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**What Did They Know And When?  
Fukushima Daiichi  
Before And After The Meltdowns**

**Symposium: The Medical and Ecological Consequences  
of the Fukushima Nuclear Accident**

**The New York Academy of Medicine, New York City, NY**

**March 11, 2013**

Presented by Fairewinds Energy Education  
Burlington, VT  
[fairewinds.org](http://fairewinds.org)

## In Honor Of:

- The Staff at both Fukushima Daiichi and Fukushima Daini are heroes, not just to Japan, but to the world.
- Their bravery saved Japan from massive evacuations.
- I wish to express my profound respect for their selfless effort during the first days and weeks following the accident at Fukushima Daiichi.

# Sequence of Presentation

**SECTION 1: Before Operation: Design & Construction**

**SECTION 2: Before Operation: Political Issues**

**SECTION 3: Radiological Releases**

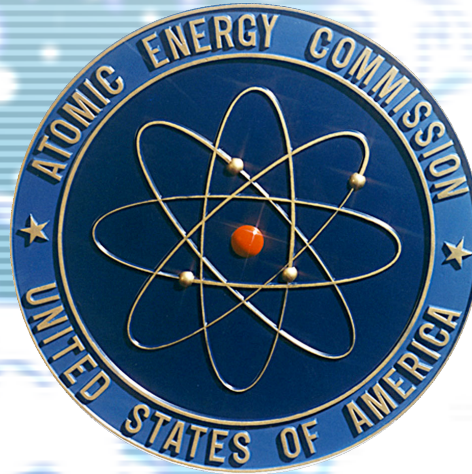
**SECTION 4: Conclusions**



## **SECTION 1**

# **Before Operation: Design & Construction**

# The Fukushima Daiichi Catastrophe Made In America In The 1960s



# **Licensed By The AEC, Designed By GE, And Constructed By Ebasco**

The Mark 1 BWRs at Fukushima Daiichi are almost identical to The Pilgrim and Vermont Yankee nuclear power plants as well as 22 other Mark 1 BWRs built throughout the United States.

The main difference between the US plants and the Japanese plants is the significant amount of highly radioactive spent fuel stored in the US reactor spent fuel pools located five stories above the nuclear reactors.

## **Six GE & Ebasco Design Errors:**

1. Reduced the height of cliff to water;
2. Very short Tsunami wall – unable to protect;
3. Diesels placed in basement – in the path of rising and surging waters;
4. Emergency pumps located on the shore line are not submersible pumps;
5. Diesel Fuel Tanks placed in flood plane;
6. Faulty Mark 1 Containment – unable to contain radiation because it is too small for reactor.

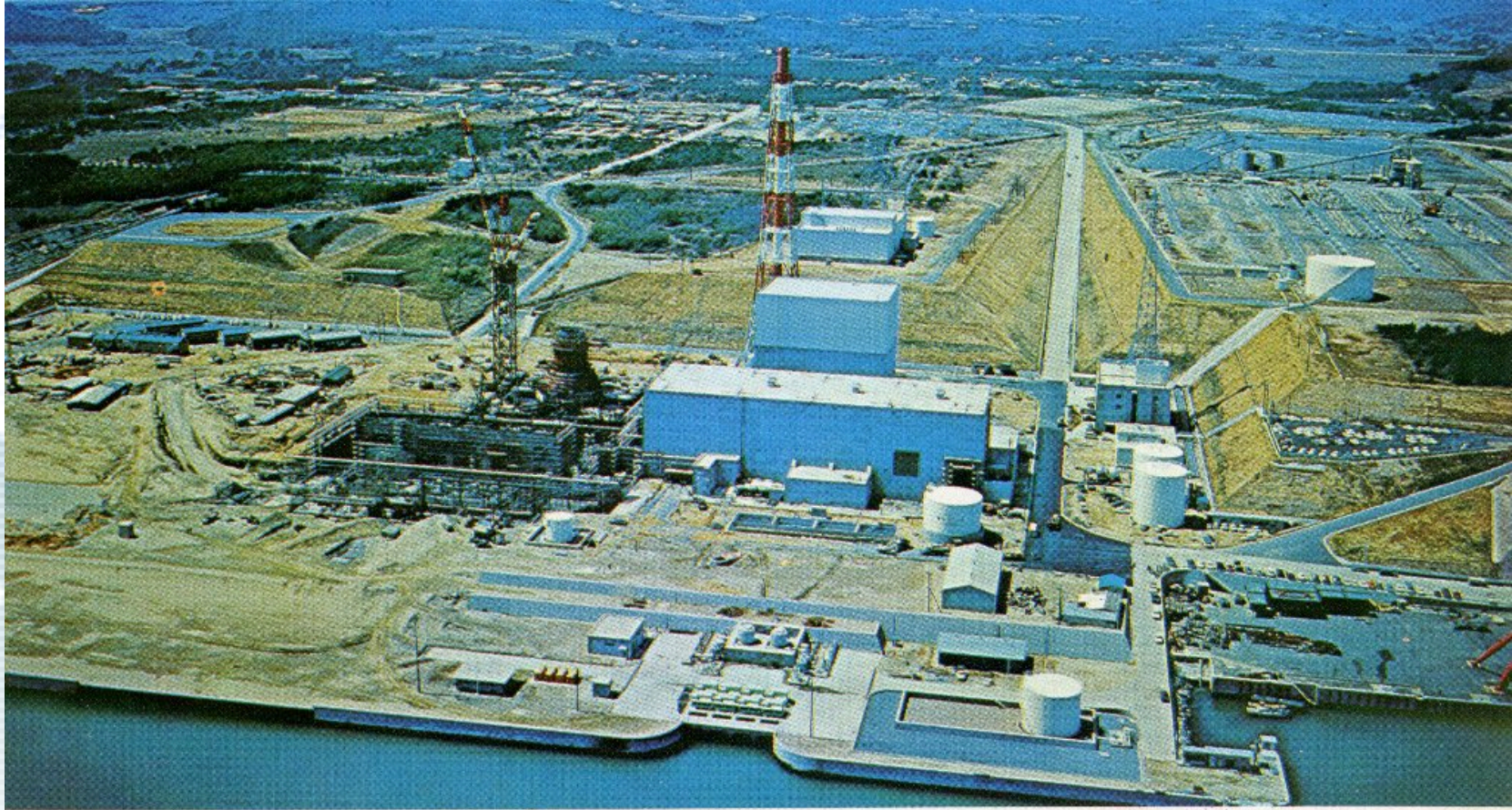


## In 1960

- The Fukushima Daiichi site contained a 35 meter (115 foot) cliff
- The cliff was cut to 10 meters (33 feet) in order to build closer to the ocean



