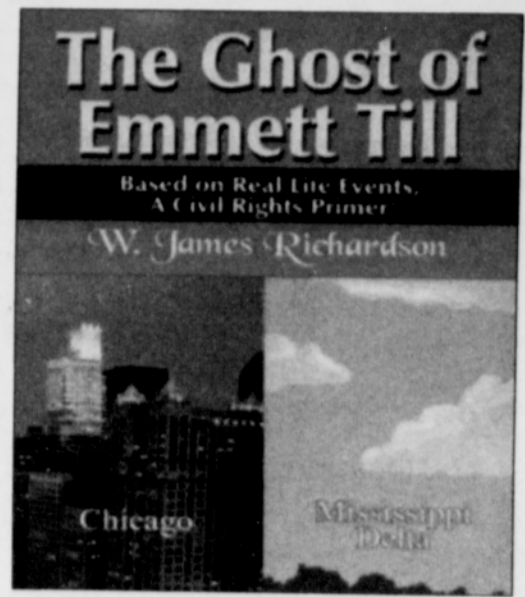




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Chaos in Japan

Nuclear threat follows mega quake, tsunami

(AP)-- A nuclear power plant damaged by fire and explosions emitted a burst of radiation Tuesday, panicking an already edgy Japan and leaving the government struggling to contain a spiraling crisis caused by last week's earthquake and tsunami.

Radiation levels in areas around the nuclear plant, which rose early in the afternoon, appeared to subside by evening, officials said. But the unease remained in a country trying to recover from the massive disasters that are believed to have killed more than 10,000 people and battered the world's third-largest economy.

The leak caused the government to order 140,000 people living within 20 miles of the plant to seal themselves indoors to avoid exposure and declared a ban on commercial air traffic through the area. Worries about radiation rippled through Tokyo and other areas far beyond that cordon. The stock market plunged for a second day, dropping 10 percent.

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Upon hearing another tsunami warning, a father tries to flee for safety with his just reunited four-month-old baby girl. The baby was spotted by military rescuers in the rubble of tsunami-torn Ishinomaki Monday, three days after a 9.0 earthquake-triggered tsunami hit northeast Japan. (AP photo)

Low Risk of Radiation Fallout in Oregon

Experts say long distance would dilute harmful exposure

BY CLIFF PFENNING
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In the wake of the devastating 9.0 earthquake and resulting tsunami that struck Japan Friday, world, national and state health officials have said the threat of significant

levels of nuclear radiation from a stricken nuclear power complex reaching the U.S. is extremely low.

An explosion Monday night caused health officials in Japan to order more than 150,000 residents to remain indoors due to concerns

about radiation poisoning, but Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said Tuesday that radiation readings outside the power plant were close to not being considered harmful.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission said this weekend the threat of radiation exposure to the West Coast of the United States remained extremely low, as did Dr. Mel Kohn, the director of the Public Health Division for Oregon.

Changing wind patterns as well as the

upper atmospheric jet stream are significant factors in radiation reaching or not reaching the U.S.

The wind direction over the past few days caused at least some radiation to reach the USS Ronald Reagan, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, which was 100 miles of the Japan coast. Sensors detected airborne radioactive particles that were estimated at 30 times

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