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## Kaiser Coal Co. Gets Hearing

# Judge Considers Legality of Mine Closure

An expedited administrative hearing opened Monday in Falls Church, Va., over the legality of the Mine Safety & Health Administration's closing a portion of Kaiser Coal Co's No. 1 mine in Sunnyside, Carbon County, on March 27.

Late Monday, neither the MSHA nor Kaiser spokeswomen knew the status of the hearing.

However, Kaiser Coal's Billie Greer said her company expected "a very prompt decision," which could occur as quickly as Tuesday.

The MSHA closed Sunnyside mine because a belt conveyor entry way was allegedly set up illegally. The MSHA maintained that construction of the belt conveyor apparently indicated Kaiser was establishing a two-entry longwall system without MSHA permission.

Kaiser Steel petitioned the MSHA

for permission to install a two-entry system on Jan. 19, 1986. But the MSHA has not yet acted on the petition.

Ms. Greer said Kaiser decided to request an expedited hearing before an administrative law judge after it unsuccessfully attempted to settle the dispute "administratively" with the MSHA last week. She said Kaiser is arguing that the MSHA should allow it to continue mining because its petition for a two-entry system is pending.

While the MSHA order directly af-

ected only one entry, Kaiser said it had no choice but to close the rest of the mine, which employs 210. Kaiser claimed the affected entry must be developed in tandem with another section in which the longwall is operating.

Longwall is the name of a machine and the most productive underground method of mining coal in Utah. The machine uses a large rotating cutting drum that moves across the face of coal deposits. The loosened coal falls onto a conveyor.