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## **Blasting Into Our Lives - The Three Mile Island Explosion Cover-Up: TV, Myth, and Reality**

By Robert A. Leishear, PhD

Continuing explosion dangers at nuclear power plants threaten us. An ongoing government cover-up has been so effective that the Press and experienced engineers extol different fictional accounts against each other. More than 40 years later, different fictions bury Three Mile Island explosions.

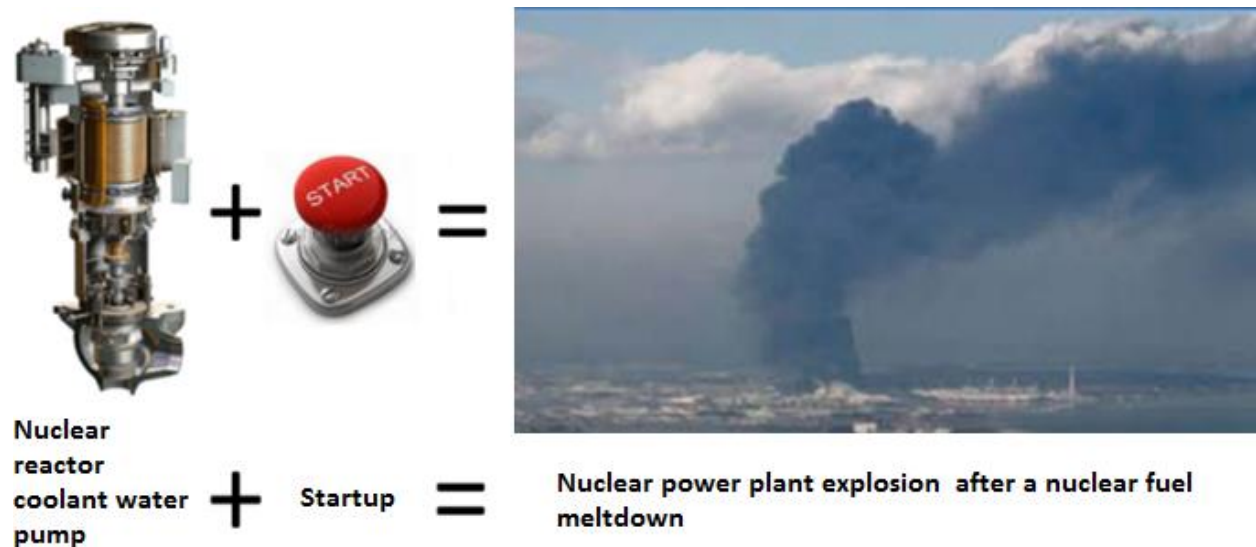
### **TV**

First, Home Box Office promoted a “Meltdown: Three Mile Island” story (HBO, 2022) that paralleled 1979 TV coverage. HBO falsely stated that an already exploded ‘hydrogen gas bubble [was] forming’ in the nuclear reactor inside the reactor building, after uranium fuel melted when reactor coolant water stopped flowing.

### **Myth**

Second, the American Nuclear Society published that HBO was incorrect. “Meltdown: Drama disguised as a documentary” (ANS, 2022) falsely storied that hydrogen was safely vented when ‘operators deftly degassed the system, ... and the [Nuclear Regulatory Commission] NRC chased this myth [that differed from ANS misinformation]’. Nonsense, the operators did not even know that the reactor melted down until three years later, and the explosions that occurred are still ignored by U.S. NRC and the U.S. Department of Energy cover-ups.

Third, NRC reports falsely claimed that the hydrogen burned as a fire before a hydrogen explosion ignited. This author believed this latter incorrect opinion about hydrogen burning until thorough studies of the TMI and Fukushima accidents proved that explosions blasted through the reactors and buildings.



**A Three Mile Island Cover-up Forced the Radioactive Fukushima Daiichi Explosions** (Adapted from U.S. NRC, <https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML1113/ML111390565.pdf>)

### **Reality**

Finally, disproving these fictions a “TMI-2 Explosion” theory (Leishear, 2019) proved that TMI explosions evolved “From water hammer to ignition, [where] the spark that ignited Three Mile Island burst from a safety valve” (Leishear, 2014, 2022). Similarities between Fukushima Daiichi and TMI meltdowns proved that explosions detonated in both nuclear power plant stations.

