

the nation

Leakage area declared safe

United Press International
ROCK, Kan. — The Air Force allowed 125 residents Saturday to return to their homes they left two days earlier because of a toxic rocket propellant leak at an underground Titan II missile silo.

Col. John Hampton, commander of the 381st Strategic Missile Wing of the Air Force, declared the area safe for the evacuated civilians to return.

One crew member was killed and

two others were seriously injured in the leak Thursday. The residents of Rock and area farmers had been evacuated as a precautionary measure. Rock is located 2 1/2 miles north of the missile site.

"We have determined the area is safe and residents may return to their homes," Jim Graham, an Air Force spokesman, said late Saturday.

Workers had pumped more than 80,000 gallons of water into the

missile silo to stabilize the leakage of the propellant nitrogen tetroxide. However, plans to dump a neutralizer, ammonium hydroxide, into the silo, remained in the planning stages late Saturday afternoon.

A spokesman for the Strategic Air Command in Omaha, Neb., said the neutralizer would form ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer, than can be explosive when dry. However, authorities said the Air Force planned to keep the mixture in liquid form.

A decision on how to remove the thousand of gallons of waste, water and ammonia from the silo had not been made, Graham said.

The same fuel propellant leaked at a similar silo 25 miles southeast of Wichita 14 years ago. The 1964 broken pressure disk injured 11 maintenance workers, non seriously.

Murder link doubtful

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — Police said that although laboratory tests aimed at linking a Greeley, Colo., rape suspect with the 13 Hillside Strangler murders will not be completed until early next month, it is doubtful the analysis will be positive.

Alan Edward Peterson became a suspect in the California slayings after his girlfriend told Greeley authorities he ranted about "killing girls in the woods and hills in Los Angeles" while sexually assaulting her.

Peterson was arrested in Greeley several weeks ago on charges of raping his girlfriend and is being held at the Colorado State Hospital for psychiatric examination.

Los Angeles police collected

samples of Peterson's blood, hair and fingerprints last week at the Pueblo, Colo., mental institution.

Police said results of the laboratory tests had been expected to be completed Friday, but because of a breakdown in laboratory equipment, they were not expected to be completed until early September.

"A lot of things Peterson supposedly said to the girl don't make any sense and, while very strange, don't tie him to the Hillside killings," one homicide detective said Friday.

"Everybody knows that the victims were strangled, but nobody (except police) knows how," he said. "Nothing Peterson said to the girl indicates that he knows how, either."

The detective said the girlfriend's information was rejected although she passed a polygraph test concerning portions of her statement. The woman's statement include reports that Peterson often disappeared from the couple's rented Los Angeles apartment and returned "scratched, bruised and with torn and blood clothes."

The detective also said none of the Hillside victims were bloodied and had no marks or scars, except around their throats.

Meanwhile, Greeley authorities said the girlfriend had disappeared and was not expected to return to press her sexual assault complaints against Peterson.

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Army reserves reported down

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — The Army's active duty units are at full strength, but the chief of staff says its reserves are dwindling drastically since the inception of the all-volunteer army.

Gen. Bernard W. Rogers, addressing the national American Legion Convention Thursday, said the Selective Service System lacks sufficient readiness to re-implement the draft fast enough in time of emergency.

Rogers said elimination of the draft cut deeply into reserve enlistments because young men no longer sought duty in those units as a means of avoiding induction.

He said the reduction in active forces since the end of the Vietnam War also lowered reserve strength.

"The greatest challenge which the volunteer environment poses for our Army today is reaching and maintaining the appropriate strength levels of our reserve forces units," Rogers said.

Selective Service, which supervised the military draft until the all-volunteer concept was adopted in 1973, "is in such deep standby status that, under current conditions, it would take much too long to get our first draftees in and out of the training command and headed toward their initial units of assignment," Rogers said.

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Child vandals knock down tombstones

United Press International
BERLIN, N.H. — Child vandals as young as 5 years old — and so tiny they could fit through a keyhole — are believed responsible for damage at three local cemeteries, police said Saturday.

"I don't know what drove them to it," Sgt. Philip Faucher said. "We have had some vandalism in the past, but not that severe."

Six children, aged 5 to 8, turned over approximately 20 tombstones at the three cemeteries near their homes last week, police said.

He also told the Legionnaires the percentage of high school graduates in the Army has increased significantly and hard drug abuse has declined. He said alcoholism and marijuana use has stabilized.

After Rogers spoke the Legionnaires elected officers.

John M. Carey, former four-term mayor of Grand Blanc, Mich., and holder of numerous American Legion offices, was elected national commander of the 2.7-million member veterans' organization. Carey, a combat veteran of World War II, was elected by acclamation for the 1978-79 term.

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