# After Daiichi Was Built



原子力発電所 上の写真は、けんせつ中の福島1号原子力発電所です。出力は、46万キロワット。

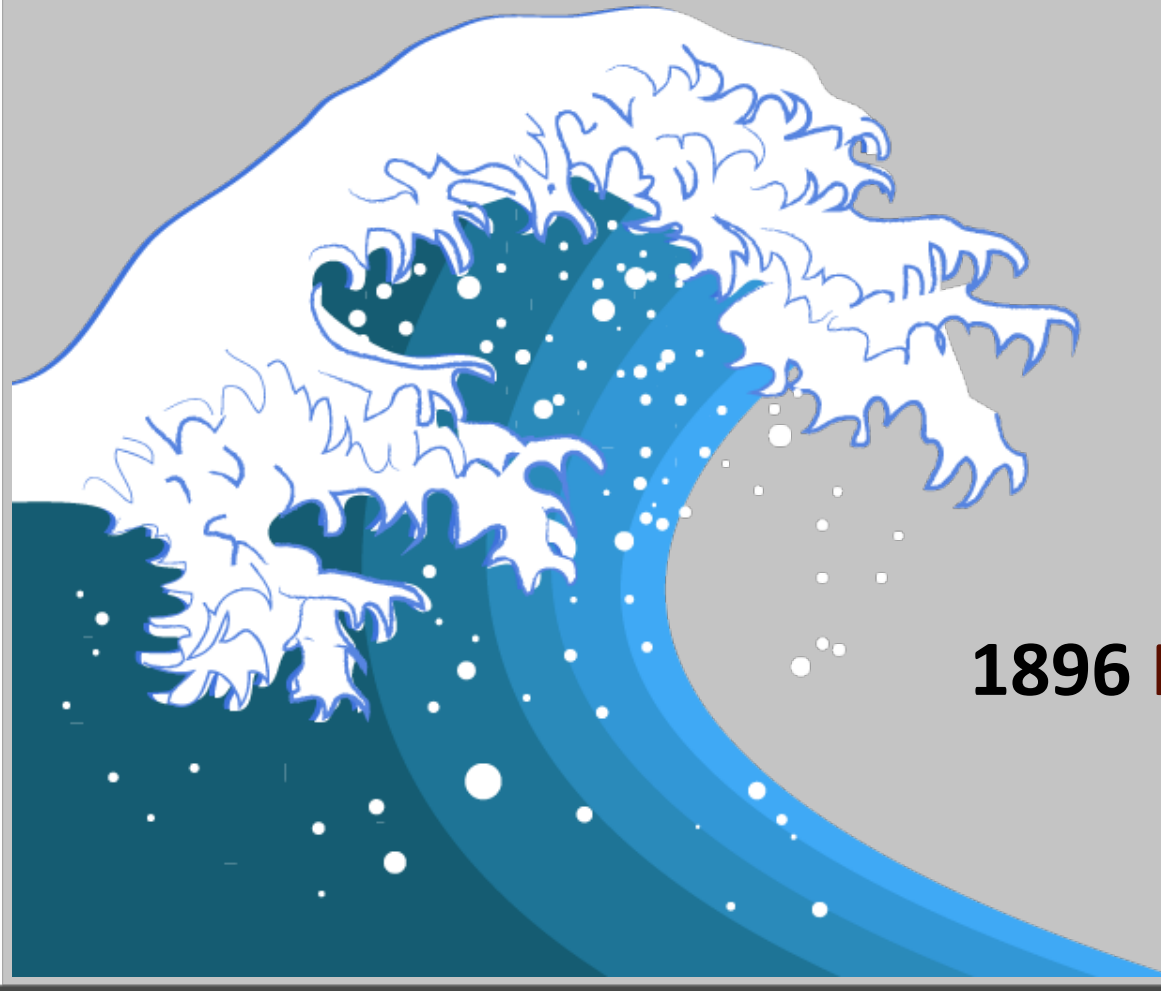
# **Tsunami – Japanese tsu "harbor" + nami "waves":**

- Produced by a seaquake or undersea volcanic eruption;
- Tsunami travel thousands of miles over the open ocean;
- Tsunamis can have heights of up to 50 m (165 ft) and reach speeds of 950 km (589 mi) per hour;
- They are characterized by long wavelengths of up to 200 km (124 mi) and long periods, usually between 10 and 60 minutes.

# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY

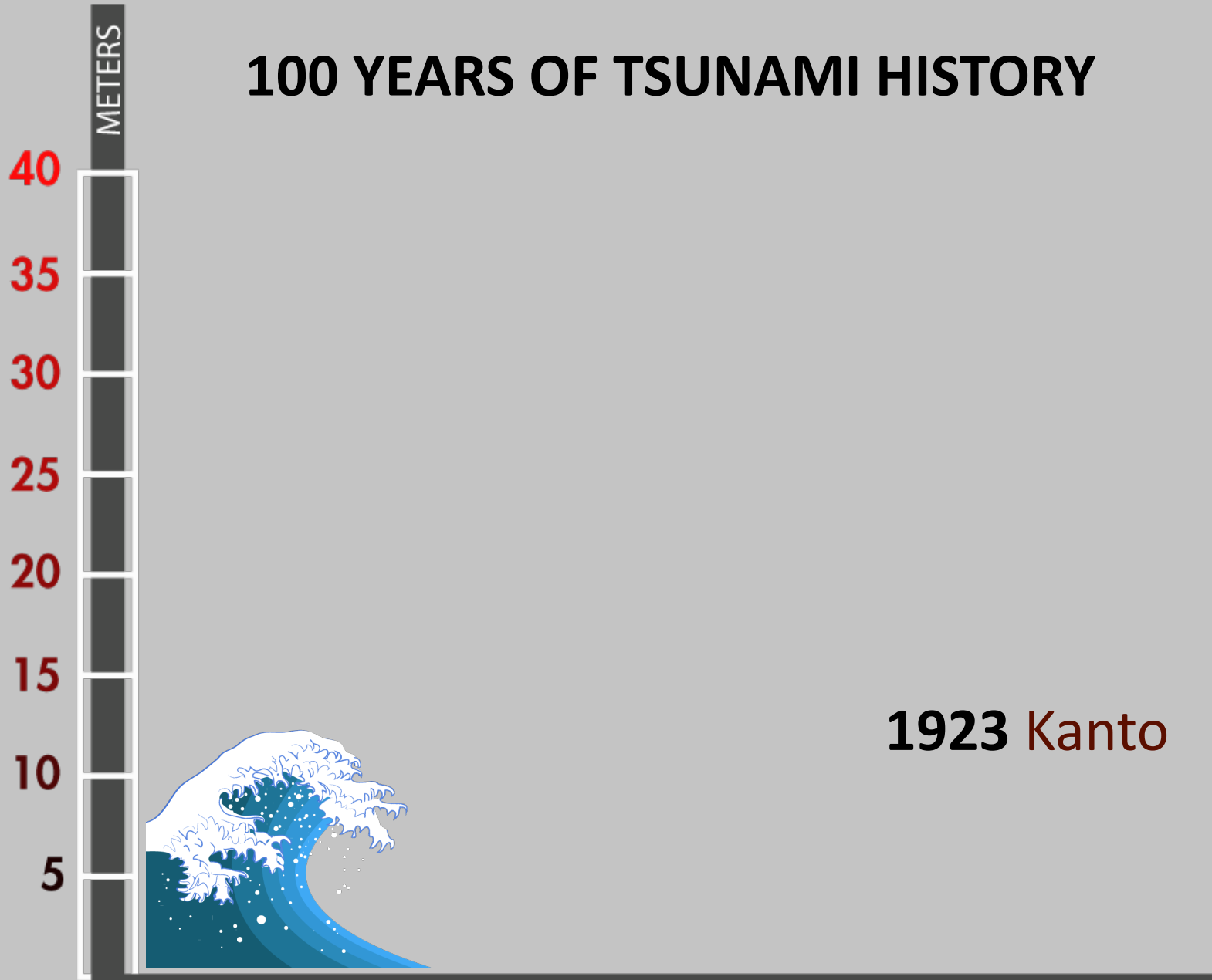
40  
35  
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METERS



