No More Nuclear!

I have never understood why anyone would buy into the belief system that nuclear energy is clean, unless invisible but deadly contamination doesn't count.

Before recent events in Japan reminded us of the global threat of radiation due to a meltdown or any other release of radioactive material into the atmosphere, we knew nuclear energy wasn't green or clean. How could it be when radioactive waste takes tens of thousands of years to decay to safe levels?

Now, with the crisis in Japan, Americans are once again speaking out about the safety of nuclear energy. And the White House is talking back.

White House spokesman, Jay Carney made it clear that President Obama, who has proposed $36 billion in loan guarantees for nuclear power, has no plans to change his policy.

We find it ludicrous that low CO2 emissions and clean nuclear energy are synonymous when talking about nuclear energy.

Alex Flint of the Nuclear Regulatory Agency said in a Fox News interview that the United States is "best in class" at anticipating and preparing for unlikely events, especially since 9/11. While doing his best not to suggest the Japanese were not lax or inept in preparedness, he suggests we are more prepared and will learn from their mistakes as well. But the truth is we currently have 104 nuclear power plants in operation in the United States and many of them are on coastlines or fault lines. When scientists say the San Onofre nuclear power plant in California was built to withstand a 7.0 earthquake, which is sufficient based on their study of the seismic activity in the area, along with its thirty foot tsunami wall, forgive me if I have my doubts that all is well and perfectly safe. I can't help but think about New Orleans.

The levees, built by the Army Corps of Engineers, failed when Katrina, a level 3 hurricane, reached the shore. American superiority? Best in class, my ass.

The Japanese are well trained, well prepared, and they knew they were living on fault lines with the threat of tsunamis. After an earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale and a massive tsunami, their preparations failed. At the time of this writing, they are facing not one, but possibly three meltdowns. There have been three explosions, which have released radiation into the atmosphere.

And one important consideration to remember is this: once released, that radiation cannot be contained. How many of Japan’s downwind neighbors will be affected by the fallout?