

Wed 6th April 2011, 5:30 am.

As if right on cue after yesterday's post (my first in months), today I wake up to the news that 1. there's [a new sex scandal at Duntroon](#), and 2. not only radioactive Iodine, but now also radioactive Cadmium (with a half-life of 30 years - think of how far a shark might swim in 30 years, or a migrating bird fly!) is polluting the seawater for hundreds of kilometres around the Fukushima catastrophe. Eleven million *tons* of mildly radioactive seawater is now being pumped back into the ocean, in what amounts to an admission that things are so bad that 11 billion liters of radioactive seawater isn't going to make things all that much worse. (Notice how the amount was specified in tons, to make it sound less – who specifies liquid by weight and not volume? “Eleven million” doesn't sound as bad as “eleven billion”, regardless of units or scales – again, an obvious implicit admission that spin and whitewash are uppermost in the mind of those supplying the information). This disaster is [so much worse than Chernobyl](#), because that radioactive material was landlocked, and disseminated only by radioactive smoke, leading to dangerous fallout over a relatively short period. Of course, this was disastrous if that fallout fell on you, especially if you were a child at the time, a fact admitted by the nuclear power companies only implicitly – i.e. when they *don't* build reactors in the neighbourhood of where their own children and families live.

Although the site of the Chernobyl plant will be highly radioactive for centuries into the future, that radioactivity is locally contained, and easily kept that way, and relatively safe so long as you don't go too near to it (less than a kilometer). But radioactive seawater! Uncontainable! What an utter catastrophe! The “fall-out” of this disaster is not at all restricted to Japan, but is of danger to the whole ecosystem of the Pacific Ocean, one of the largest ecosystems on Earth! As the contaminated krill and plankton is consumed by the complex chain of predation, the toxins bio-accumulate. And we humans, at the top of this predatory pyramid, are at the greatest risk of all. And still, the clear bias of the “neutral” media from ABC TV to 'Einstein a Go Go' play all this down, say its no worse than the dose of a medical x-ray, utterly ignoring the real danger in the long-run by insisting on focussing solely upon the level of ambient radiation at the site. They also pretend that there's no such thing as [Green Earth Energy](#), and that there's no geothermal power plant under construction at Angelsea near Geelong. Such selective objectivity! Such blatant bias, all the more disturbing for just how unconscious it is, and just how vehement the protestations of neutrality are. But there is no neutrality when it comes to nuclear power, for we all have to live with the consequences of the nuclear scientists' short-sighted and naive perspective.

Back to Duntroon: the military like the catholic church are busily trying to play this like every other sex-scandal down, insisting that it reveals nothing essential about the fundamental values of the institution in question, when in fact all thinking people can see that the irregular but persistent irruption of such scandals reveals something essential about the contradictions at the heart of the military/religious value systems. It reveals that despite the millions of dollars of taxpayers money given to the advertising industry to produce slick advertising for the military, there is an essential and fundamental contradiction between the laudable ideals of the military, and the violence on which the institution is actually based. This contradiction, so blatant as to be invisible to those immersed in it, leads to the [emporer's-new-clothes](#) form of consciousness characteristic of the puritan, religious, military, or otherwise. And such puritanical attitudes are spreading through Canberra like a new strain of 'flu.

There's [an old Monty Python](#) sketch which depicts a gathering of four elderly Yorkshiremen one-upping one another with reminiscences of hardship: “In my day, we got up at 4am and swept the road”, the next old-timer replying with “That's nothing; in *my* day we got up at 3am and ate mud: we dreamed of sleeping-in till 4am and only having to sweep the road!” etc etc. Gillard's lame comments regarding the time that Greens get up in the morning is the perfect pair to Tony Abbott's

lame attack on the disabled and unemployed. These two bullies are attempting to look tough by out-bullying each other, and dragging the level of debate in Australia down to this school-yard level. Pathetic. Is that really the best she can come up with? All to avoid facing the one big issue: how to go about showing the world how [a zero-carbon future](#) *could* look within a mere decade. Of course the world's fossil-and-uranium fuel vested interests are dedicated to preventing this demonstration of possibility occurring. They want at all costs to perpetuate the myth that there simply is no alternative to fossil-fuels other than nuclear power. But this is too great an opportunity for Australia to pass up. To suddenly leap to the forefront of world technological development, technology not of destruction and death, but technology of life and hope, creating a sustainable, smart, fantastic future of electric cars in quiet cities, cities no longer choking on petrochemical fumes and yelling over the infernal roar of the internal combustion engine, and a stable global atmosphere allowing the development of potentials and capacities of which we can only dream. And it could all be funded tomorrow without any cost to taxpayers if only the entire budget wasted on the military was immediately redirected to fighting the real battle of our times, the battle against climate instability.

Sad to think that only a catastrophe like Fukushima and the past year of widespread global weather-instability can give us the slap in the face we need to wake up and see the obvious. And even all this is not enough for those so comatose that they still think that we can keep burning coal to generate our electricity. They need a bucket of water in their faces – radioactive sea water from Fukushima – and they need it in not only their own faces, but in their children's faces too. Wake up America! Wake up England! You're asleep at the wheel and the bus is crashing!