

US Neglects the Safety of Nuclear Power Plants in Europe

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Nuclear power is now going through a difficult time and the world community is becoming more and more concerned by it. After the tragic events of 1986 at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, as well as at the Fukushima-1 nuclear power plant (where an anthropogenic accident occurred in 2011 due to an earthquake and tsunami), the safety of the operation of nuclear power plants in all countries has been receiving increasingly more attention. The European Union even convened an emergency meeting in Brussels to discuss the safety standards for nuclear reactors operating on the European continent.

According to a study by the European Commission, nuclear power generates 27% of electricity in the EU. According to the European Nuclear Society (ENS), about 200 nuclear power units are currently operating or are being constructed in Europe. Strict monitoring measures are applied to all operating and developing NPPs not only from the countries that build these facilities, but also from international organizations.

Unfortunately, despite these measures, today information campaigns conducted by individual countries against the use of nuclear power plants often appear and are clearly aimed not at strengthening security measures in the nuclear energy sector, but at narrowly self-serving politicized goals.

A striking example of this, in particular, is the campaign launched by Lithuania against the construction of the Ostrovets nuclear power plant in Belarus. The main reason for the campaign is the desire of the Lithuanian conservatives to please Washington by using anti-Russian sentiments to reduce the influence of Russia and its closest ally, Belarus, in the European energy market. It's no secret that Lithuania itself wanted to build its own nuclear power plant in Visaginas with the help of Japanese and American corporations. For a long time, Lithuania expected that the project would include its neighbors – Latvia, Estonia and Poland, but the funds for the implementation of this project were lacking.

It is noteworthy in this respect that, while artificially inflating the 'Russian threat' in the field of nuclear power, many European states prefer to keep silent about the real danger for Europe which stems from the actions of the United States in this sphere.

In 2012, the head of the US Department of State Hillary Clinton went to the Czech Republic, where she heavily lobbied the US company Westinghouse as a potential builder and operator of two new reactors at the Temelin NPP. After the deal with the Czechs (with active assistance of Washington), Westinghouse signed a contract with the Bulgarian government to build a new AP1000 reactor at the nuclear power plant in Kozloduy. In 2014, Kiev signed an agreement on the replacement of usual Russian fuel in Ukrainian nuclear power plants

with US analogues produced by Westinghouse.

Striving to ensure the priority for US companies in the European energy market, Washington does not always do the right thing on the international arena. The US acts at the expense of European security, which is fraught with a nuclear catastrophe.

A few days ago a serious breakdown took place at the South-Ukrainian NPP. In the course of the new accident, one of the power units of the nuclear power plant was shut down. The fuel elements provided by Westinghouse, which are different from those manufactured in Russia, were loaded into the disconnected power unit of the South Ukrainian NPP, built according to USSR regulations and designed exclusively for Russian fuel standards. Westinghouse products are now used not only at the two power units of the South-Ukrainian NPP, but also at the Zaporizhia NPP.

Ukrainian nuclear power plants are not going through their best period of development and are already working on the brink of their capabilities. The question of their repair and modernization in Kiev has yet to be discussed. The nuclear industry in Ukraine is in a dangerous state, and the risk of an incident like the Chernobyl tragedy is much higher than is commonly believed, the Washington Times reported.

'This is bigger than just Ukraine alone. The future of Europe is at stake,' the newspaper [states](#).

However, even the prospect of a Chernobyl-like tragedy does not serve to make the Ukrainian leadership wary of its actions.

In accordance with the political course of the Ukrainian government dictated by Washington, Kiev renounces Russian nuclear fuel, for which all the nuclear power plants that Ukraine currently uses are designed. Ukrainian NPPs are not meant for other types of fuel, and such "experiments" are fraught with certain consequences and emergency situations – this is what obviously caused the emergency situation at the nuclear power plant which provides energy to the Odessa, Kherson and Nikolayev regions.

We remind the reader that the first "experiment" of this kind on the transfer of fuel from the Russian to Westinghouse was delivered to the Czech nuclear power plant Temelin, which, like Ukrainian NPPs, was developed according to Soviet technical regulations. After the American fuel rods started "leaking" inside the reactor, careful Czechs realized that, rather than facing the prospect of getting a second Chernobyl 22 kilometers from the city of České Budějovice, it would be prudent to abandon Washington's nuclear fuel. However, this incident did not have a sobering effect on the Ukrainian authorities and they decided to continue the suicidal "experiment" at the Ukrainian nuclear power plants with fuel from Westinghouse on the 'advice' from Washington.

At the same time, we should not forget that while unsuccessfully trying to compete with the enterprises of the Russian Federation, Westinghouse has repeatedly been associated with various accidents and scandals – its fuel has proven to be unreliable and even dangerous. To prevent a tragedy that may be caused by the use of American fuel elements (technically incompatible with the stations previously built by the USSR), representatives of the Russian nuclear industry have repeatedly suggested creating a special group for the IAEA, but these

steps were blocked by the US.

Forbes wrote about the way Washington is promoting Westinghouse's business interests in Eastern Europe, creating risks to the safety of nuclear power [plants](#). The publication describes how the actions of Washington deceive countries that have decided to participate in joint projects with Westinghouse under the pretext of reducing energy dependence on Russia. In particular, Forbes says that there has already been a depressurization of US fuel cartridges in the reactor of the third power unit of the South-Ukrainian NPP, where nuclear fuel from the American-Japanese company Westinghouse has been used since 2015.

"Westinghouse is more than a brand name American power company. It's a battering ram used by Washington to promote energy security," Forbes [writes](#).

The source of the publication, who preferred to remain anonymous, claimed that Westinghouse is seeking to get a share in the fuel services market in Eastern Europe, since this is the only way to prevent the bankruptcy of this company.

And in March, the Westinghouse Electric Corporation filed for [bankruptcy](#) because of losses reaching almost \$ 7 billion.

Now that the American nuclear brand has lost its former glory, Ukraine, in fact, remains one on one with reactors rendered useless by unsuitable fuel. And, given the concern of the West with the unprecedented level of corruption in Kiev, no one will take the risk of allocating money for the security "in the center of Europe". And without this, Forbes [notes](#), a 'second Chernobyl' is becoming a viable terrifying possibly not only for the nearest countries neighboring Ukraine, but also for Europe as a whole, thanks to the toxic presence of the legacy of the American administration. And if not the fate of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, where fuel was thrown out during the explosion, the scenario of the Three Mile Island NPP in Pennsylvania, where the active zone of the reactor melted and will remain in this state forever, is predicted by a number of experts.

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