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CLAMSHELL ALLIANCE: NO NUKES!
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Is Nuclear Power Coming Back from the Dead? “Not If We Can Help It,” Say Activists Who Buried Nukes More Than 40 Years Ago

Forty-five years ago, on March 28, 1979, one of the nuclear reactors at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania experienced a partial meltdown, nearly triggering a regional catastrophe. The American public got the message: Nukes are just too dangerous. The nuclear industry sank into a coma.

But as the industry seeks a revival — with backing from Congress, the White House, and teams of industry propogandists — prominent activists from the No Nukes/Safe Energy movement of the 1970s are reviving, too.

“Shifting to renewable energy and conservation can save the planet from climate collapse, without the risks and expense of nuclear technology,” says Paul Gunter, whose anti-nuclear activism has barely paused since he was first arrested protesting the Seabrook, New Hampshire nuclear plant in 1976.

As a member of the Clamshell Alliance, a New England grassroots coalition, Gunter was part of the movement that used mass nonviolent protests and creative community education to thrust the dangers of nuclear power onto the national agenda. Now the co-director of the Takoma Park, MD-based organization Beyond Nuclear, Gunter is part of a cluster of “Clams” gearing up for a new round of No Nukes activism.

Today’s Clams point out that accidents, poor design, phony insurance, out-of-control cost overruns decades-long ramp-ups, and the absence of a long-term disposal plan for radioactive waste still haunt the industry. These adversities also haunt the memories of those who first brought these serious issues into public view. For example:

- The area around Chernobyl in Ukraine is still uninhabitable, 38 years after a nuclear reactor meltdown.¹ Thirteen years after the multiple meltdowns at Fukushima, Japan, 2000 people have died as a result of the accident and 30,000 former residents (of the 140,000 who fled) have not returned². These are just two of at least 133 potentially catastrophic nuclear accidents worldwide.³

¹ <https://www.newsweek.com/what-does-chernobyl-look-like-today-can-you-go-there-1774395>

² <https://thebulletin.org/2021/03/10-years-after-fukushima-are-japanese-nuclear-power-plants-safe/>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_nuclear_power_accidents_by_country

- Germany, once heavily nuclear, has closed all its nukes,⁴ as have Italy and Lithuania. Spain and Switzerland are shutting theirs down. Japan kept all of its nukes shuttered for several years after the accident at Fukushima and, according to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, the 17 that did restart are at risk in future seismic events.⁵
- The latest generation of nuclear reactors is unproven, would take years to come online, and are already showing they will cost vastly more than anticipated.⁶
- The war in Ukraine has illustrated the vulnerability of nuclear reactors to war, attacks by terrorists, and other potential disasters.

Meanwhile, conservation and true clean energy from renewables like solar, wind, small hydro and geothermal have become far cheaper, faster to deploy, and more reliable than any nuclear or fossil alternative.⁷

“Since the 1970s, activists have demanded the shutdown of nuclear power plants until these and other serious problems were fixed,” says Phil Stone, a one-time member of the Worcester-based Central Massachusetts Safe Energy Project, a Clamshell affiliate.

“Clamshell inspired numerous nonviolent safe-energy organizations to form around the country following the Seabrook occupation of 1977. This, in turn, helped foster the near-total halt of US nuclear power plant construction following the Three Mile Island accident in 1979,” Stone said.

Clamshell activists of that era have stayed in touch and have been meeting regularly. Rebranded as **Clamshell Alliance: No Nukes**, the revived organization released “[Nuclear Power is STILL the WRONG Answer](#)”, a paper pointing out that nuclear is no more viable today than it was 50 years ago. The statement calls for climate change activists and others to take action again to counter another con job by the nuclear apologists.

“Nuclear Power is STILL the WRONG Answer” offers eight reasons why nuclear will never solve our energy problems, and illuminates a pathway toward an alternative green and democratic future powered by renewable energy systems owned and governed by their users.

Stone added, “The new Clamshell Alliance: No Nukes [website](#) also offers other resources on why nuclear power has never been, and will never be, a solution to climate change or to our energy needs—and the numerous ways we can power our needs with truly safe energy.”

“With Congress on the brink of approving legislation to speed up nuclear licensing and further shield the industry from the consequences of nuclear disasters, we’re putting out a call for a new generation of climate and environmental justice activists to join us in proclaiming No Nukes,” said Gunter.

⁴ <https://apnews.com/article/germany-nuclear-power-plants-shut-energy-376dcaa223f88fedff138b9a63a6f0da>

⁵ <https://thebulletin.org/2021/03/10-years-after-fukushima-are-japanese-nuclear-power-plants-safe/>

⁶ <https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/latest-news-headlines/costs-permitting-hurdles-dampen-potential-for-new-nuclear-capacity-69550774>

⁷ <https://reneweconomy.com.au/nuclear-goes-backwards-again-as-wind-and-solar-enjoy-another-year-of-record-growth/>