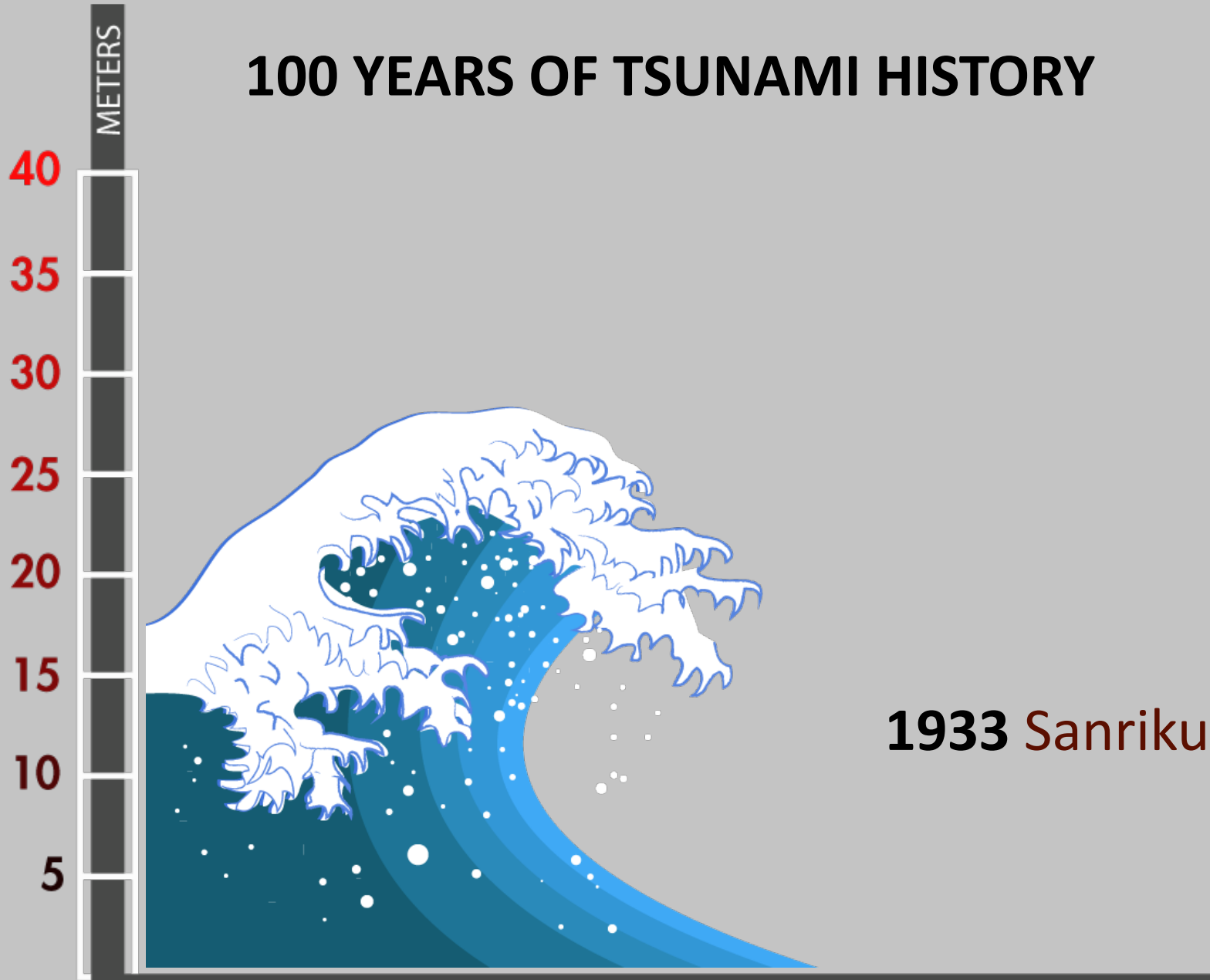
**1896 Meji-Sanriku**

# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY



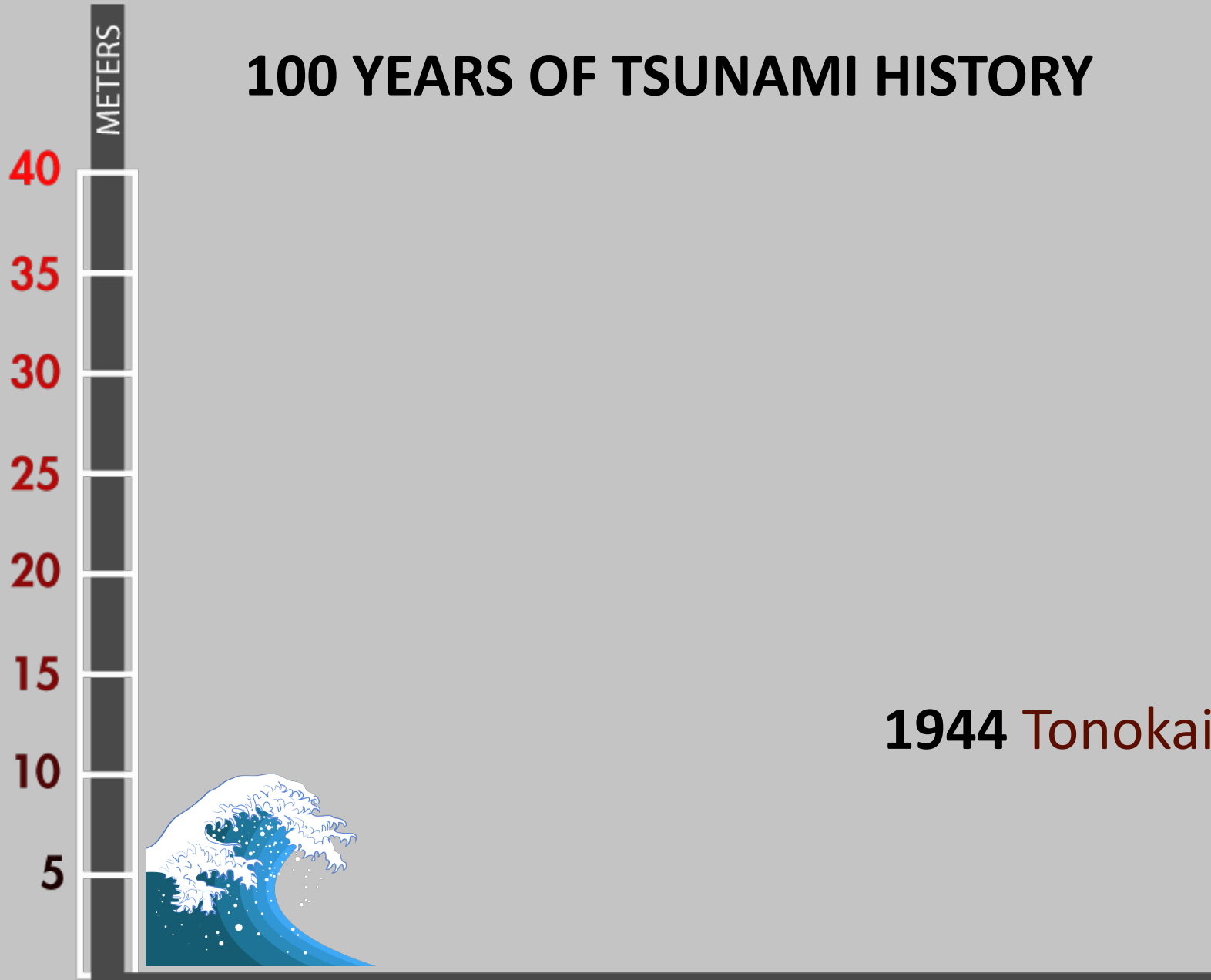
**1923** Kanto

# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY



