

2024-09-17 Britain's Atomic Bomb Scandal (Channel 4 programme).

The dramatic, shocking story of Britain's race for the nuclear bomb, the devastating fallout for the servicemen at the tests, and the veterans' long fight for justice. (See: <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/britains-atomic-bomb-scandal>).

(2024-09-15 Britain's Atomic Bomb Scandal, review: will it take a TV drama to make our government act?, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/tv/2024/09/15/britains-atomic-bomb-scandal-review-channel-4/>).

(2024-09-14 Britain's Atomic Bomb Scandal: (Channel 4, Sunday, 15 September 2024), <https://www.memorabletv.com/news/britains-atomic-bomb-scandal/>).

My notes (with later additions in brackets):

Those exposed were 22,000 servicemen, plus an unknown number of indigenous natives of Christmas Island. Britain is the only nuclear power (other than North Korea) that claims that nobody was harmed as a consequence of (witnessing the) nuclear tests.

Peter Lamborne, R.N., was drafted into Naval Party 5555, went to Christmas Island. (See: <https://www.facebook.com/coldwarconversations/videos/new-episode-the-british-nuclear-test-veterans-association-bntva-is-the-charity-f/1365909380525789/>).

Derek Woolf, RAF medic, worked on Christmas Island.

Elin Doyle, daughter of Mike Doyle, who worked at AWRE. Mum also worked there, calculating the critical mass of uranium. Mike Doyle also went to Christmas Island. He later suffered from cardiac sarcoidosis (very rare), which affected his heart. (See: 2022-10-03 Nuclear test veterans 'need Hillsborough-level apology', <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-63079621>).

Grapple Y test of 1958, of an H-bomb with 120x the power of the Hiroshima bomb. The servicemen wore sandals, shorts, shirt and dark glasses. In all there were some 22 nuclear explosions, only 15 miles away.

Shelley Grigg, daughter of a nuclear veteran who was on Christmas Island, was diagnosed with cancer.

One serviceman had married a native woman. She said that cancers were unknown on the islands prior to the tests.

British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA) (See: <https://www.bntva.com/>)
Ken McGinley (founder of BNTVA), was told of 'some risk of infertility'.

Daughter said that 'Dad was Press Officer of the BNTVA'.

In 1985 they won the right to bring a case against the UK Government.

But you don't just have to prove that it could happen. You have to show that it very probably would happen.

Famous documents. 'Aims for the Tests'.

(Searching on 'aims of the tests' found: The Long Road for Justice and Recognition: British Nuclear Tests, Compensation Schemes and Remaining Issues in Australia and New Zealand, Komei HOSOKAWA, <https://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/52458/files/39392> This 16-page document is interesting both in itself and for the references. Page 10 includes: 'All the compensation claims made by British NTVs against the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) since the 1990s have failed because the courts did not find specific causal relation between the diseases and the radiation dose (Walker 2014). A particularly important case was the test trial filed in 2014 for possible class-action procedures, because a successful ruling would have triggered a huge class action carefully prepared by around 1,000 NTVs in Britain together with several hundred NTVs from ANZ also in preparation for class action in the UK. The court approved 10 test trials to commence in 2009. To the deep disappointment of the NTVs and their supporters, however, the test cases were rejected in 2012, narrowly by 4:3, at the Supreme Court in London. The court ruled that too much time had passed since the nuclear tests to prove the cause of the health damage'.

The references notably include:

Busby and Escande de Messieres 2014, "Miscarriages and Congenital Conditions in Offspring of Veterans of the British Nuclear Atmospheric Test Programme". Epidemiology (sunnyvale) 4 (4): 172. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2161-1165.1000172> [<https://www.omicsonline.org/open-access/miscarriages-and-congenital-conditions-in-offspring-of-veterans-of-the-british-nuclear-atmospheric-test-programme-2161-1165.1000172.php?aid=30829>]

and McClelland, James R. 1985. The Report of the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia. (2 volumes).

https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/publications/tables/papers/HPP032016010928/upload_pdf/HPP032016010928.pdf and https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/publications/tables/papers/HPP032016010929/upload_pdf/HPP032016010929.pdf). These are huge, at 421 and 349 pages. However, as pdfs, they may be searched at speed for key words.

The National Radiological Protection Board was commissioned to produce a survey. Five years later, they published an interim report mentioning an excess incidence of cancers etc. However, in the final report of 1993, this had disappeared. (The makers of the Channel 4 programme seem to have found copies of the NRPB interim and final reports, so perhaps they are online. I made only a cursory search).

(While searching, I found this: Peer-Reviewed Articles (2019-2024), <https://chrc4veterans.uk/articles/peer-reviewed-articles/> 2024 Intergenerational effects of ionizing radiation: review of recent studies from human data (2018–2021), A. Amrenova et al, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09553002.2024.2309917?needAccess=true>)
2024 A systematic review of human evidence for the intergenerational effects of exposure to ionizing radiation, Jade Stephens et al, <https://chrc4veterans.uk/articles/peer-reviewed-articles/stephens-et-al-lay-summary/>).

Ken McGinley was told that he was five times more likely to get cancer.

Robin Cook, M.P. supported the claims of the nuclear veterans.

Alan (Lambourne ?) began investigating. He found a case of a boy child of a Maralinga veteran, born with no hands or feet, and a disfigured face. In all, he collected 60 to 70 letters about 32 families, with 57 children hideously deformed and died prematurely. Yet the Government dug its heel in about things passing down genetically, saying that no descendants have any right to compensation.

Labour made a commitment when in opposition, but when they came into power (Blair ?), they reneged.

Elin Doyle said (on camera) that the BNTVA phone was monitored, and that Ken McGinley was vilified and distrust was sown.

The programme showed a garden shed containing thousands of (paper) files, but searching was suspended when their guide received a phone call saying that Ken McGinley had died. (See: 2024-07-12 Ken McGinley obituary, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/12/ken-mcginley-obituary>).

Regarding medical records of the (UK) nuclear veterans, mention was made of film badges for gamma and beta-gamma, with talk that they had been thrown away. In 2018, there was talk of MOD medical records having been 'lost in a fire'.

(The BNTVA ?) has estimated that there are 155,000 descendants of the nuclear veterans.

In 2023, the nuclear veterans were told that they could use FOI requests.

America, Russia, China and France have all paid compensation, yet 18 successive UK governments have denied any such effects.

In 2022, a medal was awarded to the nuclear veterans, after 60 to 70 years.

Labour in opposition promised compensation of £50,000 each.
(See: 2019-09-23 Labour Promises British Nuclear Test Veterans £50k Each In Compensation, <https://www.forcesnews.com/news/labour-promises-british-nuclear-test-veterans-ps50k-each-compensation>).

(There were several text statements shown at the end, but I was not able to note them all).
In March 2024, the Conservative government said that the nuclear veterans and their descendants could apply for no-fault compensation.

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