

April 26, 1986

From the Diary of Vitaly I. Vorotnikov

Dolgikh told me that during the night of April 26 he got a call from Frolyshev, deputy head of the CC CPSU Department of Heavy Industry, and told him that according to the report from the director of NPS [Nuclear Power Station] Bryukhanov, at approximately 2:00 a.m., an accident occurred during some testing that was being conducted at the fourth block. There was an explosion and a fire. Parts of the fourth block are destroyed. There are victims. The fire has been extinguished. Apparently the reactor was not damaged, it had been shut down. He (Dolgikh) immediately informed Gorbachev and Ryzhkov. They decided to establish a commission headed by Shcherbina, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers. The first group of experts flew to Chernobyl (via Kiev) at 9:00 a.m., the second group—the commission members—left at 16:00, and Shcherbina, who was in Siberia at the time, got to Chernobyl only late that night. [Among the experts] are also Majorets, academician Legasov, representatives of the Ministry of Medium Machine Building and design institutes, and others.

Source: Vorotnikov, V.I. *A eto bylo tak: Iz dnevnika chlena PB TsK KPSS* (Moscow, Soyuz Veteranov Knigoizdaniya: SIMAR, 1995), p. 95

Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya for the National Security Archive.

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