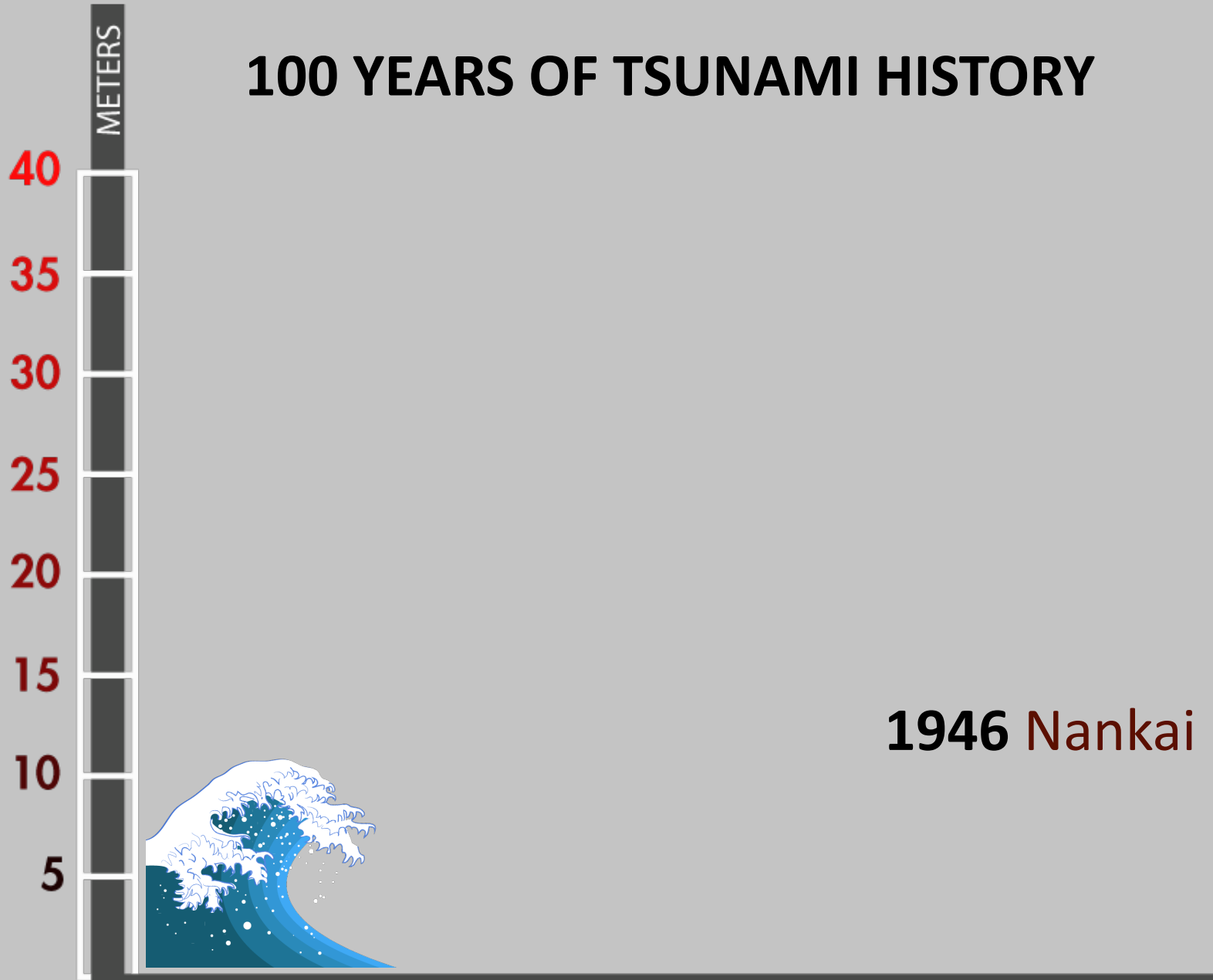
**1933 Sanriku**

# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY



**1944** Tonokai

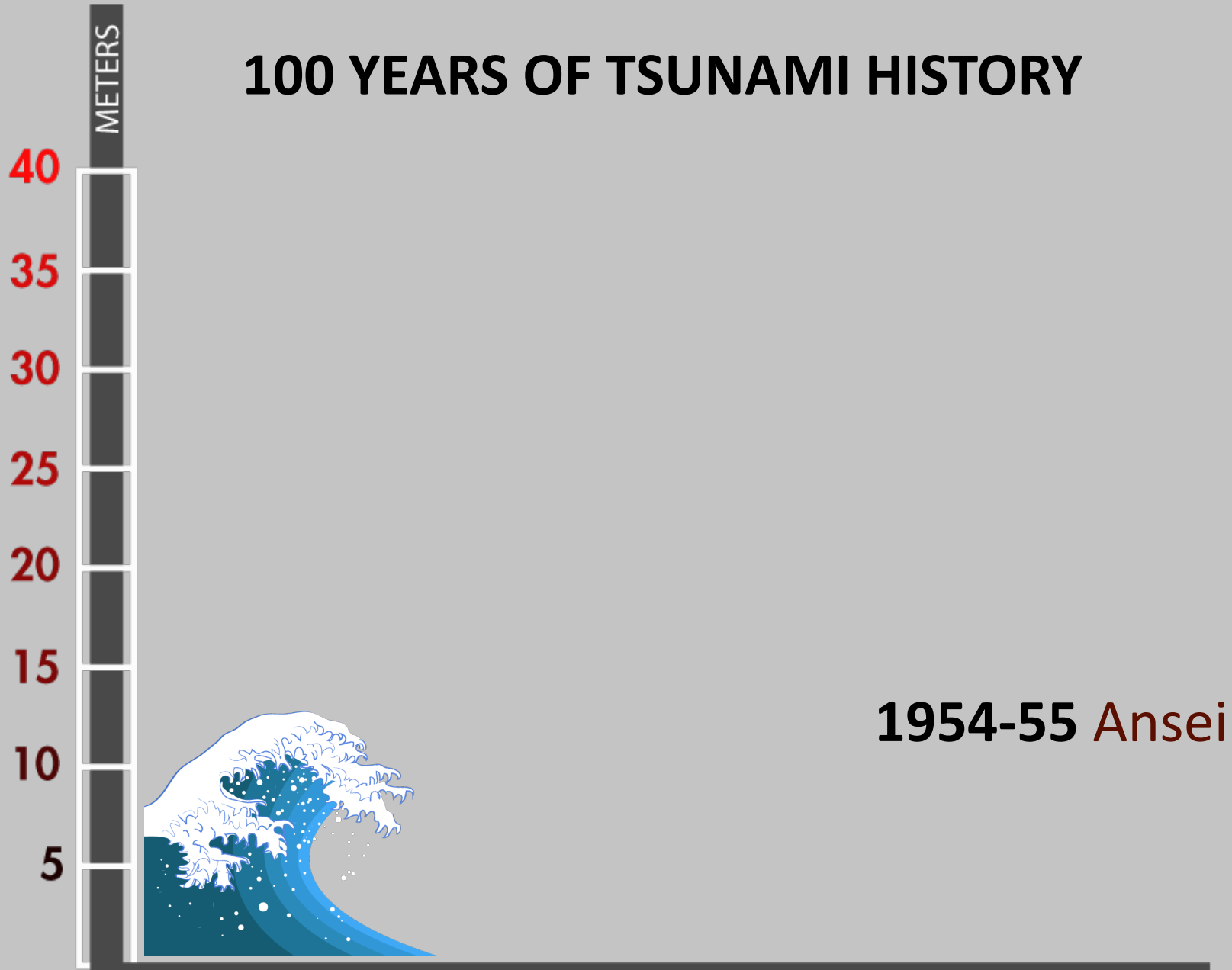
# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY



