

Dr. John Gofman

In Memoriam

September 21, 1918 – August 15, 2007

It is with deep sorrow that we mourn the passing of this great man. We mourn also the loss that his passing means for the collective conscience of the Atomic Age. Dr. John Gofman was a sentinel voice in the effort to stop atomic power. He was instrumental in drawing attention to the medical hazards of nuclear power, especially from the so-called “low” dose radiation spewed into the air and water from routine nuclear power plant operations. He spoke plainly with integrity and sincerity at citizen rallies and in court, was a published author of books and in journals and was frequently quoted by the media. He told us: “If you pollute when you DO NOT KNOW if there is any safe dose, you are performing improper experimentation on people without their informed consent. If you pollute when you know there is NO safe dose, with respect to causing extra cases of deadly cancers, then you are committing premeditated random murder.” He inspired and urged us to stand up and do something, as he did his whole life.

Kay Drey, Beyond Nuclear board member and lifelong activist, works to oppose nuclear power. She knew Dr. Gofman, and writes in tribute:

“Dr. John Gofman was one of the first credentialed scientists to speak publicly about the dangers of nuclear pollution. Because he was an award-winning, highly respected physician and nuclear/physical chemist, it was difficult for representatives of the nuclear industry and the government to discount his informed concerns about the hazards of radiation and of nuclear “poisoned power.” He was helpful and patient when responding to requests for information from the public and the media, and was able to explain complex technical issues in ways we could understand. He served eloquently as an expert witness for radiation victims in court. I will always be indebted to Dr. Gofman for his wisdom, courage and contributions toward a healthier and safer world.”

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that really matter." ~MLK