We’re outraged. And we expect you were, too. On April 23, 2012, the Washington Post editorial board writers callously dismissed the Fukushima nuclear disaster as “non-catastrophic.”

They eagerly promoted nuclear power while omitting inconvenient deal-breakers such as cost, waste, safety, health risks and human rights. The paper taunted Germany and Japan - and the anti-nuclear movement - for looking to renewables but misrepresented Germany’s successes. And they utterly ignored those who have already paid the price for the nuclear fuel chain, like indigenous uranium miners, and its newest victims, the children of Japan whose future has been stolen. You can review the original editorial here.

Let’s tell the Washington Post what we think about their shoddy editorial!

We rebutted a few of their points below. A longer rebuttal document is on our website. Please use these mythbusters to send the editorial board sacks of old-fashioned mail! Write to The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20071-0001. Or email or call editorial page editor, Fred Hiatt at fredhiatt@washpost.com or 202-334-7281. You can also contact the Ombudsman, Patrick Pexton, at ombudsman@washpost.com.

Here are some of the WP myths and our responses:

WP: The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster was “scary but ultimately non-catastrophic.”
FACT: Minimizing the still unfolding consequences of the Fukushima nuclear disaster and dismissing it as “non-catastrophic” is reprehensible and irresponsible. Radioactive contamination is widespread and growing. In fact, the accident is not even over, yet. Thousands are already suffering and countless more will suffer and die prematurely as a result of their exposure to the Fukushima radiation. A 20km (12.4 mile) area around the stricken reactors will remain a “dead zone” for decades and potentially centuries. It is hard to know what more the Post editorial writers need to qualify as “catastrophic.”

WP: Nuclear power “is the only proven source of low-emissions ‘baseload’ power.”
FACT: In many regions, peak wind and solar production match up well with peak electricity demand. Numerous regional and global case studies have provided plausible plans to meet 100% of energy demand with energy efficiency and renewable sources.

WP: Germany and Japan are “giving up all of that guaranteed, low-carbon electricity generation in an anti-nuclear frenzy.”
FACT: Far from “guaranteed,” the Fukushima reactors became a liability when they were needed most, worsening an already catastrophic situation. And far from in a “frenzy”, Germany has already revitalized home-grown industries like steel and has more people working in the renewable sector (370,000) than in the nuclear (30,000) and coal industries (20,000) combined.

WP MYTH: “Japan could still reduce carbon emissions by 25 percent of its 1990 levels by 2030 without nuclear power. Yet even if that’s true, it’s hardly a reason to let all of that existing nuclear infrastructure and know-how go to waste.”
FACT: The nuclear industry has always been in the waste business - unmanaged radioactive waste. Since December 2, 1942, when scientists created the world's first self-sustaining nuclear
Why the Washington Post is wrong

chain reaction, the industry’s entire infrastructure has gone to waste: here in the U.S. it has produced more than 67,000 metric tons of irradiated nuclear fuel - and at least another 10,000 metric tons of radioactive waste from nuclear weapons - with nowhere to go.

Read the rest of our responses to the Washington Post editorial here.

Thank you for taking action! And if you like what we do and can support our work, please make an online donation today or mail your gift to: Beyond Nuclear, 6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 400, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

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