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Author(s): S. Kuzmin: ``Explosion at Explosives Plant``]

Headline: Further Details on Blast at Biysk Oleum Plant

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Subslug: [Report by S. Kuzmin: ``Explosion at Explosives Plant``]

FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE:

1. [Report by S. Kuzmin: ``Explosion at Explosives Plant``]

2. [Text] Biysk, Altay Kray--The explosion at the oleum plant disturbed all of Biysk. Especially since it is no secret even to small children in the city--oversaturated with ``hazardous`` enterprises--that the oleum plant is a ``defense plant.`` And now the shop producing explosives has ``gone up.`` Passions were further roused by the municipal emergency commission, which categorically refused to report the details of the tragedy.

3. It was only after explanations given by the chairman of the government commission that the true scale of the tragedy began to emerge: 11 workers, nine of them women, died and several people sustained serious injuries. Another victim has not been extricated from the wreckage. No one has yet calculated the material damage, but it will run into hundreds of thousands of rubles at least.

4. The reasons for the explosion are still unclear. Despite the fact that the workshop was in fact producing industrial explosives, mainly for mining work, they are not dangerous per se. Specialists had given assurances that nothing would happen even if these explosives were to be hit or broken to pieces with a hammer. It is only when the temperature exceeds 200 degrees....

5. The government commission states: ``Saboteurs and flying saucers have nothing to do with this. There was most likely a breach of technology somewhere. A chemical reaction may have begun in one of the units. Then the temperature rose.``

6. Experts from the State Committee for Environmental Protection have made a most gratifying report: The accident will not have a harmful effect on the environmental situation in the city. I think that they are right; the situation in Biysk simply cannot be made

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worse now. The people of Biysk have resigned themselves to the fact that their native industrial giants not only feed and clothe them and harm their children's health, but also, it transpires, effectively hold them hostage.