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50 Reasons We Should Fear the Worst from Fukushima

Harvey Wasserman | February 2, 2014 12:45 pm | Comments

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[This is the first in a two part series]



Fukushima's missing melted cores and radioactive gushers continue to fester in secret.

Japan's harsh dictatorial censorship has been matched by a global corporate media blackout aimed—successfully—at keeping Fukushima out of the public eye.

But that doesn't keep the actual radiation out of our ecosystem, our markets ... or our bodies.



Speculation on the ultimate impact ranges from the utterly harmless to the intensely apocalyptic .

But the basic reality is simple: for seven decades, government Bomb factories and privately-owned reactors have spewed massive quantities of unmonitored radiation into the biosphere.

The impacts of these emissions on human and ecological health are unknown primarily because the nuclear industry has resolutely refused to study them.

Indeed, the official presumption has always been that showing proof of damage from nuclear Bomb tests and commercial reactors falls to the victims, not the perpetrators.

And that in any case, the industry will be held virtually harmless.

This "see no evil, pay no damages" mindset dates from the Bombing of Hiroshima to Fukushima to the disaster coming next ... which could be happening as you read this.

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Here are 50 preliminary reasons why this radioactive legacy demands we prepare for the worst for our oceans, our planet, our economy ... ourselves.

1. At Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945), the U.S. military **initially denied** that there was any radioactive fallout, or that it could do any damage. Despite an absence of meaningful data, the victims (including a group of U.S. prisoners of war) and their supporters were officially “discredited” and scorned.
2. Likewise, when Nobel-winners Linus Pauling and Andre Sakharov **correctly warned** of a massive global death toll from atmospheric Bomb testing, they were dismissed with official contempt ... until they won in the court of public opinion.
3. During and after the Bomb Tests (1946-63), downwinders in the South Pacific and American west, along with thousands of U.S. “atomic vets,” were told their **radiation-induced health problems were imaginary** ... until they proved utterly irrefutable.
4. When British Dr. Alice Stewart proved (1956) that even **tiny x-ray doses** to pregnant mothers could double childhood leukemia rates, she was assaulted with 30 years of heavily funded abuse from the nuclear and medical establishments.
5. But Stewart’s findings proved tragically accurate, and helped set in stone the medical health physics consensus that there is no “safe dose” of radiation ... and that **pregnant women should not be x-rayed**, or exposed to equivalent radiation.
6. More than 400 commercial power reactors have been injected into our ecosphere with no meaningful data to measure their potential health and environmental impacts, and no systematic global data base has been established or maintained.
7. “Acceptable dose” standards for commercial reactors were conjured from faulty **A-Bomb studies** begun five years after Hiroshima, and at Fukushima and elsewhere have been continually made more lax to save the industry money.
8. Bomb/reactor fallout **delivers alpha and beta particle emitters** that enter the body and do long-term damage, but which industry backers often wrongly equate with less lethal external gamma/x-ray doses from flying in airplanes or living in Denver.
9. By refusing to compile long-term emission assessments, the industry systematically hides health impacts at Three Mile Island (TMI), Chernobyl, Fukushima, etc., forcing victims to rely on isolated independent studies which it automatically deems “discredited.”
10. Human health damage has been amply suffered in radium watch dial painting, Bomb production, uranium mining/milling/enrichment, waste management and other radioactive work, despite decades of relentless industry denial.
11. When Dr. Ernest Sternglass, who had worked with Albert Einstein, warned that **reactor emissions were harming people**, thousands of copies of his *Low-Level Radiation* (1971) mysteriously disappeared from their primary warehouse.
12. When the Atomic Energy Commission’s (AEC) Chief Medical Officer, Dr. John Gofman, urged that **reactor dose levels be lowered by 90 percent**, he was forced out of the AEC and publicly attacked, despite his status a founder of the industry.
13. A member of the Manhattan Project, and a medical doctor responsible for pioneer research into LDL cholesterol, Gofman later called the **reactor industry an instrument of “premeditated mass murder.”**
14. Stack monitors and other monitoring devices failed at Three Mile Island (1979) making it

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impossible to know how much radiation escaped, where it went or who it impacted and how.

