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## [ Dirty bomb could explode in Russia

Today's PRAVDA.Ru guest is Lidia Popova, director of Nuclear Ecology and Energy Policy Centre of Social-Ecological Union. In 1969 Lidia Popova graduated from physical faculty of Lomonosov Moscow State University and started to work for Institute of Information and Technical and Economical Research on Atom Science and Technics. She occupied herself with analysis and planning of nuclear fuel cycle in the USSR. At the same time, Lidia Popova studied problem questions of atom energy through foreign sources. She was mostly impressed by a US specialist's book "Poisoned Energy. Though, Lidia Popova understood that it was impossible to turn the nuclear complex to solving the issue of nuclear waste and effectively solve other nuclear problems, so she accepted the invitation of Maria Cherkasova and Svyatoslav Zabelin, the leaders of the Centre of Nuclear Ecology and Ecological Policy and joined them as co-ordinator of the programme on alternative energy. PRAVDA.Ru has asked Lidia Popova several questions.

**Question.** Everybody speaks about nuclear security. Though, let us clear up what it is? What does this notion include?

Answer. Nuclear security means non-admission such circumstances when a spontaneous chain reaction is possible. Though, there is also the notion of radioactive security. It is being defined in the Law about Radioactive Security of the Population: [Radioactive security of the population is a state when today's and future generations of people are protected from harmful influence of ionizing radiation upon their health. On one hand, this is a good definition, because it takes into account interests of the future generations. On the other hand, it leaves too much for today, because protectability from harmful influence of ionizing radiation upon human health is mentioned.

With development of science develops, we start better to understand our environment, and what is now considered to be harmless, tomorrow could suddenly become harmful. Recently, too many works appeared, devoted to small doses of radiation. From these publications, one could conclude that long influence of small doses could cause much more serious consequences, than a single big-dose radiation. While speaking about radiation security, one usually means a human being. Though, environment also react to ionizing radiation.

Ecological scientists from the city of Tomsk found out that radioactive pollution of an area causes disappearance of some species. The question is about some kinds of plants and animals which are too small and their disappearance cannot be noticed at once. Though, everything is connected in nature. So, man-caused changes injures natural balance.

Geneticists have a term [genetic instability. Radiation's influence (for example, after a nuclear explosion) causes breakage of genetic apparatus. In a time, these breakage disappears and the wounds seem to be cured (at least in the case of test mice). Though, in 40 generations, some changes in genetic apparatus appear again. According to the scientists, this is not a normal situation, so consequences could be very serious.

**Q. When, actually, did people understand that splitting of atom is not such a harmless thing, if even this is done for peaceful aims? After the Kyshtym catastrophe, people many dozens of years lived (and I suppose, still live) in polluted territories. They simply did not know that it is dangerous to live there. In the USSR, [nuclear problem was a secret.**

A. People did not at once understand that radiation was dangerous for human life. A classical case is known. In a country, workers of a clock factory put radium on clock deal (to make them shining in the dark). They did it with a usual paint brush and licked the brush to do it more accurately. As a result, they died of tongue cancer. This case, as well as some other, made scientists study radiation influence upon human health. So, radiobiology and dosimetry appeared. After Kyshtym catastrophe, people really did not know that they lived in polluted areas. They learned it only in the late 80s, in 30 years after the Kyshtym catastrophe. Though, it does not mean that these people have no troubles with health. There are cases of negative influence of radiation upon the third or fourth generation after the accident. So, now the court makes Mayak Plutonium work pay compensation.

**Q. You are the director of the Centre of Nuclear Ecology and Energy Policy. Tell us, please, about the Centre's work and about its tasks.**

A. The task of our centre is information assistance in ecological movement, especially as concerned nuclear fuel cycle, production of fissile materials and other nuclear-radiation issues. We also co-operate with other ecology organizations in the field of energy policy, while offering some alternative decisions for today's expensive and not fully effective nuclear energy. Moreover, we consider questions of energy together with politics in the field of changing climate, because in our view all these issues are connected with each other.

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We issue an information bulletin *Energetika i Okruzhayushchaya Sreda* (Energy and Environment). We have translated and published several foreign books and wrote a common book together with experts *Plutonium in Russia*. Its second edition is being prepared. We also write some articles and publish them in other editions. We carry out daily training called [Stable Energy. Moreover, we co-operated with previous State Duma Committee on Ecology. We try to deliver information we possess to people who personally takes important decisions. I two times was a member of Commission on State Ecological Examination which passes bills on nuclear waste import in Russia. Of course, I voted against it.

