**Radion Plume Over Europe**

By Bob Mayberry

The cloud of radioactive materials that floated over Europe on the 22 and 23 of June this year seems to be the end result of the radioactive release from the Eastern Europe that worries European scientists.

News reports followed a familiar scenario. On June 10th, a monitoring station in northern Norway detected low levels of radioactive iodine in the air. On June 17th, the same station reported “higher than usual” levels of fission products, including cesium-134, cesium-137 and ruthenium-103.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) requested more information from its member states, but the source of the radion plume has still not been determined. The map of the radion cloud moving across northern Europe led scientists to speculate that the cloud might have originated in Russia.

The Rosatom State Nuclear Energy Corporation, Russia’s agency responsible for overseeing the development of nuclear reactors, reported no excess radiation levels or incidents at any of its facilities.

This isn’t the first time Russia denied any connection to radiological releases occurring within its borders.

In 2017, a radioactive plume was traced to a nuclear accident at the Russian nuclear weapons complex for plutonium production and uranium fuel reprocessing. Though Russia confirmed that a cloud of radioactivity had been detected over the Ural Mountains, they never acknowledged responsibility for the cloud or admitted a radiation accident had occurred. In 2019, an unexplained explosion took place on Russia’s northern coast at a Navy test range. Scientists speculated it was a reactor that had a weapons accident, but Russia neither confirmed nor denied this. The explosions and fire killed five high-level engineers. Some of the emergency responders that treated the injured workers were sent to Moscow to be treated for radiation sickness.

There’s a history of accidents at the Mayak facility, including the huge release of Sept. 29, 1957 known as the Kyshtym disaster.

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On May 5 the NNSA announced that it would not reemploy its workforce at the facility.

The difference lies chiefly in the continued use of storage facilities without addressing any of the requirements of the law to dispose of the waste.

Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, the NNSA administrator, issued a survey earthquake data. But just three days later, the judge ordered the NNSA to prepare a new environmental impact statement.

The appeal of the nuclear weapons complex at Y-12 and the Pantex facility in Amarillo, Texas, was cited for failing to address long-standing criticality safety deficiencies that could injure workers and release radioactive material within the Oak Ridge facility.

The judge ordered the NNSA to prepare a new record of decision, a component of the contract change will not affect construction of the nuclear weapons complex at Y-12. NNSA has announced, however, that it will not affect construction of the complex.

It’s unlikely that NNSA’s July 17th earthquake risk analysis will be the final word in this on-going legal battle. With NNSA now publicly admitting that safety violations have occurred at Oak Ridge, OREPA and its fellow plaintiffs will be evaluating new legal action to stop the construction.

The debate is partly focused on the financial expense of replacing the German Tornado jet fighters with new H-bomb carriers in a time of multiple global crises.

Dr. Angelika Claussen, a psychiatrist and vice president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, wrote in a July 6 posting that “[A] significant military build-up in times of the coronavirus pandemic is perceived as a scandal by many who no longer wish to participate in the nuclear sharing for reasons of conscience.”

Roland Hipp, a co-director of Greenpeace Germany, in “How Germany makes itself the target of a nuclear attack” published in Welt, June 26, noted that going nuclear is the rule, the exception in Germany. “There are at least 25 of the 30 NATO countries that do not have US nuclear weapons and do not want to participate in nuclear policies.” Hupp wrote.

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GERMANY DEBATES “SHARING” US H-BOMBS

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