

Fukushima Anniversary: Japan's Historic Love-Hate Relationship with Nuclear Power

Global Research News Hour Episode 175

By [Michael Welch](#), [Peter Kuznick](#), and [Gordon Edwards](#)

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Region: [Asia](#), [Canada](#), [USA](#)

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The United States knows that peaceful power from atomic energy is no dream of the future. ..To hasten the day when fear of the atom will begin to disappear from the minds of people, and the governments of the East and West, there are certain steps that can be taken now.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower's address before the General Assembly of the United Nations on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, New York City, 1953

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The island nation of Japan is [ranked third in the world](#) in terms of the number of functioning nuclear reactors on its territory.

Why would the one country to experience the destructive potential of nuclear power in wartime, the culture that gave the world 'Godzilla,' and has endured the meltdowns of three reactors in 2011 continue to embrace nuclear power?

As part of the Global Research News Hour's commemoration of the sixth anniversary of the Fukushima Daichii nuclear catastrophe, we focus on the historical and political context of the disaster.

First up, we hear from [Professor Peter Kuznick](#) about the early years after the War. He explains the role of Japan in America's postwar geostrategy, and comments on the public relations campaign that convinced the population of the Asian country to stop worrying and love nuclear power.

Later, Canadian nuclear expert **Gordon Edwards** returns to the program to comment on Canada's connections with the Japanese nuclear industry and on how the Fukushima disaster should have informed Canadian nuclear policy and regulations.

Finally, we hear from celebrated Kyoto-based anti-nuclear activist **Aileen Mioko Smith** about the evolution of the anti-nuclear movement within Japan.

We also hear from a short video produced by Fairewinds Energy Education ([fairewinds.org](#)) outlining the fallacy of nuclear power as a strategy for fighting climate change.

Peter Kuznick is Professor of History at American University in Washington D.C. And Director of that university's Nuclear Studies Institute. . He is co-author with Akira Kimura of

'Rethinking the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Japanese and American Perspectives' (Horitsu Bunkasha, 2010), and co-author with Yuki Tanaka of *'Genpatsu to hiroshima – genshiryoku heiwa riyo no shinso'* (Nuclear Power and Hiroshima: The Truth Behind the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Power (Iwanami, 2011)). He also worked on *'The Untold History of the United States'*, a ten part Showtime documentary film series and book co-authored with Oliver Stone.

Gordon Edwards is co-founder and President of the [Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility](#). Recognized by Canadian Courts as a nuclear expert, he is recipient of the 2006 Nuclear Free Future Award and has also been awarded the Rosalie Bertell Lifetime Achievement Award as well as the YMCA Peacemaker medallion. He is based in Montreal.

Aileen Mioko Smith is Executive Director of [Green Action](#), a Kyoto based non-governmental environmental organization dedicated to creating a nuclear-power free Japan. Since the 1980s she has been a leading figure in the resistance against nuclear power in Japan. She is recipient of the 2014 Nuclear Free Future Award.

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Notes:

1) Dwight D. Eisenhower: "Address Before the General Assembly of the United Nations on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, New York City.," December 8, 1953. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=9774.;>

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