FBI labels '91 conference terrorist

PHOENIX (AP) — The FBI said Monday it believed Islamic extremists planned to discuss terrorist attacks in the United States at a 1991 conference in Phoenix, but the agency wasn't allowed to bug the meeting.

At least 100 extremists, including members of the fundamentalist groups Islamic Jihad and the Muslim Brotherhood, met in December 1991 while a conference of 4,000 Muslim youths was held at the Phoenix Civic Plaza, *The Arizona Republic* reported Monday, quoting

unidentified law enforcement sources. The newspaper did not cite any specific acts of terrorism allegedly planned during the meeting.

FBI spokesman Jack Callahan confirmed Monday that the bureau believed terrorist activities were to be discussed at the meeting. But he said it is illegal for the FBI to secretly monitor a gathering unless there is evidence of criminal activity.

He said he had not seen the Republic's story and could not comment further.

Islamic Jihad has claimed responsibility for terrorist acts, including the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in which 62 people died.

The Muslim Brotherhood has been the target of a government crackdown in Egypt.

The Republic said it was unable to locate the organizer of the 1991 conference.

The conference sponsor was listed in Civic Plaza records as the Muslim-Arab Youth Association.

Father watches as kids struck by train

JOPLIN, Mo. (AP) — Two brothers and their sister were killed when they were hit by a train they were trying to outrun as their stepfather yelled frantically for them to run faster.
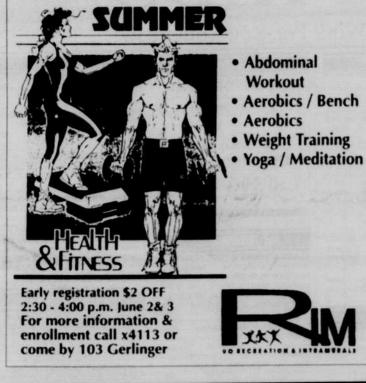
The children had walked out onto a railroad bridge Sunday afternoon just before a train hauling coal came down the tracks, said police Cpl. Mike Roberts.

"Their dad said, 'Don't go too far,'" said 11-year-old Anthony Reynolds, who was fishing under the bridge with the victims' stepfather and sister. "All of a sudden, I heard the beep of the train. Their dad said, 'Run, run!'"

The engineer tried but couldn't stop the train in time, Reynolds said. The narrow bridge stands about 40 feet above Turkey Creek in southwest Missouri.
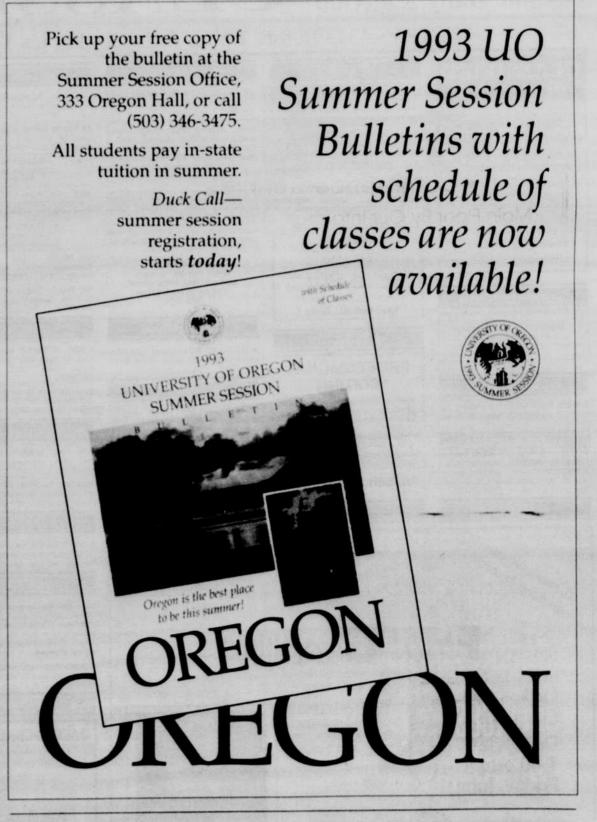
"There was no clearance at all. There's no catwalk. There's no railing at all," police Sgt. John Jensen said. "Their only option was to jump or outrun the train."

Melissa E. Seay, 13, and William Junior Seay, 9, died at the scene. Five-year-old Austin Seay died Monday at a hospital.

The two older children were each holding their younger brother's hands as they ran, police said.

Guatemalan poet urges restoring democracy

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchu urged the Organization of American States to help restore democracy through a negotiated settlement of Guatemala's political crisis.

But the 1992 peace prize winner also said late Sunday after meeting with a visiting OAS delegation that she expected President Jorge Serrano, who seized extraordinary powers last week, to give in to international pressure.

Menchu, flanked by fellow Quiche Indians in colorful highland dress, said opponents of emergency rule by Serrano want a "return to constitutional government through legal means." She didn't elaborate.

OAS Secretary-General Joao Baena Soares was to fly this afternoon to Washington. He said Sunday that his meetings with Serrano, opposition leaders and others would provide the basis for a report to OAS foreign ministers as they consider what steps to take, including possible sanctions.

The OAS chief met with Defense Minister Jose Garcia Samayoa, who has professed the allegiance to Serrano of the armed forces, a powerful institution in a country with a long history of military dictatorships.

Serrano, accusing the legislature and high court of corruption, last Tuesday dissolved Congress and the Supreme Court, partially suspended the constitution and began ruling by decree.

The 48-year-old outspoken supporter of democracy declared he did so because the country was sliding into "anarchy" after two weeks of violent protests over declining living standards.