 billion in damage.

At the 1 1/4-mile stretch of the collapsed double-deck Interstate 880, the Nimitz Freeway in Oakland, workers cut holes in concrete and used cranes to pull out pancake-flat cars. Rescuers reported finding the cars as far apart

as 60 feet, rather than bumper-to-bumper as had been feared, Assistant Fire Chief Al Sigward said.

That could lower the death toll in the highway rubble -- estimated earlier at 250, Crawford said.

On Tuesday, many people left work early to watch the third game of the World Series, scheduled to start at 5:30 p.m., and 60,000 people already were across the bay in San Francisco at Candlestick Park when the quake struck at 5:04 p.m.

The World Series will resume Tuesday at Candlestick Park in San Francisco.

Oakland Mayor Lionel Wilson said Thursday that only 85 people were officially reported missing.

On Thursday morning, three aftershocks struck south of San Francisco. The first, measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale of ground motion, hit at 3:15 a.m. and was centered near

Watsonville, about eight miles from the epicenter of Tuesday's 6.9 quake, according to the state Office of Emergency Service. Two other aftershocks measured 4.5.

"No one is really sleeping around here," Watsonville resident John Murphy said.

Fifty-six people were treated at a Watsonville community clinic, mostly for bruises and frazzled nerves, city spokeswoman Lorraine Washington said. About 150 people were evacuated from a National Guard Army shelter after a natural gas leak.

As of early Thursday, more than 1,400 aftershocks had been recorded. The strongest, 5.2 on the Richter scale, struck within 40 minutes of the initial jolt, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Across the Bay area, the nation's fourth-largest metropolitan area with more than 6 million people, shaken cities tried to cope with

still-limited services, strapped police and fire departments and transportation havoc created by the closing of freeways and the Bay Bridge, the lifeline that links Oakland and San Francisco.

A transportation department spokesman said a large marine barge crane was being moved into place to lift the fallen upper deck slab of the bridge, which might be reopened in three weeks.

Frustration and despair were evident on city streets.

Throughout the district, sirens wailed, portable generators hummed and heavy equipment, brought in to finish the destruction the earthquake left unfinished, groaned.

Marina residents gathered at police barricades and begged for permission to retrieve food, clothing and medicine from their homes, but were denied because officials said the area was unsafe.

## Gov. Orr calls special session

LINCOLN -- Nebraska's Legislature will be called into special session in mid-November to deal with the state's troubled personal property tax system, Gov. Kay Orr said Thursday.

The governor didn't specify a starting date for the session but said she is working with Speaker of the Legislature Bill Barrett of Lexington to set one.

Her announcement follows several legislators' comments that such a session should be called to deal with potential revenue loss stemming from a recent state Supreme Court decision.

Orr told a news conference crowded with legislative staffers, lobbyists and lawmakers that the administration would offer two proposals:

- To redefine real property by statute to include clearly such items as buried pipelines, buried cables, overhead cables, transmission towers and lines, railroad tracks, fixed signals and right-of-ways, and other similar types of property attached to real estate.

The governor said the proposal

"would retain 80 percent of the centrally assessed property (the items the proposal would redefine) that would be exempted" by a recent decision by the state Supreme Court, or more than \$30 million in tax revenues.

She said she has had no response from the companies that might be affected by such a move, but "there are other states that do this already."

Orr said her reason for calling the special session "in great part is to make sure that we don't lose the \$30 million."

"If we don't do anything in 1989, we may lose that money," she said.

- To clarify state law on tax refunds to ensure that refunds for the prior years' taxes aren't permitted, in case courts declare the state's personal property tax system unconstitutional.

It also would specify that only taxpayers who have pursued their "equalization" claims and have been successful in court are entitled to refunds for the years in dispute.

"Equalization" claims are claims properly submitted to the State Board

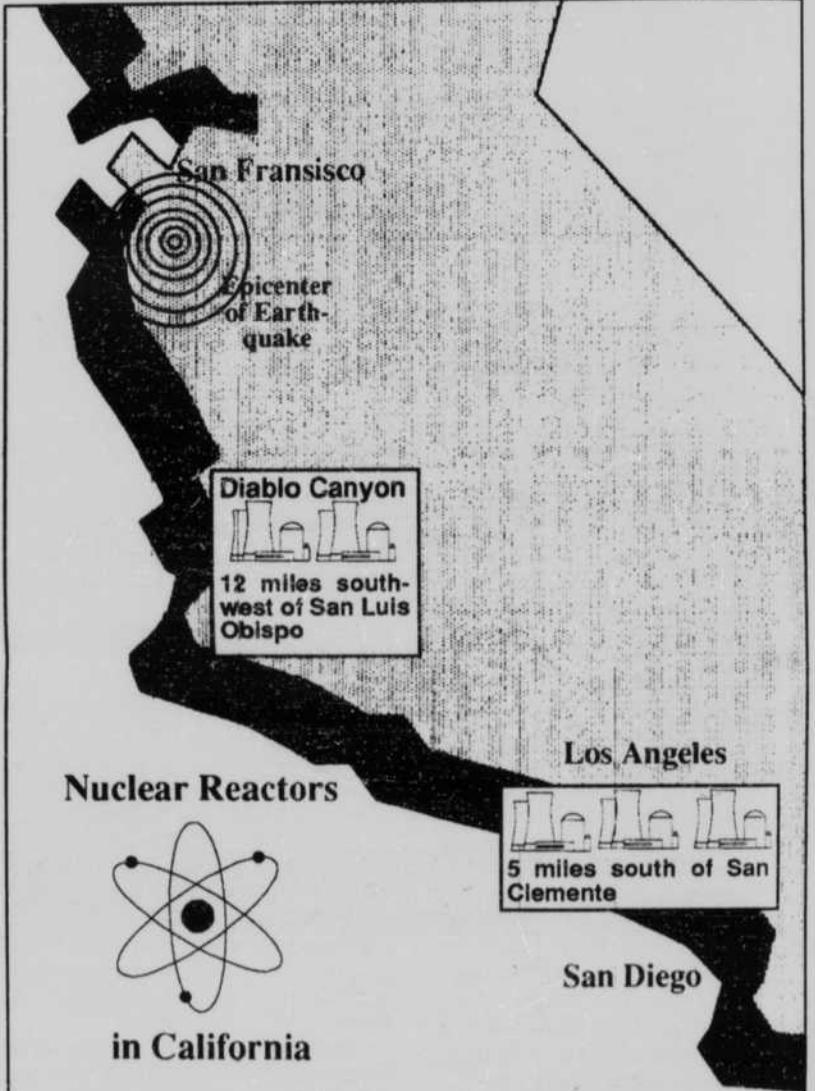
of Equalization and Assessment to equalize the valuation of property for tax purposes and acted on by the five-member board that includes Orr.

