

World and Nation

Tass: Ukrainians panicked after accident

MOSCOW (AP) — Some Ukrainians were hospitalized because they panicked after the Chernobyl nuclear plant accident and poisoned themselves with medicine they thought would prevent radiation sickness, Tass said Wednesday.

It was the first official reference to panic after the explosion, fire and reactor core meltdown April 26 that spawned an invisible cloud of radiation over Europe.

An American bone-marrow specialist who came here to treat radiation victims told the Associated Press he and other experts probably would be in Moscow for at least a month. Dr. Robert Gale would not say how many marrow transplants he had performed.

The government said radiation was declining around the disaster site and a small group of foreign journalists will be taken to Kiev, the Ukrainian capital 80 miles away.

Tass, the official news agency, carried a report from Kiev on a television appearance by Anatoly Romanenko, the Ukrainian health minister. He said radiation levels in Kiev were slightly above normal but posed no health risks and did not require preventive measures.

Tass quoted Romanenko as saying of those who took the medicine, "Such is life and there are panic-prone people. They followed some hasty advice, taking medicines that were alleged to protect them from

Texans narrowly miss Chernobyl radiation

DALLAS (AP) — Two Texans who met in the Soviet Union with Baptist groups, just 80 miles away from the nuclear plant fire at Chernobyl, say they are thankful that the wind wasn't blowing their way.

State health officials said J. Dalton Havard and Jamie Jackson of Sugarland were found to be free of radiation following the disaster last week.

"We thank God," said the 63-year-old Havard, pastor of Sugar Creek Baptist Church. "No one had any idea at the time. The Soviet citizens went on with business as usual."

"It's eerie to think we might have been wading around in it (radioactivity) and no one told us or the Soviets about it," he told *The Dallas Morning News*.

Harvard and Jackson, 37, said they only realized the severity of the accident when Western reporters questioned them on their arrival in Paris about a possible meltdown at the nuclear plant.

The pair said that after they found out about the accident, they began wondering which way the wind had been blowing on April 26.

They said authorities told them the wind had been blowing in a northerly direction, instead of following its usual southerly flow.

Harvard and Jackson then flew to New York and Houston and were tested by Texas Department of Health officials.

radiation, and there were cases of poisoning. They are now being treated in hospitals."

Romanenko did not say how many people were poisoned or what they had taken.

Like other Soviet reports on life in Kiev, the Tass dispatch said the situation was under control and consequences of the accident were being dealt with appropriately.

A Foreign Ministry official advised several Western news agencies Wednesday evening of the tour to Kiev and said it would leave late Thursday. He did not say who would be invited or whether they

would be allowed near the site of the accident.

He said the trip was organized in response to requests to visit the area. Such requests have been denied routinely.

No radiation levels dangerous to health were reported in Europe.

A U.S. Embassy statement said tests so far show no cause for concern in Moscow. American diplomats set up equipment in several locations to monitor radiation in the air and soil.

A government statement issued through Tass said that, although radiation around the reactor had lessened, it remained above normal.

Anti-nuclear organizations warn of dangers to Texas

AUSTIN (AP) — A spokesman for a group that wants to close the South Texas Nuclear Project said Wednesday the nuclear accident in the Soviet Union "is proof that nuclear technology leaves no margin for error, and is unforgiving in its consequences."

Dan Harrison of the South Texas Cancellation Campaign was joined at a Capitol news conference by representatives of Public Citizen and the Austin Peace and Justice Coalition.

Gerald Thomason of the coalition said what happened at Chernobyl can happen here.

"We, as individuals, are not powerless unless we are silent," he said.

He said the coalition "condemns the production of nuclear weapons and power and urges citizens to make their feelings and beliefs known."

According to recent congressional testimony by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission the odds are almost 50-50 that a major nuclear accident will occur in the United States within the next 20 years, said spokesman Thomas Smith of Public Citizen.

Smith said according to a study for the NRC, the "worst kind of nuclear accident" at the South Texas Nuclear Project — STNP — would kill 15,200 people living within 25

miles of the Bay City-area plant within a year.

An additional 8,770 people would become seriously ill and damages would total over \$112 billion, he said.

Later simulations, using exact size data for the STNP and the Comanche Peak nuclear plant, indicated 18,000 deaths and 10,000 injuries would take place at STNP and an accident at Comanche Peak would account for 1,200 deaths and 14,000, Smith said.

