



Extract of www.acdn.net

<https://acdn.net/spip/spip.php?article684>

Fukushima: Compassion or Anger?

- Homepage - News - News Articles -

Publication date: Friday 1 April 2011

Copyright © www.acdn.net - All rights reserved

The Japanese people have already been subject to experiments - that's the correct term - into the effects of nuclear reactions - with the dropping of the uranium bomb on Hiroshima and the plutonium bomb on Nagasaki.

(See: [HIROSHIMA, NAGASAKI - an unknown history](#))

In 1946, the Japanese Constitution included the banning of nuclear weapons and of militarism. Article 9 states:

"Sincerely aspiring to international peace founded on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounces war as a sovereign right and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international conflicts.

"To attain the goal set in the previous paragraph, Japan will never maintain land forces, naval forces or air forces or any other potential for waging war. The State's right to belligerence will not be recognized."

Unfortunately, later less inspired leaders - inspired in fact by the 'progressist' ideology of "Atoms for Peace" disseminated by the US victor to encourage people to forget those atom bombs - made the decision to choose nuclear energy, without taking account of the considerable seismic risks. This is why today the Japanese people are suffering the sinister effects of uranium and plutonium in their "peaceful" form: MOX. This mixture of the two radioactive elements was used in Reactor 3 at Fukushima.

Probably ill-informed, Japan's media and foreign media, notably in France, have so far not mentioned this "detail" which would force them to admit that the various radioactive emanations from the reactor include a significant amount of plutonium. And that's something to be even more scared about, and rather more angry about, given that France's AREVA Corporation played an essential role in introducing MOX into Japan.

Plutonium, an element not found in nature, is one of the worst imaginable poisons... it's one of the sub-products of combustion of the uranium fuel rods in the reactors. The need to extract these residues of combustion is the main reason why these are "re-treated" in a plant like La Hague (Normandy) and more recently in Japan at Rokkashomura.

With the idea of "recycling" the plutonium and making it pay, MOX is also the fuel used in a number of French plants, including the one at Braud-Saint Louis, known as Le Blayais, which almost suffered the same fate as Fukushima: on 27 December 1999, a massive storm caused cracking, with the result that over 100 000 cubic metres of water got into the plant.

On that occasion, at what might be called Chernobyl-on-the-Gironde, all that the flooding did was knock out several emergency pumps.

On 11 March 2011 the Japanese were less lucky. But we morally share their tragedy. Our compassion goes in the first instance to the workers who strove or are striving on the site to interrupt the disaster. Their sacrifice links up with that of some 600 000 "liquidators" at Chernobyl, half of whom are now dead or stricken with cancer.

It is probable that at a future date we will share Japan's fate physically - inasmuch that the radioactive fallout will eventually spread across the entire Northern Hemisphere, as did the cloud of Chernobyl.

The future victims of Fukushima, whatever their home or nationality, will perhaps know in their hearts what has caused their illnesses. But they will not be able to prove it: from Chernobyl to Fukushima, the only response of the

authorities has been denial of justice and of truth.

Will the drama of Fukushima at least teach us a lesson and prompt the consequent safety measures? In France, that is far from certain. The French government, applauded by its so-called "opposition" (sic) in parliament (except for a few Green MPs) says it is ready for all the "**lessons of experience**" - which is a pretty way of referring to a catastrophe and to the men who make guinea-pigs of us! The big "lesson" they will not be drawing is the only one that counts: the need simply to renounce nuclear technology in all its forms, civilian and military.

The MEPs of Europe Ecology - Greens put it this way : "*Our solidarity and compassion towards the victims are total... But our anger is immense.*"

They are right, and they are right to demand an exit from all nuclear technology. All the same, it is regrettable that - as part of the struggle against the greenhouse effect and climate change - they thought they should vote for the European Parliament's resolution 25 November 2009. This text [P7_TA\(2009\)0089](#) in its article 36 "*stresses that internationally the shift to economies of low carbon use will give nuclear energy an important role in the energy mix in the medium term; yet stresses that all questions concerning the safety and security of the nuclear fuel cycle must be faced adequately at the international level so as to guarantee the highest possible level of safety.*" It would have been much better if the whole Green group in the European Parliament had followed José Bové's example of abstaining so as not to condone such a declaration.

What has been called the "*insurrection of consciences to make an end of nuclear folly*" must necessarily vary in its geometry. It has to be independent of current crises and political or media opportunism. Obviously we cannot entrust its expression let alone implementation to a politician, Nicolas Hulot, who imperturbably, for years, accepted the support of Electricite de France (EDF), never breathed a word about nuclear plants, and now, suddenly discovering how dangerous they are, goes as far as calling for a referendum about whether they should be shut down.

A referendum is not something to be improvised overnight. Nor is a commitment to oppose nuclearism.

An emotional call for a referendum on phasing-out nuclear power generation is, firstly, a kind of moral cheating: what would we say about a referendum on bringing back the guillotine organized just after a series of odious crimes?

It is also intellectually irresponsible: in a country that draws 80 % of its electricity from nuclear plants (that's only 17% of all energy consumption, but it's a lot), we obviously have to think very hard about the means and steps needed to do without it totally. These means do exist, as antinuclear activists know, but they have to be explored, defined concretely, and programmed. There would be a need to choose between several scenarios.

It would also raise the risks of getting the opposite result from what you want: the emotion only has to wane a bit and the voters might opt for the status quo. This is all the more likely because a really credible phase-out scenario has not been worked out.

In addition, it would be a way of sidestepping the need to take urgent measures now, such as the immediate shut-down of the plant at Fessenheim, France's oldest and most dangerous.

It is hard to imagine that someone showing such ignorance of the nuclear issue might one day wish to claim the "ecologist" label in tilting for the presidency, or that the label might be granted him. Clearly this is a sort of music-hall fiction. And the real situation is not entertaining in the least.

What then does the situation require?

Compassion or anger ?

BOTH Compassion AND anger. Plus foresight and determination.

That means quite the opposite of political sleepwalking, media opportunism and nuclear hypocrisy.

And the opposite of the crocodile tears shed by the partisans of nuclear power, including some French peace activists whom politeness restrains us from naming. They are opponents of nuclear weapons, but they have always been contaminated by the "Joliot-Curie" virus called "Atoms for Peace". Knowingly or not, they have contributed greatly to maintaining the nucleocrats' disinformation and even disseminating their lies. They are maintaining divisions within the opponents of nuclearism, which make it easy for the nuclear lobby to neutralise us. How many Chernobyls will it take to make them admit that nuclear technology threatens the longterm survival of all humanity, and at present the Japanese who have lived through the March 11th earthquake and tsunami?

It is high time we draw the only possible conclusion for our nation and planet: we must get rid of nuclear technology, of both military and civilian kinds, as soon as possible.

19 March 2011,

Jean-Marie Matagne