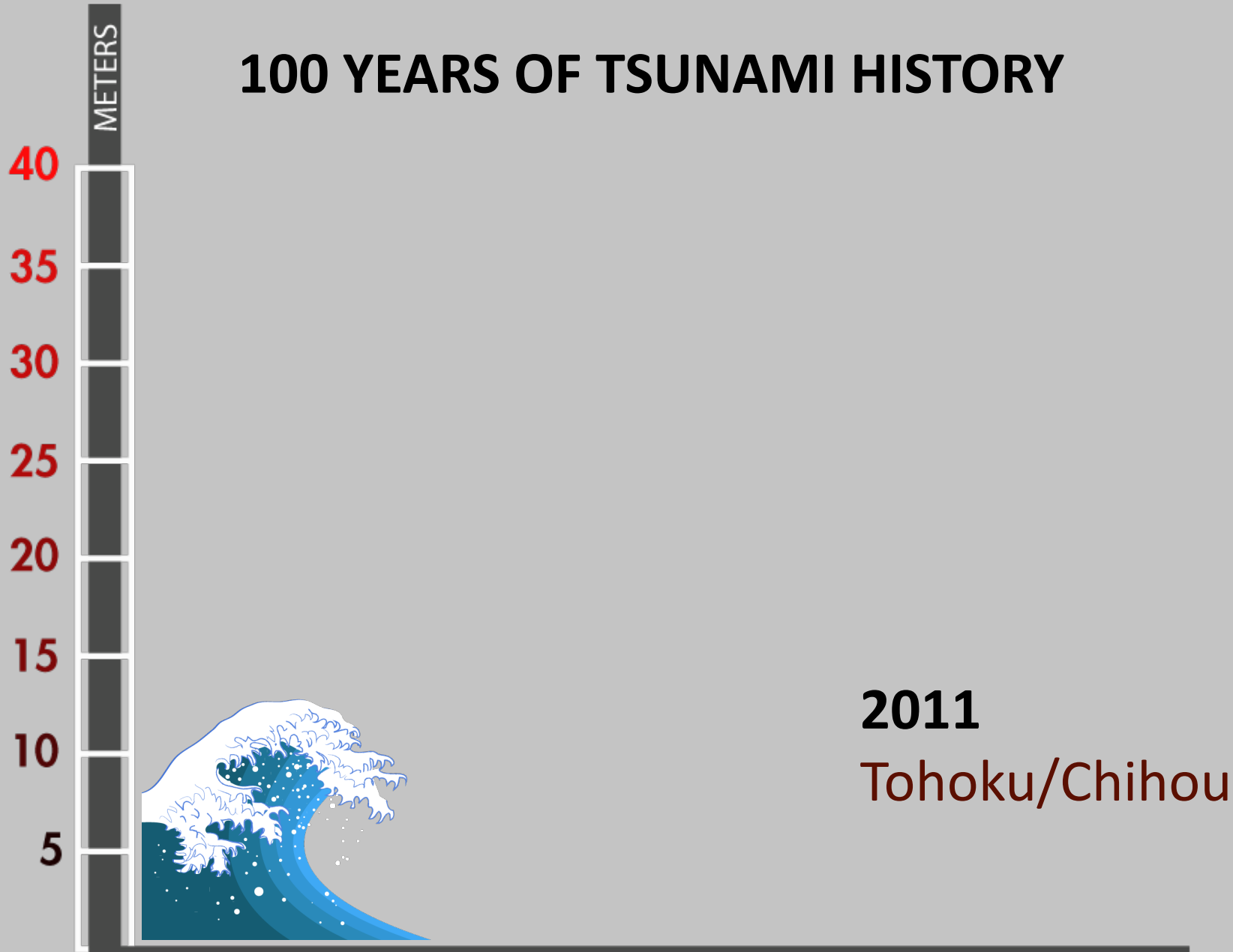
**1946 Nankai**



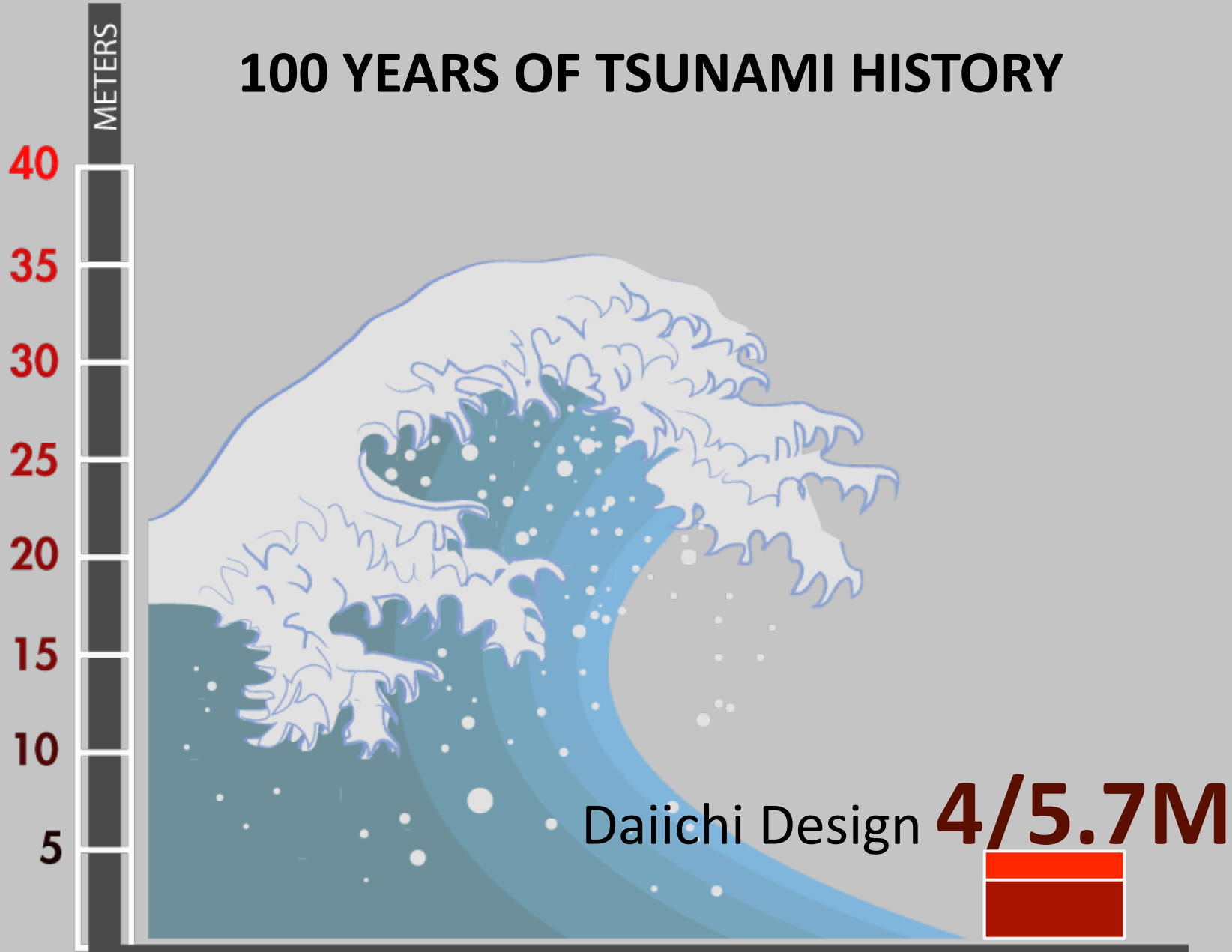
# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY



