

CHERNOBYL

COUNTRY: USSR
SUBJ: TAKE 1 OF 2 -- MORE GLASHOST ON CHERNOBYL CLEANUP URGED

SOURCE: MOSCOW KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAUDA IN RUSSIAN 14 FEB 89 P 4
TEXT:

//((OWN CORRESPONDENT D. YEGOROVA ARTICLE UNDER THE GENERAL HEADING "ECOLOGY: DANGER ZONES": "OPEN UP YOUR MAPS"))

((TEXT)) MINSK -- I AM NOT EXAGGERATING: PEOPLE IN THE REPUBLIC HAD BEEN WAITING FOR THIS PRESS CONFERENCE FOR ALMOST 3 YEARS. ONE OF THE JOURNALISTS EVEN CALCULATED IT PRECISELY: 1,000 DAYS!

BUT WHAT KIND OF CAN OF WORMS HAVE WE OPENED TOGETHER? THE MARATHON OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CONTINUED FOR ALMOST A WHOLE WORKING SHIFT -- 7 STORMY HOURS IN SUCCESSION. BUT THE MEMBERS OF THE REPUBLIC GOVERNMENT COMMISSION TO ELIMINATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT ON BELORUSSIAN TERRITORY COULD NOT ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS. INCIDENTALLY, BY NO MEANS ALL THE QUESTIONS WERE ASKED, OF COURSE. NO EXPERIENCE, NO TRADITION IS IN SUCH GREAT NEED TODAY AS DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE AUTHORITIES AND THE PUBLIC. ALTHOUGH ON THAT DAY EVERYONE AGREED ON ONE THING: THAT SUCH MEETINGS ARE ESSENTIAL AND VITALLY IMPORTANT. QUESTIONS HAD ACCUMULATED OVER THESE 1,000 DAYS AS IF IN GEOMETRIC PROGRESSION, BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF INFORMATION.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE, BUT WE WERE NOT FULLY AWARE EVEN OF WHAT HAS BEEN OR IS BEING DONE TO ELIMINATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ACCIDENT FOR PEOPLE EVACUATED FROM THE 30KM ZONE AND FOR THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO LIVE IN ZONES WHICH ARE CONSTANTLY AND PERIODICALLY MONITORED. WE DID NOT KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE TOTAL RESOURCES ALLOTTED TO ELIMINATE THE ACCIDENT FOR THIS YEAR ALONE IS R243 MILLION IN STATE, CENTRALIZED CAPITAL INVESTMENTS, WITH THE NECESSARY MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES. WE DID NOT KNOW THAT OVER 4 YEARS THIS SUM AMOUNTS TO ABOUT R1.15 BILLION. THAT BESIDES THE INSTITUTE OF RADIOBIOLOGY, ANOTHER 19 (!) ACADEMIC INSTITUTES ARE DEALING WITH THESE PROBLEMS IN THE REPUBLIC. WE DID NOT KNOW THAT MORE THAN 520,000 PEOPLE LIVING IN THE REPUBLIC WERE SUBJECTED TO VARYING DEGREES OF CONTAMINATION BY RADIONUCLIDES. AND THERE IS MUCH ELSE THAT WE DID NOT AND DO NOT KNOW... AT BEST THE INFORMATION WAS LATE. THIS PRESS CONFERENCE IS CONFIRMATION OF

THIS.

I AM CONVINCED THAT THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY SHOULD BE BLAMED, NOT ONLY THE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION MEMBERS FOR THE INCOMPLETENESS OF THE INFORMATION CONCERNING BELORUSSIA'S CONTAMINATION BY RADIONUCLIDES. FOR DECADES WE HAVE GROWN TOO ACCUSTOMED TO GOING WITH THE STREAM -- SOMEONE WILL THINK FOR US, SOMEONE WILL CORRECT US. IT IS A SHORT STEP FROM LACK OF INFORMATION TO INCOMPETENCE, AND THERE IS ALREADY A GREAT DEAL OF IRRESPONSIBILITY. HAVEN'T THERE BEEN A GREAT NUMBER OF CONFIRMATIONS OF THIS IN RECENT YEARS?

