Who's behind the new round of anti-fracking protests in Eastern Europe?

By ACSH Staff — December 1, 2014

The controversy surrounding the use of hydraulic fracturing fracking in the United States continues to make headlines, especially with the vote in Denton, TX [1] to ban fracking within its borders. Well, a new anti-fracking argument in an unexpected location is now making waves in eastern Europe. Who's behind this not Josh Fox and Yoko Ono certainly. Why, it's none other than the Czar of All the Russias, Vladimir Putin, who's to blame for this anti-science, anti-fracking viewpoint, and his cronies in the Russian Federation and the Russian gas and oil monopoly, Gazprom.

Russian energy company Gazprom wants to keep countries dependent on Russian natural gas from developing their own alternatives, spurring suspicions that they are behind Russia's involvement in blocking threats to its energy stranglehold on Europe, according to an article [2] in the New York Times. Protests against fracking in Eastern Europe began in Bulgaria three years ago. As a result of these protests, the Bulgarian government banned fracking. And Putin is keeping the debate going strong, warning that fracking poses a huge environmental problem, and places that allow it no longer have water coming out of their taps but a blackish slime. This is all coming from a country that is usually unconcerned with environmental issues, and will jail environmentalists who engage in protest.

Even the news media are active in covering the opposition to fracking. A state-run Russian TV station in Pungesti, Romania with a largely foreign audience recently covered the protests against fracking and issued a warning that fracking is resulting in poisoned water.

Although Gazprom denied involvement in this movement, according to Victor Ponta, the Romanian prime minister, Energy is the most effective weapon today of the Russian Federation much more effective than aircraft and tanks.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross adds, There is zero evidence that this method of extracting oil and gas is dangerous or harmful to human health nor to the environment, especially not to drinking water, in any way. Fracking doesn't pollute water or the air. There have been zero confirmed occurrences of groundwater contamination from more than one million wells accessed in the last 50 years. And unlike coal or oil, natural gas obtained from fracking produces almost no smog or asthma-causing
particulates. So clearly, the Russians protesting the use of this technology are not doing so for science-based reasons.

If you would like to read our peer-reviewed work on fracking, which includes a scientific paper, a consumerized version of the paper and a What s the Story brochure, please e-mail us at morning@acsh.org and we will send you our publications. Our video about the subject can be found here.

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