

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Nuclear reactor still burning

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. intelligence sources reported that the Chernobyl nuclear reactor complex in the Soviet Ukraine experienced a meltdown Saturday, was still billowing smoke Tuesday and threatened another reactor at the same site.

Arms control administrator Kenneth Adelman, meanwhile, told Congress that Soviet claims of only two deaths were "frankly preposterous" and called the incident "the most catastrophic nuclear disaster in history."

He said temperatures reached as high as 4,000 degrees (Centigrade, or 7,232 degrees Fahrenheit) at the graphite-cooled reactor and added, "The graphite is burning and will continue to burn for a good number of days."

A ranking administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that officials evaluating recent intelligence "don't believe there was a nuclear explosion per se," at Chernobyl. "But there was clearly a meltdown."

As of early Tuesday morning EDT, "smoke was still billowing from the site. The roof had been blown off and large portions of the walls (of the reactor building) had caved in," the source said. "And it seemed at the time that (another) nuclear unit just above it might still be in some danger."

The source said the U.S. government was convinced there had been a huge release of radiation, but that the most serious radioactive fallout on the ground occurred within an area stretching out about 10 miles from the plant.

This official also said the intelligence analysts were now convinced the accident occurred sometime Saturday.

Reports reaching the State Department said Soviet authorities were hampered in their efforts to put out the fire because of the intense heat. They also were concerned that dousing the fire could create more radioactivity than simply letting the reactor burn, according to a source who insisted on anonymity.

Adelman said those in the greatest risk are apparently the 2,000 inhabitants of a village built to house workers at the nuclear facility and their families.

When told by a senator that the Soviet Union has claimed that only two people were killed by the accident, he said that was "frankly preposterous in terms of an accident of this magnitude."

Northwest braces for possible fallout

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Gov. Booth Gardner met with health officials and radiation monitoring was stepped up Tuesday as Washington state prepared for the weekend arrival of fallout from the Soviet nuclear accident.

Experts said radioactivity from the power plant disaster, expected to appear over the northwestern United States as early as Saturday, would probably pose no health threat in the United States, nor in the Soviet Union outside the immediate area of the power plant disaster.

Charlie Porter, director of the Eastern Environmental Radiation Facility in Montgomery, Ala., said fallout detection stations in all 50 states will deliver data to his agency, an arm of the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Porter said the EPA does not believe the cloud would be dangerous. But he said there is no way to be sure without knowing the scope of the Soviet accident.

Gardner met with officials from the state's health, environment and emergency agencies to review steps the state could take in the event abnormally high radiation levels reach the northwest.

Filters on radiation monitors at the capital in Olympia, at Spokane and at the Hanford nuclear reservation in Eastern Washington were ordered changed daily instead of the usual once a week, officials said.

2 reported dead in Soviet disaster

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet Union struggled Tuesday to cope with one of history's gravest nuclear catastrophes, appealing for foreign help to fight a reactor fire and evacuating thousands of people from the imperiled countryside.

In its first report on casualties, the Soviet government said the Ukrainian nuclear plant disaster killed two people and injured an unspecified number of others.

A radioactive cloud loosed by the accident shifted, meanwhile, from Scandinavia back toward Central Europe.

Poland ordered emergency measures, and European political leaders angrily demanded that Moscow explain why it did not quickly alert the rest of the world to the disaster, an apparent reactor meltdown believed to have occurred late last week.

"It shouldn't be that way in a modern society," declared Denmark's prime minister, Poul Schluter.

Some called on the Soviets to shut down all their nuclear plants until international inspections could be carried out.

The Soviet government claimed the "radiation situation" had been stabilized at the damaged Chernobyl plant, 450 miles southwest of Moscow. But Swedish officials said the Soviets had asked the Stockholm government for information on combating nuclear-plant fires, indicating continuing serious problems.

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Nuclear Accident History

Here is a chronology of notable nuclear accidents worldwide.

Dec. 2, 1952: At Chalk River, Canada, an employee error leads to a million gallons of radioactive water leaking inside an experimental nuclear reactor. Took six months to clean up.

Oct. 7-10, 1957: At Windscale Pile, a plutonium production reactor north of Liverpool, England, a fire leads to largest known accidental release of radioactive materials. Government later attributes 39 cancer deaths to mishap.

1957: A nuclear accident, probably at a weapons facility, occurred in the Ural Mountains in the Soviet Union. Little information exists, but it is believed that hundreds of square miles had to be evacuated.

May 23, 1958: A second accident at Chalk River sparked by an overheated fuel rod leads to another long cleanup.

Jan. 3, 1961: A steam explosion at a military experimental reactor near Idaho Falls, Idaho, kills three servicemen.

Oct. 5, 1966: At Enrico Fermi plant, an experimental breeder reactor near Detroit, part of fuel core melts. No injuries, but radiation levels high inside the plant. Plant was closed in 1972.

Oct. 17, 1969: At a reactor in Saint-Laurent, France, fuel loading error leads to partial meltdown. No injuries and only small amount of radioactive material escapes.

Nov. 19, 1971: Over 50,000 gallons of radioactive waste water flows into the Mississippi River, when the waste storage space at the Northern States Power Co.'s reactor in Monticello, Minn., overflows.

March 22, 1975: Worker using a candle to check for leaks at the Brown's Ferry reactor in Decatur, Ala., causes a \$150 million fire which lowers cooling water to dangerous levels. No injuries or release of radioactivity.

March 28, 1979: Three Mile Island in Middletown, Pa., has partial meltdown and some radioactivity is released into the atmosphere in what many consider the nation's worst commercial nuclear mishap. Reactor is still being decontaminated.

Aug. 7, 1979: Accidental release of enriched uranium at a top-secret fuel plant near Erwin, Tenn., exposes about 1,000 people to above normal doses of radiation.

Feb. 11, 1981: At least eight workers exposed to radiation at Sequoyah I, a Tennessee Valley Authority power plant, when over 100,000 gallons of radioactive coolant leaks into the containment building.

April 19, 1984: Sequoyah I has second accident when superheated radioactive water erupts during maintenance procedure. No injuries.

June 9, 1985: Davis-Besse plant near Oak Harbor, Ohio, loses cooling water supplies due to human and equipment error. Problem was caught in time to prevent meltdown.

W.C.'s DOWNTOWN
WEDNESDAY NITES 8-1
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1228 "P"

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Lowest Pool Prices In Town
BIG RED POOL ROOM
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Happy Hour
Drinks & Tap Beer Pool
50¢ 16 oz. Draws \$1 per hour
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In Chesterfield's Lower Level Gummy's 13th & "Q"

We Invite You To
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By Royal Robbins
Lots of Colors Lots of Styles Lots of Fun
at the
Moose's Tooth Outdoor Sports
40th & O Street

NEED A JOB THAT FITS AROUND YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE?

A search is underway for a student to work in the keystone Insurance Office at the University Health Center.

The job requires a minimum of 10 hours per week.

If you feel you:

- *Are organized
- *Possess excellent communication skills
- *Are self-motivated
- *Have a flexible schedule
- *Enjoy working with people
- *Have the ability to think creatively

Please send a letter of application and/or a resume listing work experience to the University Health Center, Room 209. Applications are due Monday, May 5, 1986. If you have any questions please contact Gary Wilkinson at 472-7400.

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