

Court ruling allows state nuclear bans

United Press International
 WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court has given states sweeping powers to halt nuclear power-plant construction as long as it is done to protect economic interests.
 In a 9-0 decision Wednesday, the justices held states, using traditional power to regulate utilities, may act to protect their citizens against utility rate increases stemming from costly nuclear power-plant construction.
 The ruling, considered a setback to the nuclear industry, upheld a California moratorium on new atomic reactor construction pending development of a permanent storage system for high-level radioactive waste.
 But the court's ruling went beyond the politically sensitive issue of waste disposal and cleared the way for states to veto nuclear power development within their borders if they can justify it on economic grounds. The court specifically said a state may not take such action out of

safety concerns, which are the federal government's responsibility.
 "Congress has sufficient authority left in the states to allow development of nuclear power to be slowed or even stopped for economic reasons," Justice Byron White wrote for the court.
 Laurence Tribe, who argued the case for the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, said the ruling "is especially important because states have the power to completely reject economic dependence on nuclear plants."
 Nuclear industry representatives insisted the ruling does not affect plants currently under construction or in operation.
 But Tribe said the court's reasoning could apply to an ongoing plant.
 "If a state decides it's too costly and uncertain a source of electricity, there might be other issues raised, but the court makes it quite clear it's the states'

decision," he said.
 Donald Winston, a spokesman for the Atomic Industrial Forum, said, "It tells the states they have the right to pass a law like this, provided it involves the economics of the plant."
 "The net effect of this decision is minimal, at least for the short term, because the (U.S. nuclear) industry is dead and decaying," said Edward Merrow, the director of the energy policy programs office for the Rand Corp. in Santa Monica, Calif.
 Lawyers from some of the 31 states that supported California at the Supreme Court hailed the ruling.
 Ezra Bialik, assistant attorney general for New York's Environmental Protection Bureau, noted this was the first time the Supreme Court had ruled on the states' rights issue.
 "Such questions as whether coal is better than nuclear fuel are issues in which the states have more expertise," he said.

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Klan to defend the Alamo

United Press International
 SAN ANTONIO — Ku Klux Klansmen will forsake their traditional white sheets and don plain clothes in guarding the Alamo from communists while other robed members take part in a May Day march.
 Charles Lee, grand dragon of the Texas KKK, said Wednesday up to a dozen Klan members

will be posted at the Alamo during the eight-block march.
 Lee, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, Tuesday received a permit to hold the march near city hall, which is several blocks from the Alamo.
 The Klan originally asked to march on the Alamo and hold a

rally there to protect it from communists, who raised a red flag over the Texas shrine in May Day celebrations in 1980 and 1981.
 City officials, fearing confrontations with the John Brown organization and the Brown Berets — both of whom pledged to be on hand May 1 — would not

permit a Klan march at Alamo.
 But Lee said "we will see some members keep an eye on the Alamo whether we march or not. They will be in plain clothes. They will make sure no one does anything."
 Lee said 50 to 250 members will participate in the march to city hall.

Reporter's challenge forces bill introduction

United Press International
 WASHINGTON — Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, said Wednesday that a reporter seemed to find one of his proposed bills so important that he would go ahead and introduce it even though he doesn't have sufficient support to pass it.
 During a press conference for Texas reporters, Bentsen was asked the status of a bill he said in January he planned to

introduce.
 The bill would require television stations which sell time to political action committees claiming to be "independent groups" to give equal time, at no charge, to candidates attacked by the groups.
 Bentsen told the press conference he had not found enough support to proceed with introduction even though he said in January he would submit

the measure.
 "I don't plan to introduce until I get enough support," Bentsen said Wednesday.
 When the reporter asked that meant the media should longer operate on the premise that Bentsen's press releases planned bill introduction meant the measures would be introduced, the senator said. "If it's that important, we'll submit it."

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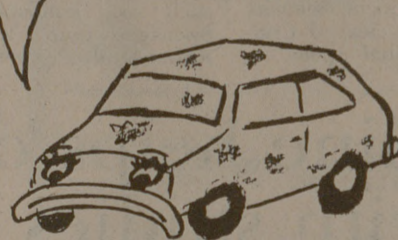


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