#### Q. Which problems in nuclear sphere should be solved immediately and which could be postponed?

A. First of all, we should solve the problem of out-of-exploitation atom submarines, the problem of nuclear fuel collected in Russian atom power stations, problem of radioactive pollution from Mayak Plutonium work, problem of open settling tanks in the cities of Seversk and Zheleznogorsk. We should stop burying fluid radioactive waste in the cities of Zheleznogorsk, Seversk and Dimitrovgrad. These territories should be regarded as reservations, where it should be forbidden to live.

**Q. There were many discussions about nuclear waste import to Russia. The opponents of this idea stated that we were creating a danger for the future generations' health, while its supporters explained economical benefit from this bargain: as if we could solve our ecological issues with these means. What is your opinion?**

A. This project will cause many troubles for our future generations. This is a lie that we should beforehand gather with us this [costly strategic stuff. It is not known when that technologies will be created - if this will be at all allowing to turn nuclear waste as row materials. So far, that are dangerous waste, and it should be regarded in this way. Future generations could face the issue of leakage of dangerous radionuclides to environment. Actually, this is dangerous to speak about future in connection with isotopes, whose half-value period makes dozens or even hundreds of years. The future generations will probably speak another language, so they hardly will understand our instructions. As for solving ecological problems, for burying 20 tons of nuclear waste, 7 billion dollars will be apportioned. The US has already spent about 60 billion for refinement of its polluted territory. Americans concluded that the refinement does not work from physical reasons: the area will be clean only after radionuclides are split. The radioactive pollution could be gathered and carried to another area, though it cannot be annihilated physically. As for pollution of subsoil waters and surface reservoirs, this problem cannot be solved at all.

**Q. Russia has enough atom problems besides foreign nuclear waste. For example the issue of Karachai lake in Chelyabinsk Region. Does anybody know how to settle it?**

A. They try to fill up Karachai lake to avoid repeating the 1967 catastrophe, when hurricane spread the pollution over dozens of kilometres. Though, what to do with underground radioactive lens?

**Q. Actually, should we build or, wise versa, close atom power stations?**

A. We cannot close them immediately, though to build atom power stations according to already existing designs is an economical gamble. Even the Atom Power Ministry admits that so-called light-weight reactors use nuclear fuel not effectively: only 1 percent of uranium is being burned in such reactors.

**Q. What could you say about atom energy from economical point of view?**

A. Atom power stations are very capital-intensive constructions. To build an energy block of 1,000 megawatt power with one reactor, 1 billion dollars should be spent. Moreover, exploitation of atom power station is also very expensive.

**Q. According to some experts, there is no alternative to atom power station in the nearest future**

A. It sounds like a spell. In Russia, there is the main alternative the great up to 40 percent potential of energy-saving. This is a real energy resource. Though, to use it, we should change our mentality and the whole culture of production and consume.

**Q. Now, about the most actual problem. There were publications reporting that terrorist were ready to use so-called [dirty bombs. Is it possible? Could something like that take place in Russia?**

A. I suppose, it could. The effect, of course, cannot be compared with that one caused by atom bomb, though this hardly could comfort the possible victims. Moreover, such explosions could change psychology of the society, [collective psychics will be injured.

**Q. What should society and authorities do to avert at least the most serious nuclear menaces?**

A. Society should change its culture and start with honour consider human person, while authorities should learn to speak with people without cynicism.

Ligia Popova was interviewed by Andrei Lubensky  
PRAVDA.ru

Translated by Vera Solovieva

Read the original in Russian: <http://pravda.ru/main/2002/06/21/42990.html>

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### A nuclear waste burial to be built in Novaya Zemlya

The Russian Nuclear Energy Ministry has taken a decision to build a nuclear waste burial in Novaya Zemlya. The project will cost 70 million dollars. [More details...](#)

19:33

### Investors from EU Countries Supply More than Half of Investment into Sverdlovsk Region

Yuri Osintsev, the Minister of International and External Economic Links of the Sverdlovsk Region, took part today in a meeting between European regional associations and centres of international trade in Ekaterinburg. As announced by the press-service of the Ministry of International and External Economic Links of the Sverdlovsk Region, the main theme of the minister's speech was collaboration with the European Union. [More details...](#)

