

# Fukushima: Japanese Government, Big Business and Corporate Media Tried to Hide a Grave Threat

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*The doomed nuclear reactor at Fukushima, Japan is leaking 300 tons of water into the ground and ocean every day. "Collusion among the Japanese government, big business and the corporate media worked to prevent the world from knowing about a grave threat." Nuclear power cannot be made safe and, therefore, is too risky at any price.*

On March 11, 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake struck just off the eastern coast of Japan. The temblor did what quakes always do. It leveled buildings, caused \$235 billion in damage and spawned a tsunami that killed more than 15,000 people. In addition to this expected chaos and carnage, the earthquake damaged a nuclear reactor located near the city of Fukushima. The Fukushima reactor has been in varying degrees of crisis ever since. The world was assured that the crisis was averted back in 2011, but plant operator Tepco has been lying for the last two years.

In the days immediately following the earthquake the Fukushima Daichi nuclear power plant experienced explosions and a near meltdown. A variety of containment schemes all eventually failed and the plant now [leaks 300 tons](#) of contaminated ground water every day. The day of reckoning has finally arrived.

The plant's failures are obviously cause for alarm, but an additional cause for alarm ought to be the lack of consistent and prominent coverage given to the situation by the corporate media in this country. The reactor damage was declared a media non-event shortly after the earthquake departed from news coverage. Collusion among the Japanese government, big business and the corporate media worked to prevent the world from knowing about a grave threat. When the evil troika decides to keep a secret, even those who strive to be well informed are not.

In recent days there have been a few understated and much too subtle reports which indicate that all is not well at Fukushima. Headlines such as "Japanese government asks for help," and "Workers sprayed with radioactive water" have begun to appear but still lack the intensity which the media show when they are interested in a topic. Fukushima is on the brink but covered on page 10, if at all.

Nuclear power was long touted as an alternative to fossil fuel production but those hopes are now rightly dashed. Only a natural disaster was able to expose the human-made disaster which should take nuclear power off the table as a viable energy alternative. Tepco hasn't stopped the leak because it [doesn't know how](#) to do it. It won't admit that it doesn't know how because the corporation wants to open more plants. The government hasn't called Tepco to account because it too wants to open more plants but can't do that without

hiding the truth from the Japanese public. The web of deceit has served only the interests of the government and the nuclear power industry.

Fukushima is both a unique place at a moment in history but it also speaks volumes about the crisis which people face all over the world. Millions struggle to survive when governments act at the behest of corporate interests. Our water and air are poisoned not just because of nuclear reactors in earth quake zones. They are poisoned because corporations want to drill for oil or dump chemical wastes. These corporations want to sell us genetically modified foods and in order to make sure they can do that, lobby congress and the president to pass legislation written specifically to protect them from lawsuits.

In the short term, the best minds on the planet need to come together in order to address the failure at Fukushima. After that, nuclear power should die off around the world and not just in quake prone regions of Japan and the United States. Despite the legacy of accidents and quandaries like how to dispose of nuclear waste, the industry won't just disappear unless people demand that it does.

Black Agenda Report addressed the Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster as it [first unfolded](#) in 2011. In the past two year the issues we raised then haven't gone away. In fact they have intensified. The lack of true democracy is never so obvious as it is when governments must choose whether to protect the interests of the 1% or those of the 99%. Tepco and the Japanese government have sided with the 1% in their country but the whole world may pay the price.

*Margaret Kimberley's Freedom Rider column appears weekly in BAR, and is widely reprinted elsewhere. She maintains a frequently updated blog as well as at <http://freedomrider.blogspot.com>.*

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