Diablo Canyon Nuke Power Plant: Battleground for Ending Radioactive Terror

Contributed by Jan Lundberg
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The revived anti-nuclear movement has promise, for the people coming together to volunteer and take on tasks are experienced. Those who are not veterans of the 1980s protests are dedicated and energetic. They're all ready for a fight to the finish: victory over allowing more Fukushimas, Chernobyls and Three Mile Islands.

On April 14 in San Francisco, California, the electric-rate state agency that in effect allows nuclear power's operation got an earful from the public.
Then we the people rallied outside in a respectable-sized crowd, demonstrating with huge puppets, speakers, musicians and news media. Go to this webpage for more photos:

Diablo Canyon Protest at CPUC

Amazingly, the federal government is rushing to foist more nuclear power on its citizens and on the world, by licensing Diablo Canyon even before the plant owner (Pacific Gas & Electric) makes seismic studies:

State senator tells feds to pause license review for Diablo Canyon nuclear plant

A top regional official of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission told a legislative committee Thursday that the agency intends to proceed with its safety and environmental analysis for extending the license of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant, despite a request from the plant's operator that the agency take no final action until after more thorough seismic studies are completed...

The senator, whose district includes the site of the nuclear plant, assailed the federal agency for what he called its decision to look at Diablo Canyon seismic issues "through rose-colored glasses" despite the damage to nuclear reactors in Japan resulting from last month's earthquake and tsunami.

"You're telling me you're going to proceed with business as usual? That's unacceptable," Sen. Sam Blakeslee, R-San Luis Obispo, told Pruett. (for the whole report see the website of the Ventura County Star.)

A major demonstration seems to be taking shape on Saturday, April 16 near San Luis Obispo which is near the seaside Diablo Canyon nuke. For details click here.

Three dozen anti-nuclear activists spoke passionately before the California Public Utilities Commission against the further operation of state nuke plants, on Thursday morning in San Francisco before the rally. Earthquake faults, lack of evacuation feasibility, and disregard for future generations were among the objections. No one at the public hearing spoke in favor of nuclear power, although several speakers overlapped with another contingent of activists: anti-Smart Meter consumers justifiably worried over wifi radiation, invasion of privacy, and unfair cost.

My own comments appear below. I wish I had notes on some others' comments so I could pass them on here. I chose to take the posture of a kind of ex-colleague of the commissioners (I used to provide alternative fuels data and analysis for their rate cases). I said

I'm Jan Lundberg, formerly of Lundberg Survey, now with Culture Change. I served on San Francisco's Peak Oil Preparedness Task Force. In my prior service to Big Oil, government agencies, and then in the nonprofit sector, I found

that the big assumption is that we need a vast overabundance of energy.

Where do we stand? Big energy in the form of the BP-Macondo disaster and Fukushima indicate a system out of control.

The industrial mindset says it's okay to mess with life on Earth - but it's not okay, and we're barely starting to pay the price.

Keeping the lid on the truth about nuclear power will be about as successful as it was keeping the lids on those nuclear reactors that exploded at Fukushima.

Following is a link for viewing good TV coverage of the hearing and the rally, by the ABC affiliate in San Francisco. It gives an overall picture of the main issues, along with more input from the public. You can see me in line to speak at the podium, the tall fellow wearing a dark blue suit. Watch now.

Further reading:

Anti nuclear movement gears up,
by Carly Nairn, April 14, 2011 (Quoting Jan Lundberg and, more importantly, Mothers for Peace which is part of a coalition petitioning the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to deny licensing.)

Where We Stand on the Cusp of Tremendous Change: Month Two of Fukushima
by Jan Lundberg

The overall news on Fukushima is very bad. For the rating of the "accident" to equal Chernobyl (7 on a scale of 1-7), according to the Japanese government (which has downplayed the disaster to the maximum), you have an idea of the ongoing harm to the air, soil and ocean. For more information, visit websites such as beyondnuclear.org

About remediation of radioactive soils:
Pour Evian on your radishes, by Albert Bates

The Problems With Smart Grids: Dumb and Dangerous
by B. Blake Levitt and Chellis Glendinning