## **A Long History of Explosions**

For 69 years, a common cause relates most nuclear power plant explosions. During “The autoignition of nuclear power plant explosions” (Leishear, 2020), flammable hydrogen-oxygen gas mixtures form during reactor operations, water hammer initiates pressures surges during pump operations to squeeze the flammable gases until they get hot enough to automatically explode. This autoignition process ignites during normal operations to cause small explosions, and ignites during off-normal reactor meltdowns to cause large explosions. Explosions also detonate when water is suddenly added to molten fuel following meltdowns.

## **Blasting into our Lives**

Eleven nuclear reactors suffered loss-of-coolant meltdowns and explosions since the nuclear industry began in the 1950s. Before every meltdown, engineers guaranteed that meltdowns could not occur. Meltdown causes vary, but the TMI meltdown was guaranteed impossible before 1979 equipment failures and improper operations. The 1986 Chernobyl explosions were guaranteed impossible before radiation killed 31 people, and irresponsible managers were sent to prison. The Fukushima explosions were guaranteed impossible before a 2011 tsunami power loss and damages. Smaller explosions shredded pipes like firecrackers, during “Nuclear Power Plant Fires and Explosions, [at a] Hamaoka [Japan] Explosion” (Leishear, 2017). In a 1961, SL-1, small nuclear power plant explosion, three were killed when a jealous husband sabotaged a nuclear reactor to kill himself, the co-worker who was sleeping with his wife, and a third co-worker. The husband was impaled into the ceiling by part of the reactor. Also, war is a new reactor explosion cause, where “Potential Ukraine nuclear power plant explosions can be stopped” (Leishear, 2022). The unknown changes with new discoveries.

## **The Cover-up**

With respect to Three Mile Island, NRC reports intentionally ignored explosion data. For example, explosion pressures were measured, and these explosion measurements were dismissed from combustion and meltdown evaluations. ‘There was a loud thud in the control room ... that everybody in the control room heard and felt ... , and at the same time there was a pressure spike in the containment building’. An explosion was witnessed by all of the operators in the control room that monitored the reactor. In other words, this omission of paramount evidence constitutes a cover-up, as proven in “Nuclear power plants are not so safe: fluid transients / water hammers, autoignition, explosions, accident predictions and ethics (Leishear, 2021). At the time, legitimate concerns opined that a nuclear power plant explosion would cripple the nuclear power industry. The NRC still claims that a fire, rather than an explosion, ignited at Three Mile Island – more nonsense.

“Water hammers exploded the nuclear power plants at Fukushima Daiichi” (Leishear, 2022). This research proves that multiple similar explosions ignited at one TMI nuclear reactor and at three Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors. If the TMI explosions had not been covered up, research to prevent the Fukushima Daiichi explosions would certainly have stopped explosions. In fact, when Fukushima Daiichi explosions were televised, I told my wife that “They just turned on the pumps”. The technology to prevent these explosions was already invented theory in a “Hydrogen ignition mechanism for explosions in nuclear facility pipe systems” (Leishear, 2010).

In other words, the nuclear industry has covered up nuclear power plant safety concerns for decades to promote the industry. Fukushima explosions could have been prevented but for the cover-up, the next explosion can be prevented but for the ongoing cover-up, and the US NRC and US DOE thwart efforts to stop explosions in an effort to shield the nuclear industry from criticism.

## **The Threat to Our Safety, Health and Environment**

Explosions continue. Cancer, death, and global radiation contamination follow. How can nuclear safety be assured when the facts are covered up, and nuclear plant operators and regulators do not even understand ongoing explosions? We can stop “Preventable disasters [in] the fight for new ideas, never give an inch (Leishear, 2022).

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### **Stop the Government Cover-up and Save Lives**

“The next [imminent] nuclear power plant explosion bangs at our doors” (Leishear, 2022). Statistics prove that a nuclear power plant reactor will meltdown before 2039; and the resultant ignition of hydrogen-oxygen gas explosions can be prevented by forcibly venting flammable gases from nuclear reactor systems and slowly adding coolant water to molten nuclear fuel. If we act now, the next nuclear power plant explosions can be stopped!

### **Credentials**

Credentials are important when challenging the status quo. Robert A. Leishear, PhD, PE, PMP, is an ASME Fellow of Leishear Engineering, LLC, and he previously served as a lead research engineer for Savannah River National Laboratory, which is a U.S. Department of Energy research facility. For the past six years, Dr. Leishear has performed voluntary research to stop nuclear power plant explosions and other industrial disasters - at a personal cost of more than \$246,000 as documented in U.S. tax records. Of Dr. Leishear's more than 100 engineering publications that include two peer reviewed books from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, 20 publications are related to nuclear power plant explosions (Website - [leishearengineeringllc.com](http://leishearengineeringllc.com)). Preventing loss of life is important.