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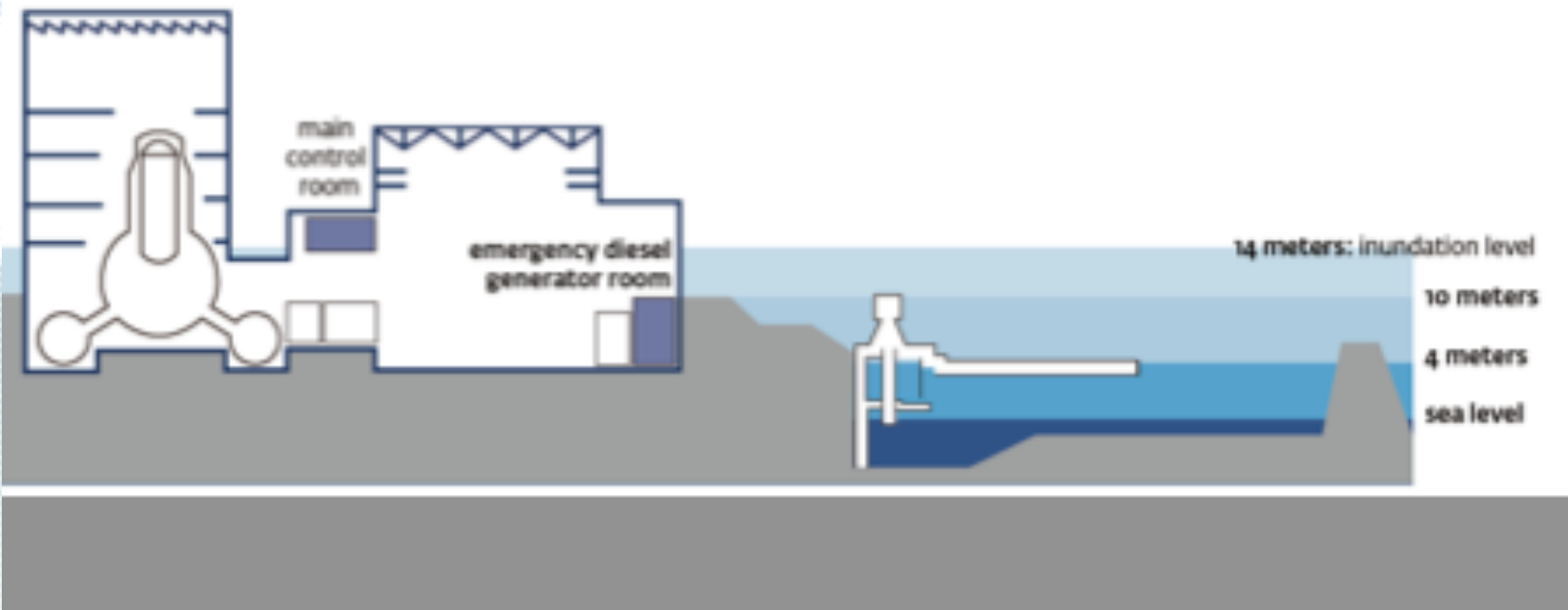
# 100 YEARS OF TSUNAMI HISTORY



# In 1968, Backup Diesels Were Placed In The Basement With No Flood Protection



# Emergency Service Water Pumps Were Not Designed To Be Flooded



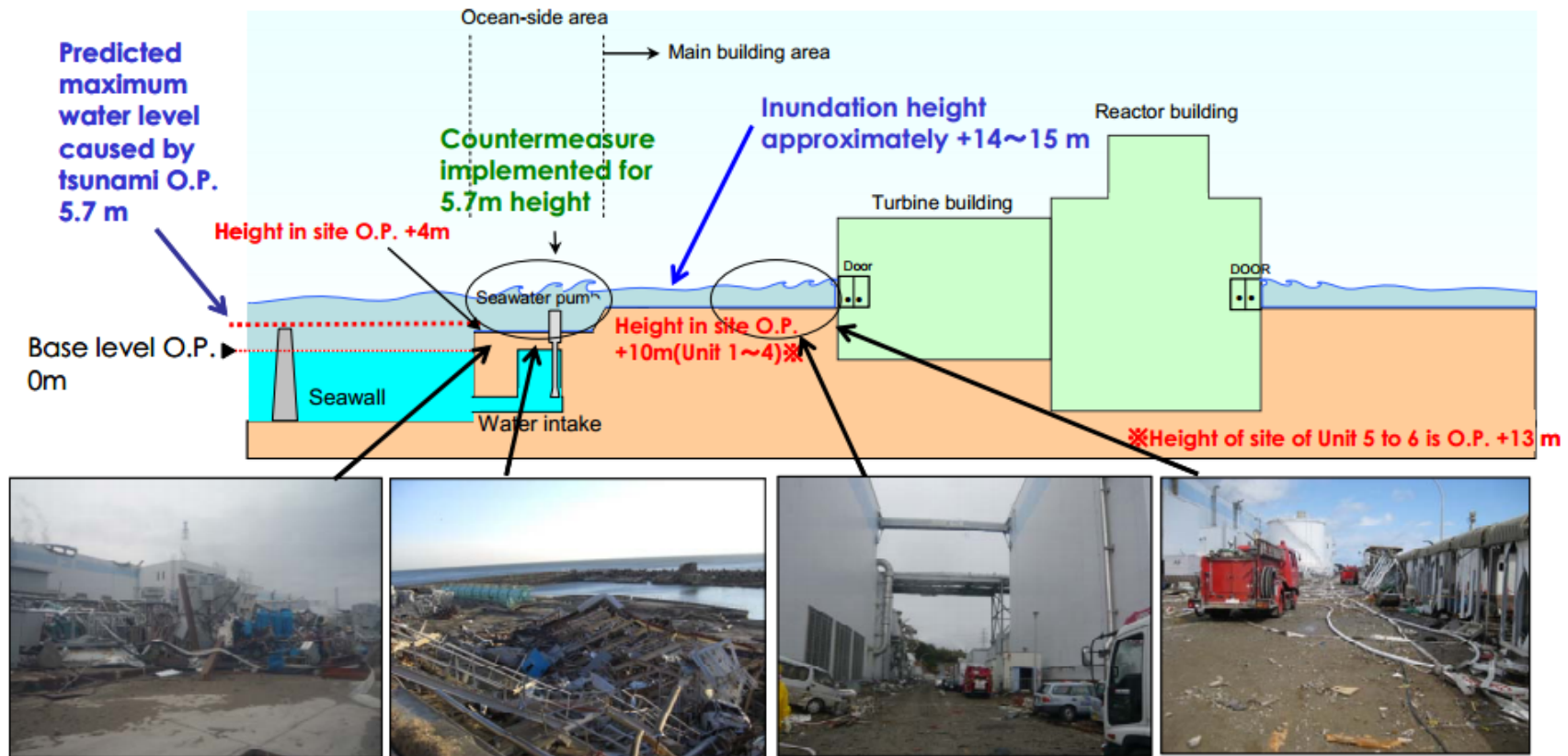
# Loss of the Ultimate Heat Sink (LoUHS)



