



Environmental, Health And Human Rights  
Implications,

Vienna, Austria

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Permanent People's Tribunal

International Medical Commission on Chernobyl  
(IMC)

Foreword

"The most dangerous isotope to escape from the  
bleeding mouth of the reactor  
will never appear on the periodic chemistry scale.

It is "Lie 86".

A lie as global as the accident itself".

Alla Yaroshinskaya

The Chernobyl disaster represents the first large-scale experiment in the management of a nuclear crisis, and it has failed miserably. It has had a social impact unparalleled in human history. People's view of nuclear technology has been changed forever. The accident that scientists were so convinced "could never happen" has marred the lives of millions, and caused the devastation of what

was formerly known as "the bread-basket of the Soviet Union". The scientists were paralyzed into inactivity by their own self-deception. It was as if to admit to the accident was an admission of defeat. The scientific community must now recognize that the human body's response to radionuclide pollution is far more serious than ever imagined by the nuclear industry. We have not developed resistance to natural or man-made radioactivity. Nuclear science has even created new radioactive elements such as Plutonium and Caesium, which had never before existed on the living planet. Significantly when he and fellow scientists witnessed the first ever atomic nuclear test, Robert Oppenheimer realized the destructive nature of the power they had unleashed. Oppenheimer recalls :

"Some of us laughed, some of us cried and some of us fell silent. I was reminded of the words of the Hindu Scriptures: "I am become death, destroyer of worlds".

Those words came back to me on my own day of "nuclear enlightenment", when, together with Ali Hewson and the Irish film crew of Dream Chaser Productions, I travelled deep into the Chernobyl purple zone to document the reality of the world's most radioactive environment. It was as if in 1945 Robert Oppenheimer had had a prophetic vision of the consequences of the world's worst nuclear disaster - the Chernobyl nuclear accident that took place on 26th April 1986 - the day the world changed forever.

The magnitude of the accident has not yet been grasped by the international community. Not only were the predictions of the health effects grossly incorrect, but few are seriously looking at the incalculable damage to the victims. This is not a calamity where people are dying in the streets of towns and villages. It is a tragedy where thousands of families and communities are quietly suffering, their lives constantly disrupted by ill health and personal crises. Worse of all, they are fearful about their futures. Their lives have been corrupted by the nuclear cloud that hangs over them every day. We have entered an era of nuclear violence, a global

sickness of endless destruction. A tragedy that is a stain on human history.

We need to grasp the global nature of its implications. The constant radioactive degradation of our human habitat has to be addressed : ever since Hiroshima and Nagasaki our civilisation has had to face a steady degradation of our habitat as a result of artificially created radiation that has been released into the atmosphere through nuclear testing and nuclear accidents. The world community must respond, and prevent potential and also existing environmental radiation crises. The accident poses a crisis of science, and the trans boundary nature of the consequences must be addressed. If we don't join together and honestly face the disaster, to ensure that it does not occur elsewhere in the world, the whole of humanity will suffer a truly irreparable tragedy. In the words of Einstein

*"The splitting of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking, and thus we drift towards unparalleled catastrophe".*

The principle of learning from mistakes cannot be applied to nuclear reactors. The potential for enormous disaster is too great, and both numbs and defies the imagination. Not only is the technology highly dangerous, but we must take human fallibility into account. If we truly love this planet, we will need to change our nuclear addictive habits.

The report from the Permanent People's Tribunal has come like a breath of fresh air amidst the lies and deception that have surrounded the true consequences of the aftermath of Chernobyl. It bears witness to the victims and gives to them a long awaited acknowledgement of their pain and suffering. This timely report will act as a vital tool to help

us to break the silence and to finally, tell the truth. A truth we owe to those who have suffered and those who have yet to suffer. This report must be

circulated and read by as wide an audience as possible for it has the power to change the minds and hearts of people.

*"Today no task is more pressing and noble, not only for a scientist, but also for any sober-minded individual, than to prevent nuclear insanity",*

Valery Legasov, head of the former Soviet delegation to the IAEA, speaking in 1986. In 1988, no longer able to cope with his realization of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, Valery Legasov committed suicide.

We all live under the shadow of the mushroom cloud as radiation levels affect us all regardless of sex, culture or class. Then let us unite together to resist the nuclear threat and renew our belief in the holiness of the earth and sanctity of all life. In our willingness to protect the earth the reward will be great, for our children will someday inherit the earth in all its mystery and wonder. Let it be so.

Adi Roche Executive Director The Chernobyl Children's Project, Ireland

JUDGEMENT The Tribunal condemns

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA),
- the national commissions for atomic energy and -
- the governments which support and finance them, on behalf of the interests of the nuclear industry for trying to promote nuclear energy, through falsehood, intimidation, and unethical use of money power

- \* for their attempts to suppress all forms of alternative renewable and sustainable sources of energy

- \* for their violation of the most fundamental rights of the victims of nuclear accidents, including their revictimisation, and the arrogant denial of their suffering

- \* for the perseverance of an arrogant attitude of denial of people's suffering, right up to the closing session of the IAEA's last meeting in Vienna, on 12

April 1996

- The International Commission for Radiation Protection (ICRP), whose policy is clearly inspired by the promotion of the nuclear industry, instead of being aimed at the protection of the potential victims.

The Tribunal blames : I

Those in the scientific community who do not stand up, to safeguard the honour of their profession, in the face of pressure from the nucleocrats, and maintain a deafening silence, in spite of strong scientific evidence, regarding the omnicidal nature of the nuclear enterprise.

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