

Testimony from Japan: “A Ship with no Captain”. Evolving Coverup of a Nuclear Disaster...

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Earthquake and Nuke Fatigue: “Time For The Rich To Leave Tokyo”

It appears there is a cover-up as to the severity of the Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster. We in Japan are being told by the government that there is a plan to monitor food safety to ensure the public will not be exposed to dangerous levels of radiation. Yet some experts dispute whether there is any such thing as a “safe dose.” Further, the government is not honestly telling the public the extent of the problem or how they propose to resolve it (see this rolling update from a resident living near the Fukushima plant: <http://candobetter.net/node/2428>).

Any intelligent layperson who considers the technical aspects of the disaster will be at a loss as to how the plant operators will be able to restore the cooling system, which may be badly damaged, to reactors that themselves may be unrepairable or in various states of melt-down. If the nuclear fuel in the reactors has melted through to the floor, what would be the point of setting up a cooling system to a dysfunctional reactor and a pool of melted fuel?

No one in the government clearly answers these questions nor has the international community come forth with a possible solution.

Is this a case of a ship with no captain?

Greenpeace Japan has been warning the government for weeks that the evacuation zone around the plant does not adequately cover those who are in danger from radiation, especially northwest of the plant. The government finally decided to widen the evacuation zone and recently upgraded the crisis level from 5 to 7, the highest rating that can be given. Japan’s Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency “says the damaged facilities have been releasing a massive amount of radioactive substances, which are posing a threat to human health and the environment over a wide area.”

Having been an inhabitant of Tokyo, Japan for twenty years I can say that things are now very different in the world’s most densely populated city.

After the massive earthquake, tsunami and dozens of large aftershocks, and the 25 million tons of debris created in the north eastern part of the country, it is apparent that the Japanese are suffering from “earthquake fatigue.” Upwards to 30,000 people may have been killed with over 240,000 evacuees which includes 80,000 due to the nuclear crisis.

For the last several decades the Japanese have enjoyed a relatively high standard of living. Although cramped into densely populated cities and working long hours, Japan has had it

pretty good compared to worldwide standards. The streets are safe, the transportation reliable, the food is good and the girls are pretty.

That said, the chickens came home to roost when it was discovered that the electrical power industry falsified documents, cut corners and participated in political corruption to fulfill their dream of an endless supply of “safe and clean” energy. Japan has received about 30% of its electricity from its 55 reactors.

But as Kobe University seismologist Katsuhiko Ishibashi noted to a government panel in 2005, “[a]n earthquake and its seismic thrust can hit multiple parts ” of a nuclear plant and result in a “severe accident.” Such warnings were ignored, of course, because money was to be made and the Nuclear Cabal are in control.

In the case of Fukushima this led to the break down of the back up safety system, and the ensuing meltdown of numerous fuel rods in the reactors resulting in hydrogen explosions and large releases of radioactive substances into the surrounding environment.

The science is clear and the proof irrefutable: sitting on the Rim of Fire as it does, a seismic hotbed where 20 percent of the world’s earthquakes occur, Japan is not a practical place to build nuclear power plants.

Dan Nocera, a professor of chemistry at MIT, on the other hand, has come up with “water cracking technology,” which is a simpler term for artificial photosynthesis that uses an innovative water battery to create electricity. A couple of gallons of water is enough to supply electricity to an entire house for a day. The system is cheap, efficient and clean, unlike nuclear power.

Other researchers claim that wind power could offer significant benefits in Japan but it is being suppressed by the Nuclear Cabal, in other words, TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company), the very company responsible for the Fukushima disaster. TEPCO has been slow to carry out research projects into wind, geothermal and other alternative energies.

Going back to the days of “Atoms for Peace,” President Eisenhower’s 1953 speech which promoted the peaceful use of atomic energy, nuclear power was used as a smiling face to replace the skull and crossbones of nuclear weaponry– a way to sell nukes to the public. Nuclear toasters and nuclear airplanes were some of the cockamamie ideas that didn’t fly, but nuke power did. There is no doubt that Japan has long held the missiles and nuclear materials to create weapons if she ever so desired. Watch out you dastardly North Koreans!