18:32

### Petersburg Economic Forum defines directions of integration into international community

The Petersburg Economic Forum, which completed its work on Friday, has determined the most rational trends in the joint integration of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) into the international economic community with the help of the World Trade Organisation and other international, including financial, organisations. [More details...](#)

17:52

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16:46

### Deputy economy minister comments on energy sector problems

The volume of RAO UES's investment program for 2003 will amount to between 20bn and 45bn rubles (about \$637m-1.43bn) compared to 20bn rubles (\$637m) in 2002, Andrey Sharonov, deputy economy minister, told journalists today. [More details...](#)

15:48

### Russia plans to collaborate with OPEC

Russia plans to improve collaboration with the Oil Producing and Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other independent oil producers, Aleksei Aleksandrov, spokesman for the Russian Energy Ministry, said at the meeting of the expert group of the OPEC and other independent oil producers in Vienna today. [More details...](#)

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13:18

## Danish Businesses Soon to Increase Investment into Russia's Northwest

Danish businesses intend to increase the volume of investment into the economy of northwest Russia in the near future. This was announced today by representatives of the Danish Manufacturers' Confederation at a meeting with the delegation of the Northwest Federal District, led by the Plenipotentiary of the President of the Russian Federation in the Northwest Federal District, Victor Cherkosov. [More details...](#)

12:26

## Russia's share in global arms exports market amounts to about 12%

On Thursday, deputy chairman of the Russian committee on military technological cooperation Yuri Khozyainov stated that Russia's share in the global weapons export market amounted to about 12 percent. [More details...](#)

19:09

## Russia wants reinvigoration of EEC work

Russia is interested in further reinvigoration and higher efficiency of work of the European Economic Commission. The Press and Information Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry reports that this opinion was voiced at a meeting on Thursday between Yuri Fedotov, deputy chief of the Russian foreign policy establishment, and the United Nations deputy secretary general Brigita Schmoegnerova, executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe, who is now on a working visit in Russia. [More details...](#)

18:43

## Russia, Denmark Will Cooperate in 20 Environmental Projects

Vitaly Artyukhov, the Minister of Natural Resources of Russia, met today with Hans Christian Schmidt, the Minister of Environment of Denmark. According to the press service of the Ministry of Natural Resources, discussed was the possible further cooperation between the two countries under the 1993 bilateral agreement as concerned environmental protection. [More details...](#)

17:49

## Deputy PM comments on legalization of exported capitals

The Russian government is not elaborating on any legislative initiatives concerning the legalization of exported capitals, Alexey Kudrin, Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister, told journalists today. He added that the legalization of capitals "may be carried out under certain conditions". [More details...](#)

17:43

## Financial Monitoring Committee starts forming regional departments

The Financial Monitoring Committee starts forming its regional departments in Federation subjects, Committee's head Victor Zubkov, who will take part in the St.Petersburg economic forum, reported. [More details...](#)

17:37

## Russia pens budget policy priorities until 2005

At a sitting on Thursday the Russian cabinet set the top priorities of the budget policy for a period until 2005 and will continue to discuss them at the next get-together, Russian Vice-Premier and Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin has said to reporters. [More details...](#)

16:47

## Gref reports deficit in natural gas supplies to Russian domestic market

Economic Development and Trade Minister of the Russian Federation German Gref pointed to the appearance of deficit in natural gas supplies to Russia's domestic market. He reported in an interview with journalists after a government session that the situation with Russia's fuel balance was "rather complicated." [More details...](#)

15:57

## European Bank For Reconstruction and Development to Invest USD 1 Billion in Russia's Economy

Jean Lemier, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) said the bank intended to invest USD 1 billion in Russia's economy over the year 2002. Mr. Lemier said this while speaking before the participants of the economic forum underway in St. Petersburg. [More details...](#)

15:55

## German Steel Makers Get Serious about Russia

German steel makers are getting serious about Russia. According to Michael Hanisch, the President of Germany's SMS Demag AG, who is now taking parting the economic forum in St. Petersburg, his company intends to build a large steel mill in the Urals to produce large diameter pipes. [More details...](#)

