

Review: Nuclear Power Is Not the Answer

By Helen Caldicott

Reviewed by Umar Karim Mirza

*Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied
Sciences, Pakistan.*

Helen Caldicott. *Nuclear Power Is Not the Answer*. New York, NY: The New Press, 2006. 240 pp. ISBN: 978-1-59558-067-2. Hardcover, US\$23.95.

Helen Caldicott, a medical doctor, is the world's leading spokesperson for the antinuclear movement. She is the co-founder of Physicians for Social Responsibility, a nominee for the Noble Peace Prize, and the winner of the 2003 Lannan Cultural Freedom Prize. She is also the founder and President of the Nuclear Policy Research Institute (NPRI) (<http://www.nuclearpolicy.org>), headquartered in Washington DC. She is the world's leading anti-nuclear voice. The book under discussion is the sixth one that she has authored.

The first four chapters talk about the true costs of nuclear power, the health effects of radiation, and nuclear accidents. The burning issue of nuclear waste is explained next, followed by the author's insights on the latest nuclear reactors. Chapters 7 and 8 are devoted to a discussion of nuclear weapons proliferation. In the following chapter, the author concludes that renewable energy is the ultimate choice for humanity. The last chapter makes suggestions as to how we as individuals can contribute towards having a sustainable energy future. A detailed notes section follows. The index is rather brief.

Dr. Caldicott has stressed in this book is that nuclear power is not the way forward. The exorbitant costs, lack of a foreseeable solution to the nuclear waste problem, and the possibility of nuclear weapons proliferation make it a prohibitive choice. Renewable energy, on the other hand, is portrayed as the only viable option for a sustainable energy future.

You do not need to be a nuclear scientist to appreciate this book. Anyone having a basic knowledge of physics and environment would be able to understand it. This is recommended reading for policy researchers, politicians and environmentalists. This is not a textbook, though public policy students can read it for their benefit.

Recommended website:

Nuclear Information and Resource Service (<http://www.nirs.org>)

Umar Karim Mirza <mensan152@yahoo.com>, Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences, P.O. Nilore, Islamabad 45650, Pakistan. TEL: +92-51-2207381, FAX: +92-51-9223727.