

Mysterious radioactivity detected at TMI

MIDDLETOWN, Pa. (AP) — Technicians were unable to discover the cause of a slight increase in radiation detected in the Three Mile Island nuclear plant's auxiliary building yesterday.

Officials initially suspected the airborne radioactive particles came from a small water leak in a pump system that adds water to the plant's primary reactor cooling system.

But after inspecting the building, technicians could find no evidence of a leak. They now believe the increased radiation was due to decontamination work carried out on Wednesday.

"There was a type of decontamination activity that uses a jet spray, and that could cause additional airborne activity," said plant spokesman David Klucsik.

Huge filters on the roof of the building trap radioactive particles. They were installed following the March 28, 1979, nuclear accident.

Monitors inside the auxiliary building, which adjoins the giant reactor containment building, first detected the increase at 1 a.m.

Although plant operators theorized an extremely low amount of radioactivity escaped into the air, it could not be detected on sensitive monitors in the building's ventilation system.

Officials said it posed no health threat.

"The main thing is we're not seeing any changes on our outside monitors. We know something is going out, but we can't detect it," said Sandy Polon, another plant spokesman.

"We've not seen any release that would exceed limits," said John Collins, chief of operations at the site for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

In addition to notifying the NRC, plant operators alerted Dauphin County officials and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency about what they called "an event of potential public interest."

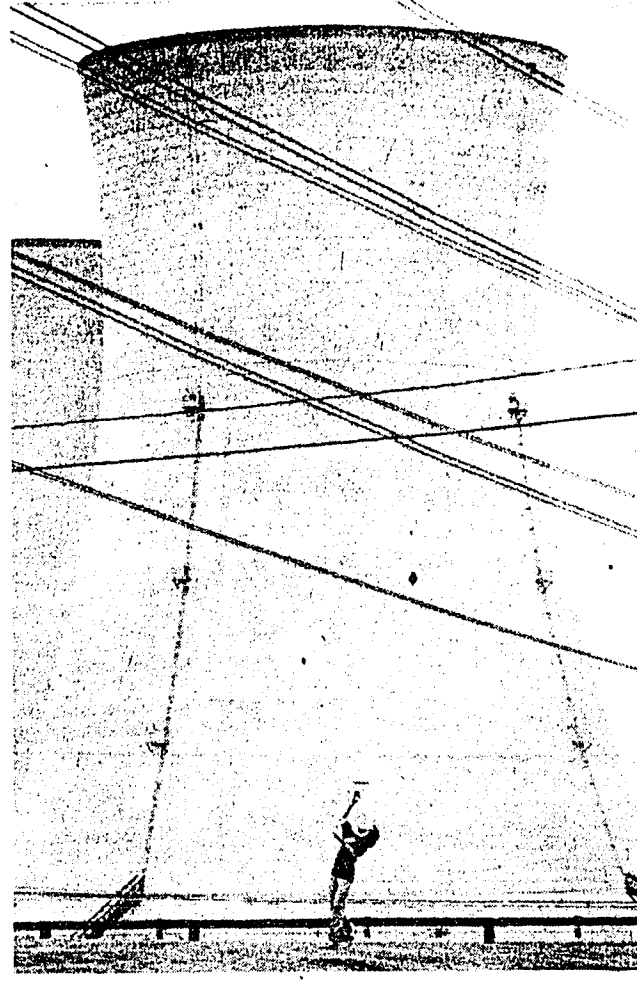
The announcement came following a mass demonstration by residents of nearby communities.

"Keep your krypton!" they shouted at a public hearing here Wednesday night.

"It's our homes. It's our health. What right do you have to play God?" said Fran Cain, who lives 700 feet from the plant.

Nearly a year ago, a series of mechanical breakdowns and operator errors robbed the reactor's uranium core of cooling water.

Federal studies have concluded that the radiation released during the accident posed no health threat.



Low amounts of radiation escaping from Three Mile Island nuclear power plant do not phase this teenager as he continued to play frisbee yesterday in front of the plant's cooling towers.

'May Day Brigade' halted by police at Alamo shrine

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (UPI) — Three persons calling themselves the "Revolutionary May Day Brigade" scaled the walls of the historic Alamo yesterday, took down the U.S. and Texas flags, raised their own banners and threw down leaflets protesting the "vicious oppression of Chicano people."

The two young men and a woman were arrested about 30 minutes later by local police, who surrounded the Texas shrine and used ladders to climb its walls and remove the shouting trio.

With their hands raised in the air, the three threw leaflets from the roof of the Alamo and shouted slogans to an angry crowd of about 200 gathered outside. Their words, however, were drowned out by the sound of a police helicopter hovering overhead.

Within minutes, police handcuffed the three, led them down the ladders and away. At least four other young people joined in the chanting as the three were led away.

The trio, identifying themselves as "Mao-ist," said the revolution would begin May 1 and the streets "would be flaming." As the crowd dispersed, police also arrested three of the four persons who were chanting on the ground.

The United States and Texas flags quickly were run back up the flagpoles flanking the facade of the historical monument.

Lt. Martin Benavides said the three people on top of the Alamo would be charged with desecration of a venerated object. He said those arrested on the ground would be charged with disorderly conduct for engaging in a heated argument with members of the crowd.

Members of the same organization earlier this week in Beckley, W. Va., held a demonstration and "dialogue" with coal miners. They were arrested and charged with misdemeanor treason.

Earlier this month, two people were arrested in Boston after taking over a cast-iron statue and unfurling a large banner. Officials of the Revolutionary May Day Committee said "brigades" of people had been traveling the country for three months to spread word of a May 1 "revolution."

"They're from everywhere it seems like. They're going to jail," Benavides said. "It's all a big publicity deal. They have some way out deal, something like oppression. It was an obvious publicity ploy."

"The crowd was pretty incited by the time we got there," he said.

Initial reports indicated the Alamo had been "seized" and 12 police cars rushed to the scene. Police said they used the helicopter to try to determine if those atop the building were armed, but Benavides said no weapons were found.



March 21-22

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U-031

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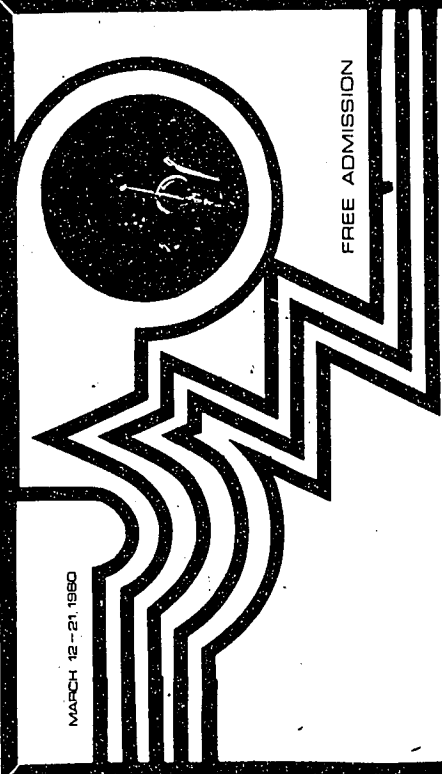
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