15. But some 2,400 TMI downwind victims and their families were denied a class action jury trial by a federal judge who said “not enough radiation” was released to harm them, though she could not say how much that was or where it went.

16. During TMI’s meltdown, industry advertising equated the fallout with a single chest x-ray to everyone downwind, ignoring the fact that such doses could double leukemia rates among children born to involuntarily irradiated mothers.

17. Widespread death and damage downwind from TMI have been **confirmed** by Dr. Stephen Wing, Jane Lee and Mary Osbourne, Sister Rosalie Bertell, Dr. Sternglass, Jay Gould, Joe Mangano and others, along with hundreds of anecdotal reports.

18. Radioactive harm to farm and wild animals downwind from TMI has been confirmed by the Baltimore News-American and Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

19. TMI’s owner quietly **paid out at least \$15 million** in damages in exchange for gag orders from the affected families, including at least one case involving a child born with Down’s Syndrome.

20. Chernobyl’s explosion became public knowledge only when massive emissions came down on a Swedish reactor hundreds of miles away, meaning that—as at TMI and Fukushima—no one knows precisely how much escaped or where it went.

21. Fukushima’s **on-going fallout** is already far in excess of that from Chernobyl, which was far in excess of that from Three Mile Island.

22. Soon after Chernobyl blew up (1986), Dr. Gofman **predicted its fallout** would kill at least 400,000 people worldwide.

23. Three Russian scientists who **compiled more than 5,000 studies** concluded in 2005 that Chernobyl had already killed nearly a million people worldwide.

24. Children born in downwind Ukraine and Belarus still suffer a massive toll of mutation and illness, as confirmed by a wide range of governmental, scientific and humanitarian organizations.

25. Key low-ball Chernobyl death estimates come from the World Health Organization, whose numbers are overseen by International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations organization chartered to promote the nuclear industry.

26. After 28 years, the reactor industry has still not succeeded in installing a final sarcophagus over the exploded **Chernobyl Unit 4**, though billions of dollars have been invested.

27. When Fukushima Units 1-4 began to explode, President Obama assured us all the fallout would not come here, and would harm no one, despite having no evidence for either assertion.

28. Since President Obama did that, the U.S. has established **no integrated system to monitor Fukushima’s fallout**, nor an epidemiological data base to track its health impacts ... but it did stop checking radiation levels in Pacific seafood.

29. **Early reports of thyroid abnormalities** among children downwind from Fukushima, and in North America are denied by industry backers who again say “not enough radiation” was emitted though they don’t know how much that might be.

30. Devastating health impacts reported by sailors stationed aboard the USS Ronald Reagan near Fukushima are **being denied by the industry and Navy**, who say radiation doses were too small to do harm, but have no idea what they were.

