



Under siege

This sign at the entrance of Centre Hall, about 15 miles east of campus, reflects the mood of the borough's residents after a memorial service last night for Lori Long, 18, who was killed by a tractor-trailer on Route 144 last

Thursday. Area residents have been trying for years to have trucks banned on the steep twisting route over Nittany Mountain. Residents also draped black ribbons throughout the borough yesterday.

Collegian Photo/Scott Wilkerson

'Nuclear winter' would cause famine, study says

By ROBERT FURLOW
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Billions of people who somehow survived the first blasts of a nuclear war would merely face drawn-out deaths by starvation, an international scientific group said yesterday in a new study supporting the theory of a crop-ruining global "nuclear winter."

Though an image of total devastation after a nuclear attack may well be accurate for areas around actual targets, one of the report's authors said famine conditions in unscathed areas would be far more typical as hundreds of millions of tons of black smoke drastically cut sunlight and robbed crops of needed warmth and light from the sun.

"We are left with images of Ethiopia and the Sudan as being more representative of what the world would look like after a nuclear war for most of the people than the sorts of images we have of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," Dr. Mark Harwell of Cornell University said at a news conference on the report.

He said it estimated famine deaths of 1 billion to 4 billion of the world's 5 billion people after direct blast and radiation effects of actual attacks cost several hundred million lives.

"The main mechanism by which people would die after a large-scale nuclear war would not be blast effect, would not be burns, would not be radiation but rather would be mass starvation," he said.

The two-volume report, prepared by a special committee of the International Council of Scientific Unions, suggests that black smoke from nuclear attacks on urban areas — the main trigger for a "nuclear winter" — would cause sudden and perhaps long-term declines in temperatures and in light reaching the Earth, even in nations far from those attacked.

The findings basically support those of other groups, including the National Academy of Sciences, which have used atmospheric models as evidence that even a limited exchange could touch off some form of nuclear winter — especially in inland farm areas away from moderating influences of the oceans. The new report is based on more detailed modeling and computer work, the authors said.

The chairman of the study group, Sir Frederick Warner of Britain, former chairman of the British National Committee on Problems of the Environment, said, "This effort represents the consensus

of a prestigious body of scientists. It would be a grave error to ignore their findings.

Reagan administration officials, on the other hand, have said repeatedly that they accept the general concept of nuclear winter but believe it is one more reason to stick to their policy of seeking arms control while continuing to build new nuclear weapons as a deterrent to Soviet attack.

Harwell, associate director of the Ecosystems Research Center at Cornell, told reporters the new report's conclusions "don't represent the views of political activists or environmental extremists or people with any particular policy position, but rather we feel this is a sober assessment by 200 of the top world scientists on agriculture and ecologic systems."

The group's report said it was "a plausible scenario" that a nuclear exchange would include about 6,000 megatons of explosive force divided among more than 12,000 warheads. And there was an assumption that an attacker would hit urban areas and fuel sources rather than just remote missile silos, igniting fires that would send hundreds of millions of tons of black sooty smoke into the atmosphere.

Scientists from 30 nations, including the Soviet Union, contributed to the report, the authors said.

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