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Nuclear shipments in Germany are most likely to be protested against by increasing numbers of activists USA

German Activists Protest Against Nuclear Transport

A train carrying nuclear waste is coming from France

Some 15,000 activists gathered along a train line in Germany, to protest against the continued use of nuclear energy in the country's 17 nuclear power plants. A shipment of depleted fuel came from France, carrying some 17 tons of used pellets, to be disposed of in a special facility, at the salt mines in Gorleben. The dangerous chemicals were encased in some 100 tons of plastic, which officials say offers sufficient insulation.

However, protesters seem to disagree. Some of them even chained themselves to the tracks, forcing the shipment to grind to a halt. They said that such a large number of people protesting against nuclear energy had not been seen in the country since the protests of 2001. The "rebirth of the anti-nuclear movement in Germany," as anti-nuclear group x-tausendmal quer spokesman Jochen Stay called it, also saw violent clashes between protesters and the riot police, ended with injuries on both sides.

In Germany, there is a strong tradition of opposition towards nuclear energy. Even the government has agreed to try and phase out the reactors of the country by 2020. But that's not enough for people, who say that shipments of depleted fuel should also be banned. The current train load is the 11th Germany receives from the Normandy factory, in France.

Protesters set barriers on fire and halted the shipment for 11 hours, as several of them wouldn't leave the tracks. The police had to use water cannons and rubber sticks to drive the crowd back, into a nearby forest. Some 16,000 troops were mobilized for protecting both the train and the waste facility from what the national media has termed the largest and most violent protest since 2001.

As Chancellor Angela Merkel said that the country had to revise its plan of shutting down the plants, it's highly unlikely that this type of protests will stop anytime soon. Rather, they will probably escalate and become more and more violent, as the police become more brutal in dispersing crowds.