The second proposal also would prohibit injunctions delaying the payment of taxes in such "equalization" cases and require those making such protests to pay their taxes while such protests are pending. It would add a penalty for willful failure to timely pay taxes.

Recent calls for a special legislative session have followed a Nebraska Supreme Court ruling that some Orr administration officials say threatens to deprive local governments of \$222 million a year, or 19 percent of the revenue derived from property taxes.

The court ruled that pipeline companies were being unfairly taxed on personal property because railroads were exempt from such a tax.

In the wake of the ruling, more than 900 companies sought similar exemptions which were denied by the equalization board. More than 200 have appealed that decision to the state Supreme Court.



Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

## E. German reformists warn of protests

BERLIN -- Protesters may fill East German streets again unless the new leader, Egon Krenz, belies his hard-line record and begins the kind of reforms under way elsewhere in the Soviet bloc, pro-democracy activists said Thursday.

Krenz made clear almost immediately after replacing Erich Honecker on Wednesday that the Communist Party would resist the democratic trends evident in Poland and Hungary.

"Krenz stands for the continuation of neo-Stalinist politics," said Reinhard Schult, a founder of New

Forum, the largest pro-democracy group in East Germany.

Speaking on RIAS radio of West Berlin, he said Krenz "did not have one word to say about the causes of the current crisis and made no offer for talks with the opposition."

Author Rolf Schneider, a critic of the government, told RIAS: "The crisis will keep dragging on."

A Lutheran church leader said privately "the demonstrations will start again soon" unless the government changes its course. The church has been in the forefront of reform

efforts in East Germany.

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of West Germany, to which tens of thousands of East Germans have fled in search of freedom, urged Krenz to make "fundamental reforms." He said East Germans demand "their basic rights."

Reform activists in East Germany said 1,000 people held a peaceful protest in the northern city of Greifswald hours after Krenz, 52, was named Communist Party chief. He is a protege of Honecker, 77, who led the party for 18 years.

## Senate defeats flag burning amendment

WASHINGTON -- The Senate Thursday defeated a proposed constitutional amendment to ban burning and desecration of the American flag, delivering a sharp rebuff to President George Bush on a high-profile issue.

The vote was 51-48 in favor, but

constitutional amendments require approval by a two-thirds margin in both houses of Congress and the Senate vote thus fell far short.

"We can support the American flag without changing the American Constitution," Majority Leader

George Mitchell, D-Maine, declared before the vote.

The measure would authorize the state and federal governments to ban burning and desecration of the flag.

Eighteen Democrats joined 33 Republicans in support of the amendment, while 38 Democrats and 10 Republicans voted against it.

Bush repeatedly called for approval of such a measure, saying a simple statute such as one approved by the Senate last week would be inadequate.

Critics of the amendment said it amounted to tampering with the constitutional right of Americans to freedom of expression. But they also expressed concern that opposition could be turned against them at election time in view of the power of the flag as a political symbol as demonstrated in last year's campaign.

Those concerns appeared to ease in recent days. Asked why that was, Mitchell told reporters this morning: "I think the sound judgment of the American people."

## Debate over nuclear plant seismic standards revived

WASHINGTON -- The San Francisco Bay area earthquake revived a debate over whether 16-year-old federal seismic standards for nuclear power plants are tough enough.

Tuesday's quake caused no damage to the five active nuclear reactors in California, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The three that were operating at the time are still running normally, said Frank Ingram, an NRC spokesman.

The five reactors are in Southern California: two at Diablo Canyon, 12 miles southwest of San Luis Obispo, and three at San Onofre, five miles south of San Clemente.

Under the 1973 standards set by the NRC, each nuclear power plant must be built to quake-resistance specifications that differ according to local seismic conditions. The standards for Diablo Canyon are the stiffest in the country, Ingram said.

ing in this country.

The chief danger is that a quake would cause a crack in the piping that carries cooling water to the reactor core. A rapid loss of coolant could cause the fuel rods in the core to melt, possibly allowing radioactive material to escape into the atmosphere.

Although the seismic issue has faded in recent years, the environmental group Public Citizen, founded by consumer advocate Ralph Nader, said Wednesday the Northern California quake underscored a need to reexamine the nuclear construction standards.

"Federal regulators should at least view (the) earthquake as a final warning that seismic standards and testing for all nuclear reactors as well as evacuation planning needs to be substantially upgraded before the next quake hits," said Ken Bossong, director of Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy Project.

Bossong said at least two nuclear plants are "perilously close to known fault lines." He cited Diablo Canyon, which is near the Hosgri fault, and Millstone, near the point at which the Honey Hill and Lake Char fault lines intersect in Connecticut.

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