

'X-TMI Worker, Family Disappear

By Jeff Hawkes
Intelligencer Journal Staff

author of an unpublished critical of operations at the Mile Island nuclear plant vanishing mysteriously with his family in early New Mexico state police reported. The disappearance also has off-putting an elaborate public hoax is the motive. Reported missing is Randall S. Thompson, his wife, Maryann (who goes by the nickname Joy), both 29,

and their children, Tasha, 11, and Stephen, 10. Thompson, a former worker at the Peach Bottom nuclear power plant, was hired as a health physicist at TMI in May 1979, several months after an accident crippled the plant. He worked there about a month. Friends said Thompson left TMI for Taos, N.M., after he claimed he was threatened for indicating he planned to write a book about activities at the damaged reactor. His lengthy article reportedly was rejected by several national

magazines and metropolitan newspapers. "We've not come up with no trace at all since they've been reported missing. We're at a blank wall," Sgt. James Hickman, a New Mexico state trooper at Taos, said Sunday. "We can't come up with no motive at all except the Three Mile Island thing to get enough publicity to get a book published," he said. Thompson's mother, Norma Thompson, Wilburton, Okla., however, said Sunday that she can't imag-

ine her son pulling a publicity stunt. She thinks he is alive and perhaps disappeared because of some perceived threat. She said she has not heard from him since before he was reported missing.

Thompson's sister-in-law, Barbara Busey, Taos, found the family's 1966 station wagon abandoned Feb. 24 at a roadside campground east of the northern New Mexico communi-

More EX-TMI Page 27

TMI Worker, Family Appear in New Mexico

Continued from Back Page

The keys were in the ignition. Busey told the Rocky News, Denver, Colo., that to the Thompsons' cabin the front door open. "They swears up and down that (Thompson) are as dependable day is long," Sgt. Hickman said. Mrs. Busey could not be contacted Sunday. Authorities ordered a search of rugged foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains near the campground Feb. 26. State police helicopters, Civil Air Corps planes, rescue units from and 21 students from St. John's College, Santa Fe, participated. "We haven't turned up a footprint," said Sgt. Hickman, who led head the investigation. "We've done everything we can possibly do on this end without any more ammunition. We have no shred of evidence of foul play whatsoever. I mean that's why we kept it listed as a missing persons case," he said. Thompson, from his month-long absence at TMI, wrote a 200-page script called "Tales From the Mouth of the Beast." Thompson said the manuscript alleges that coverups occurred at TMI. She said her son was involved with anti-nuclear

felt they usually didn't know they were talking about," she

his marriage at a young age. Thompson joined the U.S. Air Force worked with nuclear submarines about two years. "I loved it. He did well. In his own words he talks about how great it is, well controlled," Mrs. Busey said. "In several years in the Navy, employed by the Virginia Beach Light Co. Later, he was employed by Radiation Services, Pittsburgh that "rents" technicians.

sent him to Peach Bottom, moved to Stewartstown,

York County. After a couple years he got tired of the long hours and decided to publish a magazine on skateboarding, Mrs. Thompson said.

That venture failed. Then the TMI accident occurred.

"When Three Mile Island happened, he definitely wanted back up there to see what was going on. He went back to (Radiation Services) specifically for that," his mother explained.

She said it is her understanding that before he was threatened, he was working on a pamphlet to inform people of radiation safety precautions concerning food consumption and cleanliness.

"He was supposedly threatened, a vague threat of some kind," she said. "We definitely feel like our son is frightened. We don't know why or of whom. We did know that he was very concerned for his safety.

"If he had reasons for this, we don't know. He's a very serious minded young man and never in the past sought publicity."

She said that before the disappearance, her son called regularly.

"Why he left when he did, we don't know. We had just talked to him and he seemed fine to us," she said.

"We have been under a terribly emotional strain. We do hope we do hear something. I always think when the phone rings it might be him.

"If they are indeed alive — my instinct would tell me they are — I feel like Randy is doing something and he is doing something halfway constructive, whatever it is.

"I don't think he has given up on his project on what he is trying to do, and he's trying to get his manuscript published. Maybe he has someone helping him now," she said.

Another source close to the Thompsons, who asked not to be identified, said she has reason to believe the family is in hiding but is safe.

She said she thinks Thompson's allegations are "rather wild."

"It would make good fiction, I believe," the source said.

Where Is Randy Thompson? TMI Employee & Family Disappear

Randall S. Thompson came to Harrisburg as a Health Physics Technician for Rad Tech Services, a company assisting in the Met-Ed clean-up program at TMI. Thompson had been trained in the U.S. Navy and had been a member of the nuclear submarine Task Force. His wife, Jana, is also a nuclear technician who went to work at TMI. Both of them were employed at the power facility shortly after the 1979 disaster.

The Thompsons worked only a short time at Three Mile Island—about a month, and then left the area.

Before the Thompsons left, Randy discussed the book, exposing TMI, that he was writing, and he reportedly was threatened.

In February, 1981, the New Mexico State Police discovered the Thompson's automobile, abandoned. There has been no trace of the couple and their two young children, who apparently disappeared with them.

Parents Baffled

In trying to track down the story, the Paxton Herald interviewed Randy's father who lives in Wilburton, Oklahoma. The elder Mr. Thompson said, "all this that's been happening...I don't understand it. My own life style", he went on, "just doesn't let me comprehend what's going on."

Bizarre Events Begin

Mr. Thompson told us that his son, along with his daughter-in-law and grandchildren, had stopped in Oklahoma to visit after leaving Harrisburg late in May, 1979. While at his parents home, Randy told them he had been very concerned about conditions at TMI. The elder Thompson said his son had told him that he & Jana, his wife, were writing a book about the laxity at TMI...that **they had been warned not to write such a book, and they were so frightened they had packed and left their jobs and left Pennsylvania.** Randy kept saying, "They are after us." Thompson said his son used the telephone a lot to contact people who might be interested in his book entitled, "Tales from the Heart of the Beast," and finally left to live in New Mexico. That's when seemingly bizarre things started to happen!

"Accident"...and Death ..Books Missing From Car

Mrs. Thompson's mother, Mrs. John Benzie of Jacksonville, Florida, told us that in October, 1980, her son, Charles Busey, went to visit his sister & her husband Randy, at their home in Taos, New Mexico. Charles was also a nuclear technician, working in Georgia and went to New Mexico to, "help Randy with his book."

Forced Off Road—Brother-in-Law Dies In Accident

Three hours after he arrived at the Thompsons home in Taos, Charles & Randy went to the store and on the return home—with Randy driving his brother-in-law's new car, they were reportedly "forced off the road." The brother-in-law, Charles Busey, died in the accident and Thompson was

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Thompson Family Disappears In February

In February of this year, the New Mexico State Police found the abandoned Thompson vehicle. Sgt. James Hickmen, New Mexico State Police, has been in charge of the continuing investigation & has not the slightest clue as to what might have happened to Randy, his wife & children. Randy's father says he believes his son is still alive, somewhere, and "just plain scared." Mrs. Benzie, Randy's mother-in-law says she has faith that the family is alive and well and is just hiding out of fear. She said both her daughter & her son-in-law had developed an obvious fear about Three Mile Island and Metropolitan Edison. She said, "Something really frightened them up there."

Where is Randy Thompson, his wife Jana, and