## **Tsunami Wave Topping Seawall**

Tsunami wave topping the 5.7 meter high seawall at Fukushima Daiichi on 11 March 2011, in front of the two diesel generator fuel tanks. [Source: TEPCO Photo]

# Tsunami Damage Causes Loss of the Ultimate Heat Sink (LoUHS).





## **SECTION 2**

# **Before Operation: Political Issues**



## General Electric (GE)

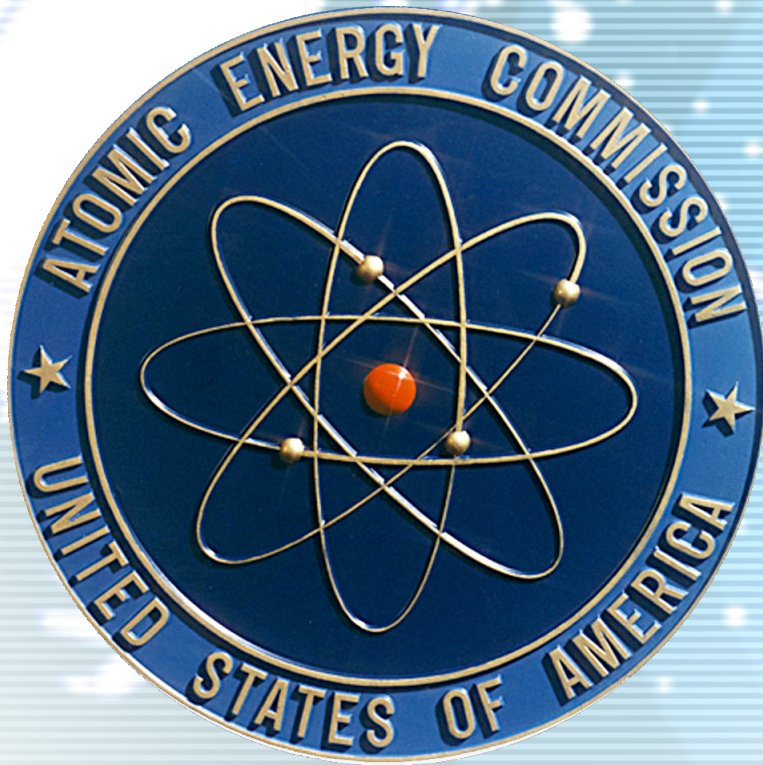
***Progress Is Our Most  
Important Product.***

In 1961 GE's CEO  
proclaimed:



“We’re going to  
ram this nuclear  
thing through.”

# Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) #1

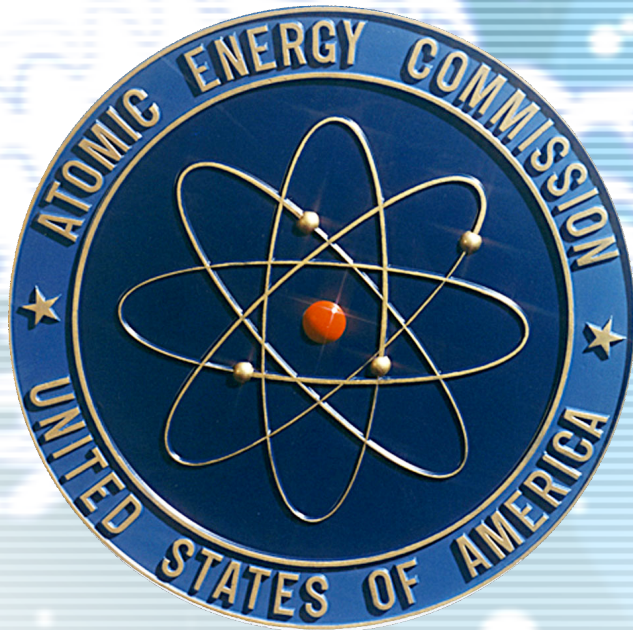


## AEC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS)

Dr. David Okrent said that General Electric made it plain in the 1966 meetings that it would not remain in the business of nuclear reactors if it were forced to redesign its nuclear reactors to better account for core meltdown scenarios.

## Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) #2

**AEC Chartered Mission To  
Regulate And Promote  
Nuclear Power**



**AEC's Advisory  
Committee on Reactor  
Safeguards (ACRS)**

Dr. David Okrent said that GE's comment "was a kind of threat I think".