"The recent accident in Russia has given the world a stark reminder that nuclear energy is not safe, and that the consequences of simple hu-

man error are enormous," Smith said. "In Texas we don't need the power that will be produced from nuclear power."

He said the Public Utility Commission will release a study later this month that shows more power can be saved through conservation than would be generated by both nuclear plants in Texas.

Harrison of the STNP cancellation campaign noted nuclear risks, cost overruns and construction that is behind schedule, and said the PUC expects STNP electricity to cost 15 cents per kilowatt hour, or about

far only insignificant amounts of radiation had been found.

A government official in Bonn said a West German company that specializes in nuclear cleanups had sent two remote-controlled earth moving machines to the Soviet Union on Wednesday for use at the Chernobyl plant.

In Italy, Premier Bettino Craxi's office said Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev had pledged to keep the world informed on the aftermath of the disaster.

A spokesman quoted Gorbachev's message to Craxi as saying in part: "We will inform . . . in the future Italy, as we will other countries and world public opinion, on the progress of the work to clear up the consequences of the damage."

Gale arrived last Friday to help Soviet doctors treat the people most seriously injured at Chernobyl. Bone marrow transplants are considered the only effective treatment for severe radiation exposure.

He said by telephone Wednesday that he has been operating on victims.

Official government statements have said 18 of those injured were in serious condition, but have not disclosed the degree of exposure.

twice the cost of fossil fuel electricity.

"Don't we have more than enough reasons now to cancel STNP?" he said.

Smith urged Texans to contact the NRC, Gov. Mark White and the PUC to stop construction and licensing of all nuclear plants in Texas until the causes of the Soviet accident "are fully understood."

Also, he said, Texans should demand a complete reinspection of STNP and Comanche Peak by outsiders before construction resumes and that federal limits on liability for nuclear accidents be removed.

Boston train crash injures about 200

BOSTON (AP) — A train packed with commuters slammed into a freight train in the fog Wednesday morning, injuring 200 people as passengers were hurled about the cars moments after the conductor yelled "Brace yourselves!"

Although most suffered only cuts and bruises in the 8:40 a.m. crash of the four-car commuter train from Framingham, about 50 people were taken away on stretchers and five were seriously hurt.

Witnesses said the commuter train, which was carrying about 550 people, managed to slow down just before hitting the idle freight train. Several passengers said the conductor yelled out, "Brace yourselves!" to the first car seconds before the crash.

Glass, shoes and other debris went flying as the passengers were pitched forward after the crash, witnesses said.

Rob Ball of Wellesley said, "A lot of people couldn't move. They were stuck in the aisles."

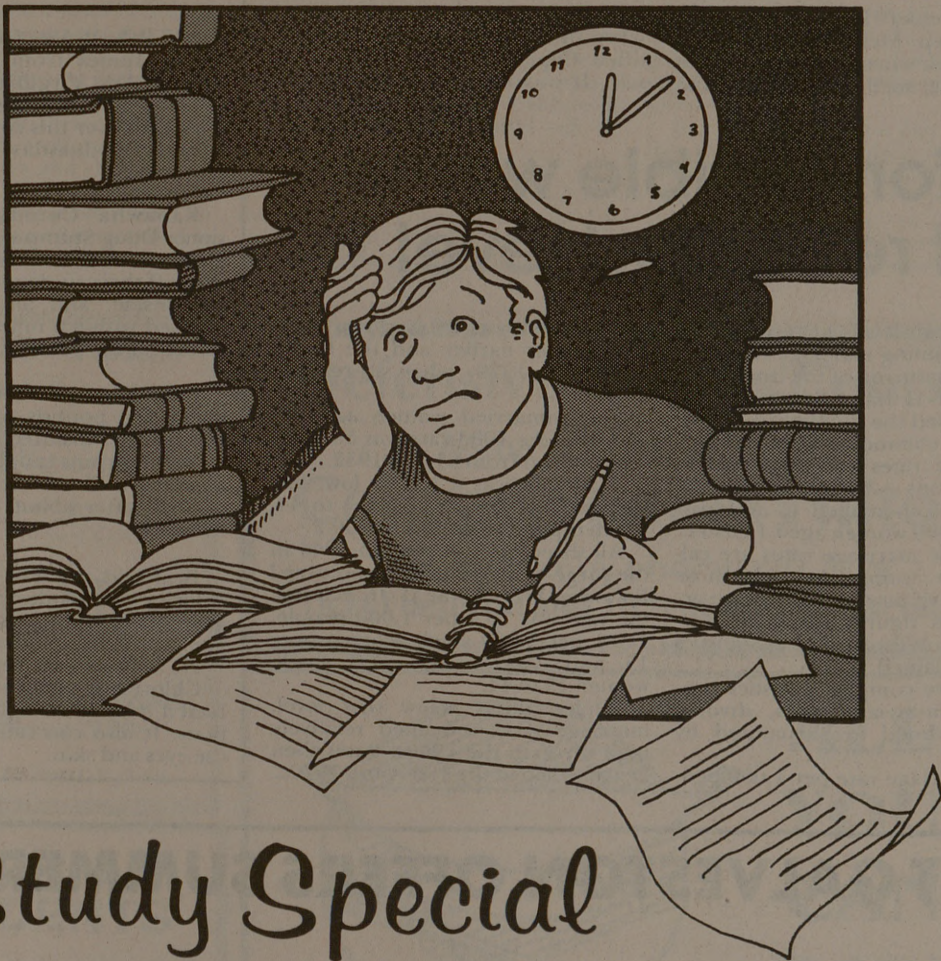
Tim Chatma of Framingham said ambulance workers wrapped wounds and calmed passengers who were "screaming . . . yelling for doctors."

