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Directorate of Intelligence

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# The Chernobyl' Accident: Social and Political Implications



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A Research Paper

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Excerpt 1:

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***The Evacuation of Pripyat'***

*The actual evacuation of the city of Pripyat' took place 36 hours after the initial release of radiation. What we know of Pripyat's evacuation is based entirely on Soviet retrospective accounts, since no television pictures or photographs of Pripyat' just before or after the dramatic evacuation have been released.*  25X1

*In later months, the press described the exodus as an orderly and efficient process. A caravan of more than 1,100 buses, mostly from Kiev, got under way on Sunday afternoon, carrying the townspeople in a line that stretched for almost 19 kilometers. The complete operation took less than three hours, a strikingly short time to move so many people.*  25X1

*Despite this impressive achievement, firsthand accounts of local officials directly involved in the evacuation present a picture of disorganization, supporting speculation there were no evacuation plans for an event such as the one unfolding at Chernobyl'. The Soviet press details how officials hastily decided on where to move such a large number of people; how to assemble the transportation; and what resources to tap to shelter, feed, and provide medical services for such a large number of evacuees. One Kiev Obkom official said that shortly before the evacuation an information group composed of oblast party officials, militiamen, and voluntary police (druzhinniki) went from house to house informing the residents of the evacuation. The people were given less than an hour's advance warning, and no additional information was provided for fear of creating a panic.*  25X1

*after the accident people reacted "very emotionally," because they had no previous emergency exercises about what to do after an accident and stressed the need for such a public education program for people living around nuclear plants.*  25X1  
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Excerpt 2:

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Figure 1  
Evacuated and Repopulated Sites Surrounding Chernobyl<sup>a</sup>



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