

THE SILENCE OF NUCLEAR DENIAL

Radioactive contamination- of our planet, fellow species, our own bodies, and all future generations- is the greatest risk to our well-being today. As early as December 1951, the Atomic Energy Commission covered up the warning from its own consultants that "cancer is a significant industrial hazard of the atomic energy business." Numerous studies have confirmed this fact over the years.

High incidence of breast cancer and birth defects have been linked to neighboring nuclear reactors. Connections between cancers, coronary heart disease, and excessive medical x-rays are well established. Genetic damage can cause increasing health problems and learning disorders in the descendants of those originally exposed.

The most severely affected sectors of the U.S. population- atomic miners, workers and veterans- have to compete for meager benefits only recently made available by the government.

WHERE IS THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE?

- **County by county data exists for risk of thyroid cancer** from bomb testing. Where is the information to discuss with our doctors our own level of risk and how it may affect our children?
- **80% of breast cancer is environmentally caused** and therefore preventable, but we hear more about our diet, smoking and family history than about the nuclear industry.
- **Medical experiments** were deliberately and secretly conducted on the most vulnerable members of our society- school children, remote Native communities, mental patients, prisoners, soldiers and sailors. Where is our outrage?
- **Transportation of nuclear ores, fuels, weapons and wastes** had numerous accidents and near-misses. New proposals will magnify the problem exponentially. Do you know which routes are near you?
- **U.S. ballistic missiles and nuclear powered space stations** and mining colonies on the Moon and Mars will begin a whole new era of nuclear waste production. How will U.S.

dominance of space affect global peace?

- **For over fifty years the U.S. government contaminated** all of North America, South Pacific islands, and much of the world's oceans with radiation. Why isn't nuclear policy an important part of electoral debates?

Like an alcoholic family- where emotional survival is maintained by an unspoken agreement not to discuss the disease openly- we are living in a condition of nuclear denial.

HOW BIG IS THE PROBLEM?

Information on radioactivity is hard to come by, often conflicting, and usually specific to one aspect of the industry or another. But our exposure is cumulative, and we need to develop an understanding of the industry as a whole.

For example, an older person living in the four corners area has been exposed to radiation from atmospheric testing, medical procedures, uranium mining, and coal powered electrical plants, which can emit more radiation than nuclear reactors.

According to the estimates of Dr. Rosalie Bertell, a world-renowned radiation expert, 1.2 billion human beings have already been killed, maimed or sickened by nuclear testing and nuclear reactors world-wide. These figures differ radically from calculations by government agencies- whom she refers to as the "radiation protection industry". Their definitions exclude non-fatal cancers, non-cancer illness, auto-immune diseases, some doses to specific organs, stillbirths and miscarriages. *Says Dr. Bertell, "Another century of nuclear power, and this carnage would continue with more than 10 million victims a year. An industry which has the potential to kill, injure and maim that number of innocent people— and all in the name of 'benefiting' society— is surely wholly unacceptable."*

HOW ARE WE EXPOSED?

Nuclear fission, whether in a reactor, a bomb, or a laboratory, creates about 80 different radioactive byproducts. In addition, about 300 different existing chemicals take on radioactive forms that before 1943 were found only rarely and in trace amounts.

The atomic particles escape into the air and the water in a variety of ways. In addition to exposure from breathing and drinking, particles end up in soils and enter the food chain. Strontium-90 (Sr90) is just one radioactive

element that caused wide-spread illness due to above-ground nuclear testing. It especially affected children through consumption of fresh milk. Particles remain lodged inside us often for life- damaging DNA and our body organs. And to make matters worse, industrial chemicals in water or milk are doubly carcinogenic when in contact with Sr90.