IT IS AS IMPORTANT TO BE WELL-INFORMED IN MODERN SOCIETY AS IT IS TO BE LITERATE. THIS IS THE CULTURAL STANDARD, THE STANDARD OF THE PEOPLE'S MORALS. HOW, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN THE FACT BE EXPLAINED THAT IN CERTAIN VILLAGES WHERE IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LIVE, NONETHELESS PEOPLE LIVE THERE VOLUNTARILY, SO-CALLED "SELFSETTLERS" ABOUT WHOM JOURNALISTS HAVE RECENTLY STARTED TO WRITE? BUT IS IT RIGHT TO COMPARE SOMETHING TERRIBLE -- RADIATION -- WITH SOMETHING SACRED -- THE MOTHERLAND. IS IT RIGHT THAT EVEN ONE PERSON, JUST ONE CHILD SHOULD TODAY CALL HIMSELF A "SELFSETTLER," SUBJECTING HIMSELF TO UNFORESEEN DANGERS FOR GOODNESS KNOWS HOW LONG? DO WE SENSE OUR COLLECTIVE GUILT ON THIS QUESTION?

I THINK THAT THERE IS ONE REASON -- THE ABSENCE OF GLASNOST TRADITIONS. BUT TELL ME WHERE YOU CAN BUY A BOOK EXPLAINING RADIATION IN MINSK TODAY -- NOT TO MENTION IN THE POLESYE VILLAGES, FOR WHOSE INHABITANTS SUCH LITERATURE MUST BE AN ABC AND MANUAL ON HOW TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES ON A DAILY BASIS.

(MORE) 14 FEB HD/BENNETT/JA 15/13032 FEB

BT

COUNTRY: USSR

SUBJ: TAKE 2 OF 2 -- MORE GLASNOST ON CHERNOBYL CLEANUP URGED

REF: PM1502123989 MOSCOW KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA RUSSIAN 14
FEB///A DAILY BASIS.

TEXT:

((TEXT)) WE PUBLISH OR HAVE PUBLISHED MOUNTAINS OF PULP LITERATURE OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS -- AND NOT A SINGLE BOOK ON THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT PUBLISHED ON A MASS SCALE ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE. OR: WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE MOST ELEMENTARY POCKET MONITOR? I AM NOT ASKING ON DAY 3 AFTER THE ACCIDENT BUT IN THE 30 YEAR. THERE IS NO ANSWER. BUT THEN THERE ARE RUMORS WHICH ARE SIMPLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE. THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, THE BELORUSSIAN GOVERNMENT REFUSED HELP FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH THE REPUBLIC SUFFERED NO LESS THAN THE UKRAINE. AND THAT, IMAGINE, IN OUR REPUBLIC AN AGREEMENT WAS ALLEGEDLY GIVEN TO BURY THE AES' RADIOACTIVE WASTE! SUCH RUMORS ARE THE RESULT OF THIS SAME LACK OF INFORMATION.

IN MY VIEW, THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN MINSK IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP IN REALIZING THE ENTIRE SET OF PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH THE CHERNOBYL CATASTROPHE, WITH INTERPRETING THE LESSONS OF ITS CONSEQUENCES. BUT IT HAS BEEN TAKEN, ALBEIT RATHER LATE, BUT NONETHELESS IT HAS BEEN TAKEN.

A FEW DAYS AGO MAPS WERE PUBLISHED IN THE REPUBLIC NEWSPAPERS WHICH DOCUMENT THE RADIATION SITUATION FOR JANUARY THIS YEAR. ARE THERE GUARANTEES THAT THEY, THESE DOCUMENTS, THESE MAPS, THESE INTERPRETATIONS, WILL CONTINUE TO BE PUBLISHED? IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, AND APRIL... ARE WE ALL SUFFICIENTLY OPEN AND DO WE HAVE ENOUGH SENSE, HONESTY, AND ETHICS, WILL WE BE ABLE TO MAKE THIS INFORMATION EVERYONE'S PROPERTY TOMORROW AND THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW?

THIS IS WHY I AM WRITING, AND WHY I WANT TO MAKE THIS DOCUMENT PUBLIC FOR EVERYONE, BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL. IT CANNOT BE OTHERWISE IN OUR TIMES. IT IS EVERYBODY'S MISFORTUNE, IT IS EVERYONE'S DUTY.

((THE ARTICLE IS ACCOMPANIED BY A MAP AND A FOOTNOTE READING:
"THE MAP SHOWS THE RADIATION SITUATION FOR JANUARY 1989.

"THE SYMBOLS: 1. CONSTANTLY MONITORED ZONE. 2. PERIODICALLY MONITORED ZONE. 3. EVACUATION ZONE. 4. EXCLUSION ZONE." -- FBIS))

(ENDALL) 14 FEB HD/BENNETT/JA 15/1305Z FEB