Pineapples and computer television screens that spilled from the freight train were strewn along the tracks. Neither train derailed.

Vincent Carbona, spokesman for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which owns the commuter train operated under contract by the Boston & Maine Railroad, said the crash occurred near the entrance to a Conrail freight yard.

Conrail spokesman Bob Libkind said about a third of the freight train's 69 cars had been moved into the yard and those hit were waiting to be switched to another line when the crash occurred.

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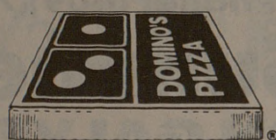
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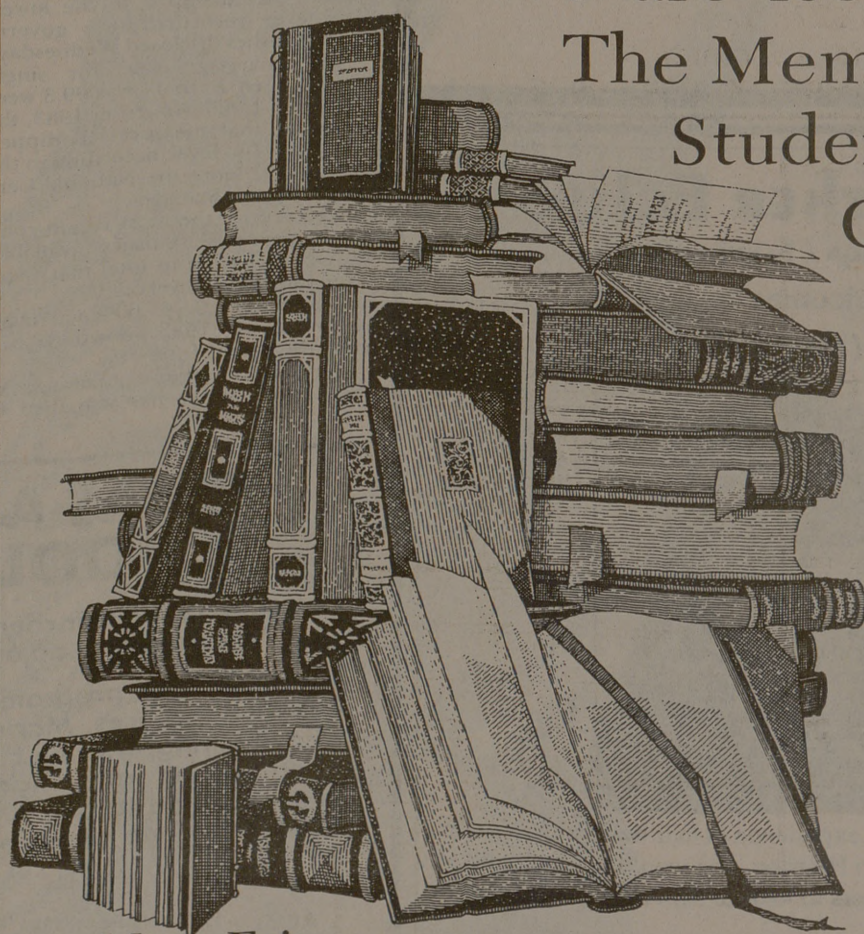


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