15:39

## Russia's Entry into WTO in Final Stages of Discussion

'The issue of Russia's entry into the World Trade Organisation is currently in the final stages of discussion', says General Director of the WTO, Mike Mur. He spoke of this on Wednesday, June 19, during his speech at the sixth St. Petersburg Economic Forum. [More details...](#)

13:45

## OPEC hopes Russia will keep oil exports cut



The OPEC still hopes that Russia will keep crude oil exports to the world markets cut at least for the third quarter of the current year, said a high-ranking source in the OPEC headquarters in Vienna. [More details...](#)

19:50

### **Russian Cabinet bridles natural monopolies to keep tariffs down**

Russia's Cabinet is determined to drastically limit natural monopoly tariff-rise demands this and next year, say papers drafted by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade for tomorrow's Cabinet session, to be chaired by Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov. [More details...](#)

19:19

### **Russian cabinet to check country's forecast mid-term development indices**

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov has instructed the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in association with Russian entrepreneurs to check the country's forecast mid-term social and economic development indices. The premier said this at a press conference. [More details...](#)

18:17

### **EBRD has invested twelve billion dollars in economy of CIS countries in the past ten years**

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has invested its own twelve billion dollars in the economy of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in the past ten years. The bank's president Jean Lemierre spoke about it at the Petersburg Economic Forum which opened on Wednesday. [More details...](#)

15:31

### **French companies intend to intensify presence on Russian services market**

French companies intend to build up their presence on the Russian services market, said Francois Perigot, head of a representative delegation of French businessmen who are currently in Moscow, in reply to RIA Novosti question. [More details...](#)

15:27

### **Political decisions are needed for synchronizing electricity systems of East and West**

Synchronization of the electricity systems of the East and the West is a technical question but political decisions are needed for deciding it. In this way chairman of the Board of RAO EES Rossii Anatoly Chubais commented to journalists on the purpose of his conversations in Brussels with high-placed representatives of the European Commission and with president of the Union for the Coordination of Transmission of Electricity (UCTE) Martin Fuchs. [More details...](#)

14:15

### **FATF: It is too early to exclude Russia from the black list**

The Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, or the FATF, which has gathered for a session in Paris shall not discuss the possibility of excluding Russia from the FATF black list, reports the financial publication Le Figaro Economie, citing the words of the FATF vice president. [More details...](#)

13:28

### **Russian Premier: Russia's economy is coming out of the inflation and stagnation**

Russia's Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov believes that next year, provided inflation continues to drop, Russia will be able to get out of the "inflation and stagnation period." [More details...](#)

12:36

### **6th Petersburg Forum opens in St. Petersburg**

The 6th Petersburg Economic Forum opens in St. Petersburg on Wednesday. It is expected that the forum will gather Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, Vice Premier Alexei Kudrin, Chairman of the Board of RAO Russia's Unified Energy Systems Anatoly Chubais, Chairman of the Audit Chamber Sergei Stepashin, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Jean Lemierre, Director-General of the World Trade Organization Michael Moore, Chairman of Russia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry Yevgeny Primakov, and Minister of Economic Development and Trade German Gref. [More details...](#)

11:05

### **IMF : US more, EU less**

According to the International Monetary Fund, the Eurozone countries are forecast to register a slower growth rate than expected, while the US economy is set to see a faster recovery than had at first been predicted in the year 2002. [More details...](#)

19:41

### **Official forecasts consequences of IAS for Russian banks**

The transfer of Russian banks to International Accounting Standards (IAS) starting in 2004 would activate their takeovers by foreign competitors, Alexander Mamut, head of the task group for the financial and stock market in the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, forecasted at a meeting with a French delegation of businessmen, MEDEF, today. [More details...](#)

19:27

### **International Cooperation in Innovational Entrepreneurship Forum to be Held**

**in Moscow, June 26 through 28**

According to Andrei Tsygankov, a Deputy Minister of Anti-Trust Policies of the Russian Federation, the *International Cooperation in Innovational Entrepreneurship* forum will be held in Moscow, June 26 through 28. [More details...](#)

**18:40****Russia misused IBRD credit**

The Russian Audit Chamber sees as "extremely unsatisfactory" the use of resources given to finance the enterprise support project through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development /World Bank/. [More details...](#)

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