

Re: "The Chernobyl disaster very probably a sabotage" ["no, just same procedure as last year"]

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Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.energy/2007-09/msg00105.html>

- *From:* Bill Ghrist <notmyname@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 18 Sep 2007 20:25:12 GMT
-

Bill Ward wrote:

On Tue, 18 Sep 2007 04:30:32 +0000, Rolf Martens wrote:

In article <[0MFHi.6148\\$A72.3702@trnddc08](mailto:0MFHi.6148$A72.3702@trnddc08)>, notmyname@xxxxxxxxxxxxx says...

Bill Ward wrote:

On Mon, 17 Sep 2007 18:45:57 -0400, daestrom wrote:

"Rolf Martens"
<rolf.martens@xxxxxxxxx>
wrote in message
[news:2UmHi.8954\\$ZA.4705@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:2UmHi.8954$ZA.4705@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

<snip>

What you're saying here is, that what took place at Chernobyl on 26.04.1986 was just "the same procedure as last year". "Such tests, with disabling of several

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safety
systems,
was the rule
in the
Soviet
Union at
that time."

No, very
clearly it
was not
"just the
same
procedure"
– which
would
have been a
pretty risky
thing too,
even
considering
the
well-known
sloppy
procedures
in that
social-imperialist
state at the
time.

...

Thanks, daestrom, for another incredibly
interesting and informative
post.

When do you think was the last point of safe
return? It seems like
once the rods were pulled outside the design
limits, there was no way
out. Was there any way to shut down the
reactor other than suddenly
reinserting the control rods? Could a slower
insertion rate (before
the final power transient) have recovered
from the situation?

The point of no return was probably when they tripped the
second turbine

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for the test (the unit had two turbine generators). At that point the steam pressure started rising and the water flow started decreasing (because half of the water pumps operated off of the turbine that just tripped). The displacement of water in the reactor by steam caused a rapid rise in reactivity due to the positive void coefficient (steam absorbs fewer neutrons than liquid water). The power increased from 200 Mw to 530 Mw in less than three seconds. The operator responded by scrambling the reactor, but that just initiated a greater excursion for the reasons explained by daestrom.

I on my part am pretty certain that the point of no return was not one reached on account of any technical matter but on account of a political one, on account of some crooks' – and I've indicated as main suspects approximately the same as the French–language very well–informed blogger I quoted did too: The Gorbachov group and/or some of its US imperialist friends – deciding: "Let's pull it!".

See that "UNITE! Info #258en" of mine about the political context, and also the French–language blog "le petrole abiotique", article of 11.09.2007.

I've found daestrom to be an entirely credible source, and his explanation seems completely plausible to me, so how do you think "they" did it?

The only open question I can think of is, "Why did they decide to run the test after the delay?" Were they unaware of the Xe poisoning?

I generally don't assume malevolence when simple incompetence will suffice, but I wonder if their operator training was really that bad? The Xe effect seems pretty basic. I'd speculate they just wanted to get the test over and done with, then pushed past the physical limits. Pilots call that "get–home–itis", and it's a contributing factor in many aviation accidents.

Explanations given for why they decided to go ahead with the test include:

Because the test was scheduled to be carried out just before a planned shutdown for routine maintenance, the operators were under extra pressure. If the test could not be performed successfully this time, then they would have to wait another year for the next shutdown.

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The test was perceived as an electrical test only and had been conducted uneventfully before. Thus the operators did not think carefully enough about the effects on the reactor. There is reportedly a strong possibility that the test was being supervised by representatives of the turbine manufacturer instead of the normal operators.

Bill Ghrist

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