

Navy Dumped Thousands of Tons of Radioactive Waste Into the Atlantic Ocean

By [Washington's Blog](#)

Theme: [Environment](#)

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[U.S., Russia, Japan and Other Countries Have All Polluted the Oceans With Radiation](#)

The Tampa Bay Times [reports](#):

For up to 15 years after World War II, the crew of Albernaz's ship, the USS Calhoun County, dumped thousands of tons of radioactive waste into the Atlantic Ocean, often without heeding the simplest health precautions, according to Navy documents and Tampa Bay Times interviews with more than 50 former crewmen.

Albernaz began a battle for his life in 1988 when part of his brain began to die, mystifying doctors who eventually concluded the rare ailment might be linked to radiation. He filed a VA claim for benefits in 2001 that was repeatedly rejected, often with tortured government reasoning.

The VA and Navy told Albernaz he was not exposed to radiation on the Calhoun County, a vessel the Navy ordered sunk in 1963 because it was radioactive.

In order to make sure the waste-containing drums sank, the sailors would sometimes shoot them with rifles:

Not all of them sank. A few pushed back against the frothing ocean, bobbing in the waves like a drowning man. Then shots would ring out from a sailor with a rifle at the fantail. And the sea would claim the bullet-riddled drum.

The U.S. isn't the only country that has dumped mass quantities of radiation into the ocean:

- The International Atomic Energy Agency notes that [13 countries used ocean dumping to "dispose" of radioactive waste between 1946 and 1993](#)
- Russia dumped [19 radioactive ships plus 14 nuclear reactors](#) into the ocean
- *Numerous* above-ground nuclear weapons tests were conducted in the oceans:

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