

rie-Louise of Austria, resulted in their son Napoleon II. Following the consummation scene, the Archduchess does not appear again, obscuring the fact that she served as France's empress for four years and became the Duchess of Parma after the Napoleonic wars.

In the end, France banished Bonaparte to the island of Saint Helena. Bonaparte's accomplishments as a conqueror are listed before the film's credits begin. The three million soldiers who died under his command attest to Napoleon's tendencies as an ambitious general. Unfortunately, the film leaves out the fates of the European elite involved in Napoleon's life. French politician Paul Barras, Tsar Alexander of Russia, and even Duke of Wellington (the victorious military officials at the Battle of Waterloo) were essential figures in Bonaparte's life; Leaving out how these figures helped restabilize Europe after the Napoleonic wars is a missed opportunity to teach European history.

The main takeaway from this movie, and the main lesson from all cinematic war stories, is a focus on the loss of life of the many who follow the ambitions of a few who sought power for their selfish desires. The visual storytelling makes for an action-packed film that a general audience will enjoy. On the macro scale, *Napoleon* is another addition to the large collection of films depicting Bonaparte's life.

*Lachlan Streeter*

Andy Webb, director. *Chernobyl: Secrets, Lies, and the Untold Stories*, Science Channel. 2022

Despite the film's negative reviews, the documentary offers insight into the mistakes that led to the nuclear explosion at Chernobyl and its effects throughout Europe. The film introduces previously unknown KGB files, combining historical photos of the disaster and first-hand accounts to detail how the KGB saw themselves omnipotent, visitors spied on, and the critical Soviet government was kept in the dark as to the extent of the disaster.

The film opens with the historical background of the disaster, as it occurred at the height of the Cold War. Human error,

combined with a flawed design of the plant, had caused the core to set off a chain reaction that went out of control, culminating in the explosion of Chernobyl's Reactor 4 in the early hours of April 26, 1986. The KGB, formally known as the Committee for State Security, viewed itself as omnipotent. The documentary argues that the KGB had misinformed and attempted to cover up the intensity of the crisis to government officials, citizens, and the world. As such, citizens were placed in unnecessary danger.

The KGB reports expressed concerns about the design of the newly-built nuclear power plants. A similar atomic power plant in Leningrad, a city that has a place in history, came close to a meltdown. Ignoring the dangers, the Soviet government continued to promote the new model of the nuclear power plant model as advanced technology. The city of Pripyat, constructed to house the families of the power plant workers, was promoted as exclusive. The film displays the negligence of government officials in addressing concerns about the poor designs of the power plants, showing that national image had taken precedence over the well-being of citizens.

Despite the explosion, Pripyat evacuation was only delayed until the next day. The KGB worked to cover up the extent of the damage. The agency seized phone lines and mail so residents of Pripyat could not relay concrete information to anyone outside the city. According to a nurse, she was ordered to obtain books from a library that contained anything that pertained to a nuclear explosion. When she reached the library, she was notified by a librarian that they had received orders from officials to remove any book related to radiation.

The explosion came at a very inconvenient time for the Soviets, as the May Day celebrations were scheduled in Moscow. Opposition was ignored, and a woman recounted that Russia was sending a message of triumph. At the same time, a radioactive cloud was headed towards Moscow. The KGB, in response, used dry ice to cloud-seed an area and created artificial rain to stop the radiation. Citizens from Moscow were radiation-free. However, the documentary shows that the KGB continued to hide the truth in an attempt to display an image of a resilient Russia to the world. Even when of the explosion had gone public, most Soviet citizens still didn't know the extent of the damage. The KGB had placed citizens' life at risk due to radiation poisoning and cancer. They had gone so far as to order an abortion against the mother's wishes. She was released, but the fact that the Soviet government was willing to go to extreme lengths showed how they had placed precedence on their image instead of the lives of their citizens.

The breaking point in the crisis was when a doctor from UCLA Medical Center used contacts to enter the Soviet Union and visit patients with thyroid cancer and radiation poisoning. The fact was made clear to the Soviet people that their government was hiding the truth, especially when Gorbachev had promised the Soviet people to implement his policy of *perestroika*. The Soviet Union lost faith in the government and their fear of the KGB. The Soviet Union dissolved in 1991 and the KGB soon after. The documentary provides extensive insight into the attempts by the KGB to cover up the long-term damage of Chernobyl. In addition, the documentary shows how the Soviet government had once praised Chernobyl, like other nuclear power plants in the Soviet Union, as a feat of modern technology. However, it also displays how the abandoned Pripyat and the Chernobyl nuclear power, serving as a plant, are now a reminder of the disastrous consequences of harnessing a powerful form of energy.

*Albert Faz*