A study by Dr. Jay Gould found that Sr90 is still showing up in children's teeth at levels 100 times greater than expected. Reactor emissions and accidents like Chernobyl and Three Mile Island are the most likely sources.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

1. **Break the silence.** End the denial. Learn the facts and tell everyone we know.
2. **Stop making messes we can't clean up.** We expect it of our children. Why not our government and top-level scientists?
3. **Insist on complete and accurate information** from government agencies and representatives. What is our exposure? Where are the contaminated sites, and how bad are they? Where are the shipment routes?
4. **Talk to our doctors.** Insist on knowing the exposure of all x rays and other diagnostic procedures. Are they absolutely necessary? Is your doctor aware of current health studies on the risk of thyroid cancer, leukemia, etc., and prevention and early detection techniques?
5. **Take personal action to reduce energy use.** Learn about non-toxic energy like solar and wind generation. Exploit simple construction techniques that vastly reduce your need for heating and cooling. Santa Barbara made renewable energy a city-wide goal- what about your town?
6. **Direct people to HOME's website.** Spread the word to co-workers, friends, family, and at public events!
7. **Get involved!** Ask your elected officials their positions or nuclear issues. Download fact sheets and maps and pass them out. Write to newspapers, talk to community groups, speak out on radio talk shows. *With a mess this big, there's certainly something each and every one of us can do.*
8. **Support HOME.** We need financial support to meet requests for information and to continue our public education programs and research. We would be very grateful for anything you can contribute toward our mission. *Thank You!*



HOME PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

The Yucca Mt. Legacy Project— The program includes identifying and addressing ways to protect future generations from the impacts of the proposed radioactive waste dump at Yucca Mountain that may be overlooked by other agencies. HOME has conducted a groundwater radiological baseline study, to provide sound data on water chemistry now, for future comparison and exposure calculation. We would also like to better characterize soil, air, plant and animal life, medical histories and water consumption.

The Nuclear Education & Activism Program— Encouraging youth awareness and participation in issues that affect them. The program includes classroom activities and an annual essay contest on *Nuclear Issues in Our Times*. In the spring, we will send two students with the best essays from Washoe Co. Nevada to Washington DC.

The Museum to End the Nuclear Age— Our 30 foot mobile teaching center is full of easy to understand displays about health and the entire nuclear industry, from uranium mining through nuclear reactors, weapons and waste. We have a library, handouts and contact lists. Our solar system is capable of operating video equipment, a laptop computer, and all our lighting and fans.

The HOME website and downloadable fact sheets on

- Health, Habitat and Radiation World-Wide
- Yucca Mt. High-Level Nuclear Waste dump
- Western Shoshone Sovereignty & Radiation Issues
- The Yucca Mt. Legacy Project
- Hazardous Materials Transport Study, Inyo Co. CA
- Nuclear Education & Activism Program
- The Comprehensive Peoples' Nuclear Waste Policy

ALL GOOD THINGS COME FROM EARTH:

The food we eat, medicines that heal us, shelter and clothing, the air we depend on for life. Our bodies are made of the same elements as the Earth, and like her, we are mainly composed of water. She is our resting place for all time when we pass on. Our survival is linked to her survival, and like us, she is suffering from the effects of the Nuclear Age. She is our HOME, and we have no other.

HOME BREAKS THE SILENCE OF NUCLEAR DENIAL

- **We believe the public has the right to know** the magnitude of current and proposed nuclear contamination. Only through informed decision making and action can policies be changed.
- **We direct you to health studies** and other expert information about radiation.
- **We conduct independent scientific research** to find the facts and protect the public.
- **We empower youth to become active** responsible adults, by joining them in the classroom, and taking them to the halls of Congress.
- **We provide information about current nuclear policy** decisions and who to contact to voice your opinion.
- **We show the connections** between all sectors of the nuclear industry and examine the cumulative effects.
- **We encourage you to use renewable energy** (like wind and solar) that will not poison the future of our children and biosphere.
- **We show you sustainable and affordable ways** to build homes and businesses.
- **We explore ways to heal the human fears** within each one of us that lead to conflict-and ultimately, to a world bristling with genocidal weapons.

"We live on a recycling earth. You can't put poison into a recycling earth. We're damaging the seed... that's a death process. We're seeing it crop up as breast cancer, mentally retarded and hyperkinetic kids. We're seeing it crop up as infertility, and we're seeing animal species destroyed. But we don't seem to have quite said 'yes, that's us. That's our planet, that's what we did, and let's & stop it'." Dr. Rosalie Bertell



"This is truly the ultimate "right to life issue"— a right to be born without genetic malformations, a right to eat and drink non-radioactive food, a right to live a normal life-span without the threat of early cancer, and the right to live without the ever present threat of nuclear war.

"Above all, we are the curators of life on Earth, we hold it in the palm of our hand, a sacred trust with God."

Dr. Helen Caldicott

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