



# World News

## Watery Grave of Russian Sub Brings Crewman's Message

A note found on a body recovered from the sunken Russian nuclear submarine shows that at least 23 people survived the powerful explosions that killed most of the crew and sunk the vessel, sealing the fate of the rest, according to the ITAR-TASS news agency.

The desperate message, which the author mysteriously says was written "blindly," says the survivors gathered in the compartment where the emergency escape hatch was located—but could not escape. The letter may also turn into the most grisly and poignant indictment of President Vladimir Putin, who vacationed through the earliest days of the drama and reportedly rejected the first offers of international help in reaching the vessel. But it was unclear if a quicker response would have saved the survivors trapped inside the compartment.

Russian Navy chief Adm. Vladimir Kuroyedov said at a meeting with submariners' widows the note—written an hour or so after the Aug. 12 explosions—was found in the pocket of a seaman identified only as Lt. D.R. Kolesnikov, ITAR-Tass said.

"All the crew from the sixth, seventh and eighth compartments went over to the ninth. There are 23 people here. We made this decision as a result of the accident. None of us can

get to the surface," Kuroyedov quoted the note as saying. After the Kursk sank, Russian divers were unable to latch onto the hatch,



This undated image from the Russian Television Channel shows Russian Lt. Dmitry Kolesnikov, the commander of the Kursk's turbine section, aboard the Kursk submarine.

but Norwegian divers who followed managed to open it a week after the tragedy—and determined that there were no survivors. Kuroyedov said divers' operations in the seventh and eighth compartments had been stopped and the divers were concentrating their search on the ninth compartment.

The letter also contains important details about the accident that sank the Kursk—and the drama that captured the attention of the world, Vice-Admiral Mikhail Motsak, chief of staff of Russia's Northern Fleet, said later during a TV interview. But he said the contents of the letter were private and would be handed over to relatives.

Foreign and Russian ships in the area and seismologists around the world registered two powerful explosions in the Barents Sea around 11:30 p.m. local time on Aug. 12. All 118 submariners were killed, either by the initial blast, or in the days following as desperate, repeated attempts to reach the vessel failed.

The government's handling of the disaster—including a perceived de-

lay in requesting outside help, and the release of often contradictory information—angered and shocked many Russians and threatened to undermine the fledgling Putin administration. The letter could spark a new wave of outrage.

Initial sonar reports said tapping heard on the hull of the vessel suggested that at least some sailors were alive. But the tapping faded and disappeared in the days following the crippling explosion. Others discounted the reports as unsubstantiated and said the sounds could have been caused by collapsing equipment or the submarine settling into the seabed.

The letter was the first real confirmation that anyone had survived the initial blasts. Russian officials say that up to two-thirds of the crew were likely blown to bits by powerful explosions in the weapons room in the submarine's bow. The survivors of the initial explosions probably died of drowning, hypothermia or high pressure. Kolesnikov was the only seaman to have been identified so far, Kuroyedov said. Russian and Norwegian divers recovered the first four bodies after five days of painstaking work to cut holes in the top of the submarine.

The complex underwater operation is being performed with leading-edge diving equipment, includ-

ing robots and mechanical arms. Divers have used an instrument that sprays pressurized water mixed with diamond dust to cut the Kursk's 2-inch thick inner steel hull. Kuroyedov had warned that he might cancel the recovery effort if experts ruled that divers' lives were in danger. Two widows of the Kursk crewmembers visited the Regalia on Wednesday and, on behalf of all the families, pleaded with the divers not to take excessive risks.

But President Vladimir Putin promised to recover the bodies at an emotional meeting with the crew's relatives shortly after the disaster, and the government seemed bent on conducting the costly effort despite the shortage of funds for the military.

Some Russian media have pointed out that by stubbornly conducting the risky effort the government wants to vindicate its confused response to the sinking of the Kursk, when it resisted foreign help for days while botching its own rescue efforts. The cause of the disaster remains unknown, with authorities pointing at a collision with a Western submarine, World War II-era mine or an internal malfunction as possible reasons.



Map Shows Location where Russian Sub went down

## HBO Program Tracks Hate Groups

By DAVID BAUDER  
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) — Check your stereotypes at the door. The best place to find purveyors of racial hate isn't in the back room of some service station in Alabama or Mississippi.

It's on the Internet, a fact outlined with chilling dispassion on the new HBO documentary, "Hate.com: Extremists on the Internet." The documentary explores an online racist subculture, tracing its members to many of the notorious acts of domestic terrorism during the past decade.

"The film is depressing in the sense that it really paints a gloomy picture of what's out there on the Web," said Morris Dees, co-founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center. "But I think that's necessary to do something about it."

Dees, whose organization has gone to court in an effort to bankrupt white supremacist organizations, was contacted by filmmakers to help provide information on hate groups. He grew so involved he became the film's narrator. Starting from scratch five years ago, there are now between 300 and 500 racial hate Web sites operating now, Dees said. Don Black, operator of one of the early sites, is described at the "Godfather of hate on the Internet." Black almost gleefully describes in the film how inexpensive and easy the medium is, while providing the anonymity many users require.

Black's 11-year-old son, Derek, has started his own Web site for children. The site lets people click onto versions of the popular video game "Doom," where players kill black characters.

These Web sites help leaders of the movement recruit young, educated members, Dees said.

"These are not tobacco-chewing, pot-bellied Klansmen from the Deep South," he said. "You're talking about college-educated, clever people."

Just as Rotary Clubs are finding that people are less willing to meet in groups these days, so is the Klan, Dees said. But with the Web, "they're able to create a virtual organization," he said.

"Hate.com" introduces viewers to the leaders of these movements, including the glib World Church of the Creator founder Matt Hale and William L. Pierce, leader of the National Alliance. Pierce's 1978 book, "The Turner Diaries," a fictional account of an American race war, was a favorite of both Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh and Bill King, one of three white men convicted of dragging James Byrd from his death behind a pickup truck.

In one of the film's most effective moments, Pierce reads a passage from his book describing the dazed faces of bombing victims, while the screen shows footage of shocked people injured in Oklahoma City.

Filmmakers Vince DiPersio and William Guttentag include interviews with movement leaders and figures like Joseph Paul Franklin, a convicted mass murderer who talks candidly from jail about killing two women because they said they were interested in dating black men. A woman, Brandi Houston, proudly displays her white supremacist tattoo and talks crudely of sending blacks to Africa—a first step toward an effort to conquer the world "and make the whole world white."

The interviews are conveyed without a tone of moral judgment. "If it's too strident and condemning, then it comes across as being polemic," Dees said. "In cases we've used in the past, we usually let these people hang themselves by letting them tell their own stories."

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