- 31.** While in a snowstorm offshore as Fukushima melted, **sailors reported a warm cloud passing over the Reagan** that brought a “metallic taste” like that described by TMI downwinders and the airmen who dropped the Bomb on Hiroshima.
- 32.** Though it denies the sailors on the Reagan were exposed to enough Fukushima radiation to harm them, Japan (like South Korea and Guam) denied the ship port access because it was too radioactive (it’s now docked in San Diego).
- 33.** The Reagan sailors are barred from suing the Navy, but have **filed a class action against Tokyo Electric Power (Tepco)**, which has joined the owners at TMI, the Bomb factories, uranium mines, etc., in denying all responsibility.
- 34.** A U.S. military “lessons learned” report from Fukushima’s Operation Tomodachi clean-up campaign notes that “decontamination of aircraft and personnel without alarming the general population created new challenges.”
- 35.** The report questioned the clean-up because “a true decontamination operations standard for ‘clearance’ was not set,” thereby risking “the potential spread of radiological contamination to military personnel and the local populace.”
- 36.** Nonetheless, it **reported** that during the clean-up, “the use of duct tape and baby wipes was effective in the removal of radioactive particles.”
- 37.** In league with organized crime, Tepco is pursuing its own clean-up activities by **recruiting impoverished homeless** and elderly citizens for “hot” on-site labor, with the quality of their work and the nature of their exposures now a state secret.
- 38.** At least **300 tons of radioactive water continue to pour into the ocean** at Fukushima every day, according to official estimates made prior to such data having been made a state secret.
- 39.** To the extent they can be known, the quantities and make-up of radiation pouring out of Fukushima are also now a **state secret**, with independent measurement or public speculation punishable by up to ten years in prison.
- 40.** Likewise, “There is **no systematic testing in the U.S.** of air, food and water for radiation,” according to University of California (Berkeley) nuclear engineering Professor Eric Norman.
- 41.** Many **radioactive isotopes** tend to concentrate as they pour into the air and water, so deadly clumps of Fukushima’s radiation may migrate throughout the oceans for centuries to come before diffusing, which even then may not render it harmless.
- 42.** Radiation’s real world impact becomes even harder to measure in an increasingly polluted biosphere, where **interaction with existing toxins** creates a synergy likely to exponentially accelerate the damage being done to all living things.
- 43.** Reported devastation among starfish, sardines, salmon, sea lions, orcas and other ocean animals cannot be definitively denied without a **credible data base** of previous experimentation and monitoring, which does not exist and is not being established.
- 44.** The fact that “tiny” doses of x-ray can harm human embryos portends that any unnatural introduction of lethal radioactive isotopes into the biosphere, however “diffuse,” can affect our intertwined global ecology in ways we don’t now understand.
- 45.** The impact of allegedly “minuscule” doses spreading from Fukushima will, over time, affect the minuscule eggs of creatures ranging from sardines to starfish to sea lions, with their lethal impact enhanced by the other pollutants already in the sea.

- 46.** Dose comparisons to bananas and other natural sources are absurd and misleading as the myriad isotopes from reactor fallout will **impose very different biological impacts** for centuries to come in a wide range of ecological settings.
- 47.** No current dismissal of general human and ecological impacts—”apocalyptic” or otherwise—can account over time for the very long half-lives of radioactive isotopes Fukushima is now pouring into the biosphere.
- 48.** As Fukushima’s impacts spread through the centuries, the one certainty is that no matter what evidence materializes, the nuclear industry will never admit to doing any damage, and will never be forced to pay for it (see upcoming sequel).
- 49.** Hyman Rickover, father of the nuclear navy, warned that it is a form of suicide to raise radiation levels within Earth’s vital envelope, and that if he could, he would “sink” all the reactors he helped develop.
- 50.** “Now when we go back to using nuclear power,” he said in 1982, “I think the **human race is going to wreck itself**, and it is important that we get control of this horrible force and try to eliminate it.”

As Fukushima deteriorates behind an iron curtain of secrecy and deceit, we desperately need to know what it’s doing to us and our planet.

It’s tempting to say the truth lies somewhere between the industry’s lies and the rising fear of a tangible apocalypse.

In fact, the answers lie beyond.

Defined by seven decades of deceit, denial and a see-no-evil dearth of meaningful scientific study, the glib corporate assurances that this latest reactor disaster won’t hurt us fade to absurdity.

Fukushima pours massive, unmeasured quantities of lethal radiation into our fragile ecosphere every day, and will do so for decades to come.

Five power reactors have now exploded on this planet and there are more than 400 others still operating.

What threatens us most is the inevitable next disaster ... along with the one after that ... and then the one after that ...

Pre-wrapped in denial, protected by corporate privilege, they are the ultimate engines of global terror.