Today the Fukushima plant looks like a war zone due to TEPCO’s negligence. Their record of lying and falsification is well documented at the Citizens for Nuclear Information Center in Tokyo (CNIC) which has a bi-monthly newsletter available in their archives. It is published in both Japanese and English.

As late as the latter part of March, TEPCO had sent a proposal to the Fukushima prefectural government requesting that it build two more reactors at the stricken site! The Fukushima official in charge steamed with anger shouting, “are you guys completely crazy?” Judging by the gravity of the situation in relation to the industry and government response, the answer may be, “yes.” TEPCO’s behavior has clearly shown, before, at the beginning of and during the nuclear crisis, that saving face and worrying about profits is of greater concern than

preventing the worsening of the crisis.

On April 1st (and this is no fool's joke), 16 Japanese experts on nuclear power engineering, nuclear physics and radiology issued a frightening statement, saying that they "do not rule out the possibility that as time goes on, a molten core melts a weak part of a pressure vessel and enters a containment vessel, destroying the reactor's function to contain radioactive substances, or that hydrogen gas forming inside a pressure vessel explodes and destroys a containment vessel, causing serious radioactive contamination over a large expanse of land and sea....the current makeshift efforts to cool the No. 1, 2 and 3 reactors will not be able to completely cool down molten nuclear fuel so as it will not burst through the bottom of pressure vessels."

Yet there is little doubt it will take months to fix the site in order to safely stop leaking radiation. Decommissioning a plant takes three years under normal circumstances and the Japanese government has now admitted that the plant which houses six reactors must be "scraped."

In the meantime, about 700 workers who are paid 200 dollars a day must endure high levels of radiation in "Hazmat" suits (hazardous material suits) which during the summer are going to become intolerably hot. The process of repairing broken pipes is incredibly slow since workers must quickly change shifts in order to reduce radiation exposure time.

The government of Japan had temporarily set acceptable radiation levels higher than normal due to the urgency of the crisis, but workers refused to endure them because they knew of the danger.

It has been long been rumored that the Japanese nuke industry uses homeless and other desperate workers to carry out dangerous cleaning operations in their aging reactors. A 1995 British television documentary entitled "Nuclear Ginza" revealed this astonishing practice. Photo journalist Kenji Higuchi presented stunning interviews with workers who had suffered radiation exposure in the plants. Higuchi once told me the film was blocked from being shown on NHK, the government TV news station.

The public must also endure the uncertainty of knowing whether the air, food and water are safe to ingest. Fish, which are a major part of the Japanese diet may now be contaminated with cesium.

Masayoshi Yamamoto, a professor of radiology at Kanazawa University, finds the cesium-137 to be the most worrisome because of its 30 half life. He stated that if continuous leakage into the ocean is not prevented, "[a]ll of Japan's sea products will probably be labeled unsafe and other nations will blame Japan if radiation is detected in their marine products."

In most recent days Japan has had a number of major earthquake aftershocks and the reelection of the far-right nationalist governor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, who is an advocate of nuke power and weapons. But we have also seen the revival of the anti nuclear movement. An activist once told me that without the movement during the days from the 1970s when the majority of plants were first built, today Japan would probably have an astonishing 100 reactors instead of 55.

Japan is not noted for its extravagant protests but this last Sunday 2,500 protesters rallied in

front of TEPCO headquarters in Tokyo and another 15,000 protesters marched in an artsy neighborhood of Tokyo, known as Koenji. I attended the latter protest and noted that most of the folks were of the artsy, musician, intellectual type persuasion, and they made a powerful statement against nuclear power that even the mainstream media has begrudgingly covered. The array of colorful and creative posters and costumes, along with music and shouts of joy and anger from protesters was a testament to those who still have a dream of happiness and freedom for their children. Indeed, a banner hugely displayed on the side of a truck used during the march shouted: "TIME FOR THE RICH TO LEAVE TOKYO." Since the Tokyo megapolis has relied on electricity from plants placed in outer areas, the question of energy justice is raised: why should Fukushima residents suffer for Tokyoite's luxurious lifestyle?

The Japanese are clearly sick and tired of the earthquakes, but they know that is the reality of the place where they live. Perhaps they are also waking up to the extreme danger of living with nukes on a narrow archipelago where radiation and geiger counters are becoming an everyday fact of life.

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