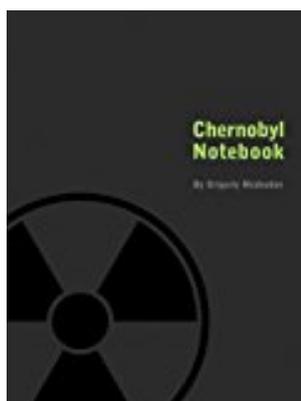


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Description:

Medvedev's "Chernobyl Notebook" is a competent and dispassionately truthful account of the tragedy that occurred more than [25] years ago. This is perhaps the first time we have such a complete firsthand account in which nothing is kept back and there is no departmental "diplomacy." The author is a nuclear power specialist who worked for a time at the Chernobyl AES and knows it well, just as he is personally acquainted with all the principal participants in the events. By virtue of his official position, he has attended many of the crucial conferences concerning nuclear power plant construction. Immediately after the accident, Medvedev was sent to Chernobyl and had an opportunity to learn a great deal while the trail was still fresh and to see things with his own eyes.

He presents many technical details indispensable to understanding the mechanism whereby the accident occurred, he exposes the secrets of bureaucratic relations, he tells about the oversights of scientists and designers, about the disastrous overbearing pressure in the command system, about the violations of glasnost before the accident and in the emergency situation following it that have caused enormous harm. The chronicle of events at Chernobyl in the tragic days of April and May 1986 takes up the central place in the story. The author portrays the behavior and role of numerous participants in the drama, of real living people with their shortcomings and virtues, their doubts, their weaknesses, their illusions, and their heroism alongside the nuclear monster that had gone out of control. It is not possible to read about this without the deepest emotion. We knew about the exploits of the firemen. The author tells about the heroism of the electricians, the turbine specialists, the operators, and other workers at the station who prevented the accident from taking on greater proportions.

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