*Harvey Wasserman’s next piece is on how Fukushima threatens our human freedom and material survival. He edits www.nukefree.org, and wrote *Solartopia! Our Green-Powered Earth*.*

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Steve_I_Am · 7 hours ago

Of all of the horrible things to worry about in the world today, it is the ongoing disaster at Fukushima that keeps me up at night.

10 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›



pmagn · 10 hours ago

you miss a couple of key points...

1 when Chernobyl blew the infant mortality of birds on the west coast of america where severely impacted. This is documented evidence. The fellow who notice this is actively trying to see if the Fukushima incident will have an impact.

2 the was a rise in infant mortality around the time shortly after Fukushima on the west coast which was reported in newspapers in BC and US west coast states. At frist the connection was not made and there is some debate on the data. But still it is an oddity.

Nukes are absolutely crazy and will nail us eventually if climate doesn't get us first.

11 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›



Andrei Rinea → pmagn · 9 hours ago

I completely agree on the last statement. It's not even a targeted weapon. It's a global weapon (i.e.: kill everything including "me")

8 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›



B Lee · 8 hours ago

Hyman Rickover also said

"Yet it is incumbent on those in high places to make wise decisions and it is reasonable and important that the public be correctly informed. It is consequently incumbent on all of us to state the facts as forthrightly as possible."

Somewhere along the line our government missed that quote! Thank you for the article.

8 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›



Boeser Wolf · 4 hours ago

Every nuclear power plant is a ticking time bomb. Even "safe" operation exposes those who live within 50 miles of a reactor to raised levels of radioactive particles from emissions and higher cancer rates overall. The cancer rate in the US now stands at 40% and rising.... you can bet your bottom dollar that radioactive nuclear contamination has a lot to do with it. We are living in a slow-motion planet-cide. We are all hospice workers now.

3 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›



Sunflowerbio · 6 hours ago

One of the strongest criticisms of fossil fuel power generation is that many of the real costs of fossil electricity are externalized and passed on to the general public rather than being born by the electricity consumer. How much greater are the real costs of nuclear electricity externalized and passed on to the general public?

Probably the greatest is the limit on accident liability granted to the nuclear industry by the US government, which then evades its responsibilities by denying any damaging health or environmental effects from nuclear

accidents. Decommissioning and long term storage of spent fuel are two other externalized costs of nuclear power that are not added into the rates paid by electricity consumers.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

B Lee → Sunflowerbio · 6 hours ago
Don't count on that Sunflowerbio! I am pretty sure that the rate paying consumers, (at least everyone who used the power), is going to be stuck with higher rates so Edison <<for a="" after="" all="" buying="" can="" certainly="" come="" company="" cost="" decommissioning="" didn't="" down="" enjoy="" for="" gamble...right?="" get="" have="" instance,="" is="" it="" it?="" just="" nuclear="" of="" onofre="" operated.="" pay="" plant="" power="" profits="" recently="" recoup="" san="" shareholders?="" should="" shouldn't="" shut="" stock="" that="" the="" thought.="" to="" we="" why="" wishful="" years=""></for>

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B Lee → B Lee · 6 hours ago
Sorry I don't know what happened to the message above? It's certainly not how I wrote it!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

Boeser Wolf → B Lee · 4 hours ago
NSA

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

Sunflowerbio → B Lee · 5 hours ago
It looks like your comment never got UN-packet-ed.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

Chris Herz · 8 hours ago
Somebody needs to scam the corruption reactor which is Washington. Unfortunately their craziness is harder to tamp down than neutrons.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

Debbie Bradshaw Muga · 7 hours ago
<http://hatrickpenryunbound.com...>

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

Bruce · 7 hours ago
These suicidally self-Obotomized, nuclear-advocating Flacks the world round are NUKING FUTS!

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

Caroline Yunker · 5 hours ago
What is the status of Unit 4? Supposedly there spent fuel rods in the damaged Unit 4 that were to be removed beginning last Nov by TEPCO.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share >

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