

The Nuclear Waste Problem in France

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An opinion poll reveals that 3 habitants of Europe on 4 don't trust nuclear industry speeches.

Nuclear waste is one on the main problems of nuclear industry. It is like a plane flying that does not know how to land.

Up to 1993, countries were dropping nuclear wastes into the sea.

100 000 tonnes were dumped into the sea (80% from UK) until the international agreement in 1993. France was been the last country to sign the agreement.

Nuclear poisoning started in the USA with the Manathan project. River water was used to cool down the the reactor core and radioactive water was directly dumped in the river. 60 years later, 13 of 15 fish tested are radioactive.

In the USSR, Medzedev revealed to the word in 1976 that an accident happened in 1957 in Tchelabink that had been kept secret. It was an explosion involving nuclear waste that was due to a defect in the cooling system. This accident proves that nuclear wastes pollutes and is explosive.

15,000 Km2 were contaminated and **270,000 habitants** exposed without knowing it. They have been and still are considered guinea pigs for nuclear industry.

Still today with 5 tonnes of led covering a truck, it is dangerous to stay close to the lake for more than 3 minutes.

Many tests are made on people and food but not communicated to the people. The industry carries out tests to improve its knowledge of the consequences and use the earth as a laboratory. Authorities say " there is no danger, just don't use the river for agriculture."

As far as we know, there are only negative experiments from nuclear waste management.

They now want us to believe that they can bury nuclear wastes in earth. The new priests of nuclear waste management ask us to believe their religion.

Situation in France

France is a country that, like Japan and UK, that “reprocesses”.

That means the radioactive elements are separated into low, middle, and highly radioactive wastes. These plans are made by a national agency for nuclear wastes called ANDRA .

The French director *Marie-Claude Dupuy*, is at the head of an international committee on nuclear waste management.

Politicians, right or left, are completely incompetent on the matter. They trust what they are told by engineers. They dismissed their responsibility putting their trust in one group of people, that have all attended the same school: “Ecole des Mines”.

They just know nuclear means power (military and political), and proceed without the normal democratic process.

The reprocessing process is in **La Hague**, in the west of France.

4,000 m³ of liquid waste are ejected into the sea every day as well as 10 000Bq/l into the air.

The authorized level of dumping into the environment creates a state of permanent accident. In one year it’s more than 500 nuclear war tests!

All calculations on maximum radioactivity allowed to be released without consequences on health are based on Hiroshima models. This means that all safety limits on radioactivity are unsuitable.

The separation of radioactive elements creates a bigger quantity of wastes:

4% of the volume contains 99% of the radioactivity that is dangerous for several hundred thousands years. They want to bury these wastes in deep ground storage in the East of France, in **Bure**, in 2025.

For the highly radioactive wastes, they determinate a 250 km² zone, where they want to dig galleries 500 m underground, and put little parcels of radioactive wastes, spaced enough to not produce explosion.

It is intended that the others 96% will be stored in central facilities or be sold to Russia.

There is a storage place in **Soulaines** (100 KM from Reims, Champagne). The site was supposed to only take low radioactive wastes with a short life time in such a way that it could go back to the initial nature in 300 years.

Because they are compacting the barrels, there is radioactive gas rejected in the environment, and we now there is 12 Kg of plutonium (that is dangerous for 240,000 years!) stored in Soulaines.

L'ANDRA is selling this Soulaines technology to Lithuania.

They now admit having a million m³ of nuclear wastes, and expect 3 million m³ in a few years.

L'ANDRA, will invite other countries to an international meeting in December 2010 in Reims (France, Champagne, 200 kms from Bure).

The big word they use now is "reversibility". It's a concept to try and get politicians and the public to agree to deep burying. It's more sociological than technical. It's based on the idea that if in the future there is a solution to make these wastes less radioactive, they waste could be retrieved.

This theory is just to amuse or abuse people, because the melting of highly radioactive wastes in ceramic, make impossible all possibility of transmutation later on.

Anyway, they keep pushing the date forward when this transmutation could be possible and are now speaking of 2050.

That is why they now have to play with words and are going to change the word "reversibility" by "retrievability".

Véronique Marchandier

Réseau Sortir du nucléaire,

A network of 843 associations, who want to phase out nuclear power

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