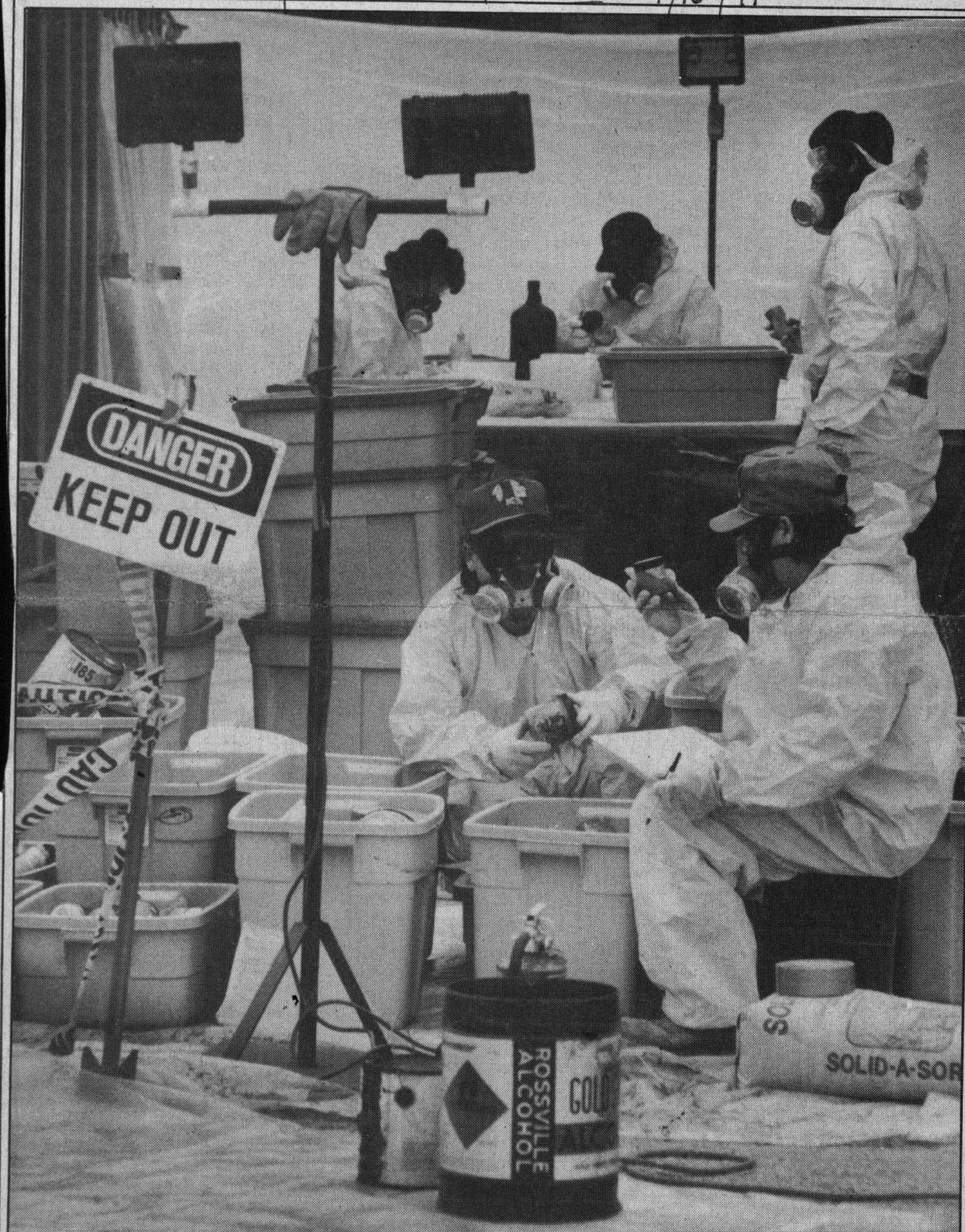


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✓OF Earthquake 1989 RP 1/15/91



Mike McCollum

Workers carefully go through and separate containers of hazardous chemicals that had been left in the Marine Lab since the earthquake.

Crowd gathers to watch destruction of Marine Lab

By LARAMIE TREVINO
STAFF WRITER

Under a thick blanket of coastal fog, workers from Castroville-based Randazzo Enterprises early yesterday morning began dismantling the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories.

The labs were declared an \$8 million loss after the 1989 earthquake split floors, burst pipes and shifted the building four feet.

As a carpet of debris thickened beneath the Caterpillar tractor crunching through the building, observers jockeyed for vantage points nearby.

Many, like graduate student Frank Roddy, brought cameras.

Officials estimate it will take 10 to 14 days to level the 10,000-square-foot building that served as the oceanographic center for the California State University system.

Within a month, CSU officials anticipate they'll settle on one of five or six Moss Landing properties they're considering for

the new structure, to be built in the next couple of years. Final costs, including the \$200,000 demolition charges, are expected to reach \$6 million, said Melanie Meyer, lab project manager with the CSU chancellor's office. Financial help has been promised by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the state Office of Emergency Services.

Like most of the dozen or so watching the center come down, graduate student Tom Okey recalled the disaster. Even now, many of the 80 or so students enrolled in lab courses haven't caught up with the research timetables set back by the quake, he said. These days, students are spread out among trailers alongside the former lab site and on the satellite campus of San Jose State University in Salinas.

Okey was with six other invertebrate-lab classmates and instructor James Nybakken when the building started shaking, causing light fixtures to swing so hard he thought they'd hit

the ceiling. A "huge jolt" that struck just as the group rose from their seats separated the small classroom building from a larger one and broke the overhead pipes.

"Water was spraying everywhere," Okey said. "There was a lot of noise."

Keeping the waves off the soon-to-be-vacated land is also a concern. Through a cooperative effort spearheaded by the Moss Landing Harbor District, a team of environmental and public agencies will construct a temporary retaining wall of sand. As a formality, harbor officials requested a commitment to construct a dune be included in the demolition contract.

Among those watching the demolition was the harbor master for the district, Craig Winter. But most were spirited students who kept an alert vigil on the happenings.

Soft drink in hand, Roddy headed for a choice spot from which to observe.