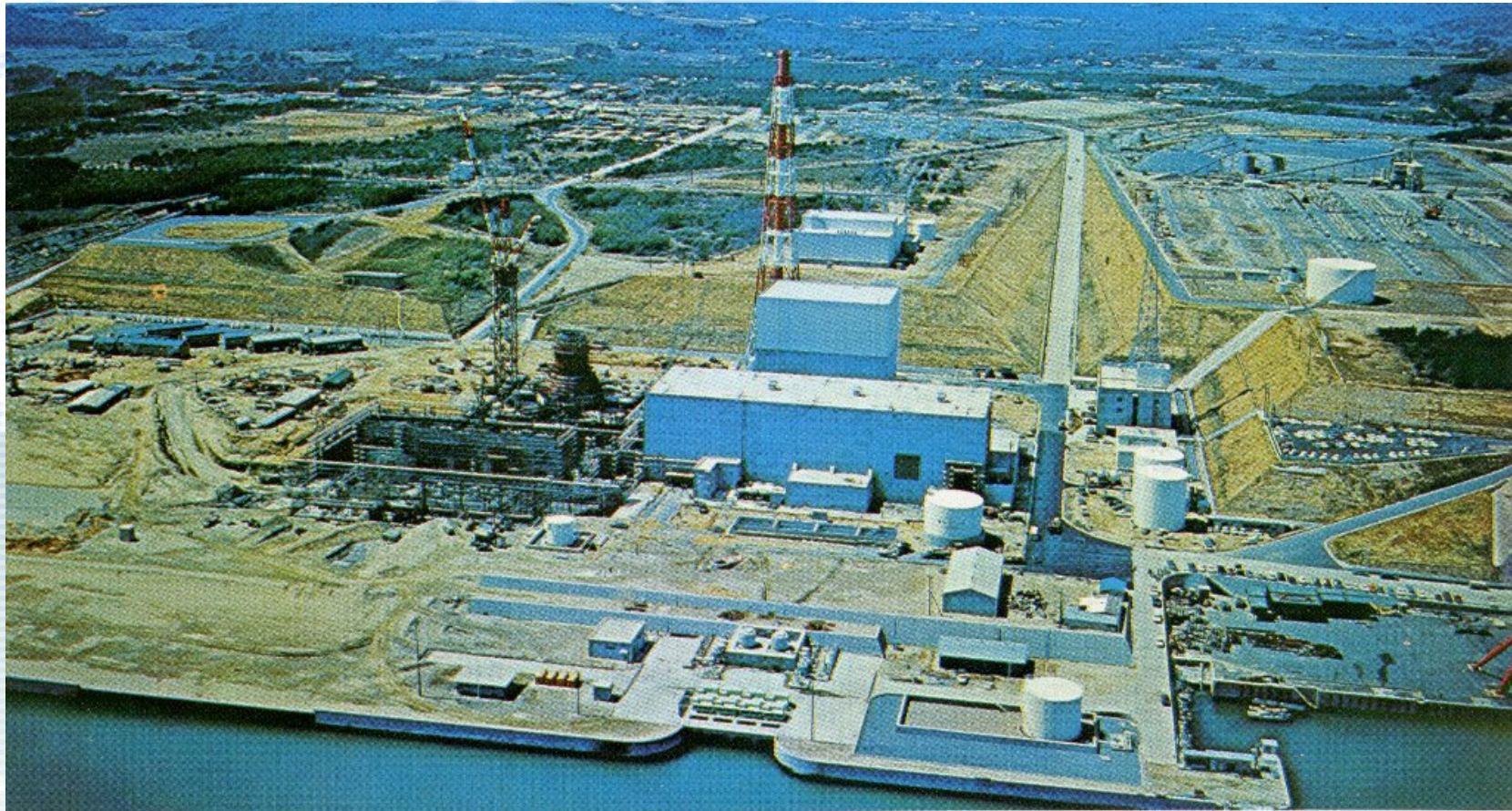
Dr. Glenn Seaborg admits, "I don't think we had the power to stop them."

# Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) #3



On September 25, 1972, Senior AEC official Joseph Hendrie wrote that the option of banning the Mark 1 pressure suppression containment systems was “an attractive one in some ways,” the “conventional wisdom” accepting this containment model had reached a point where admission of its defective and unreasonably dangerous design **“could well be the end of nuclear power,”** creating **“more turmoil than I can stand thinking about.”** [Emphasis Added]

# When Operation Of The First Fukushima Daiichi Reactor Produced Power in 1970; It Was An Accident Waiting To Happen.

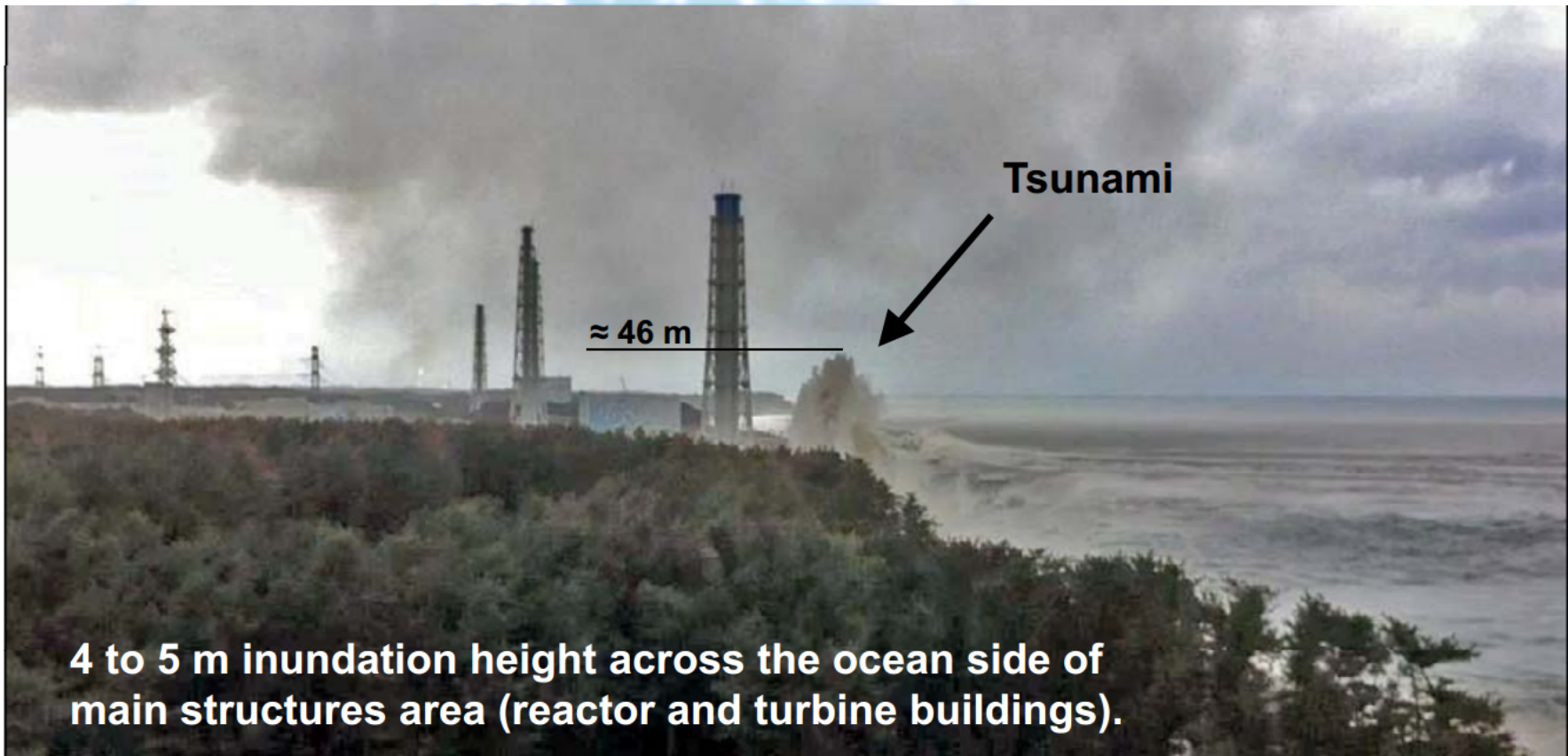


げんしきょくはつでんしよ うえのしゃしんは、けんせつ中の福島1号原子力発電所です。出力は、46万きろわっと。

# Fast Forward 40 Years



# Tsunami Hitting Fukushima Daiichi



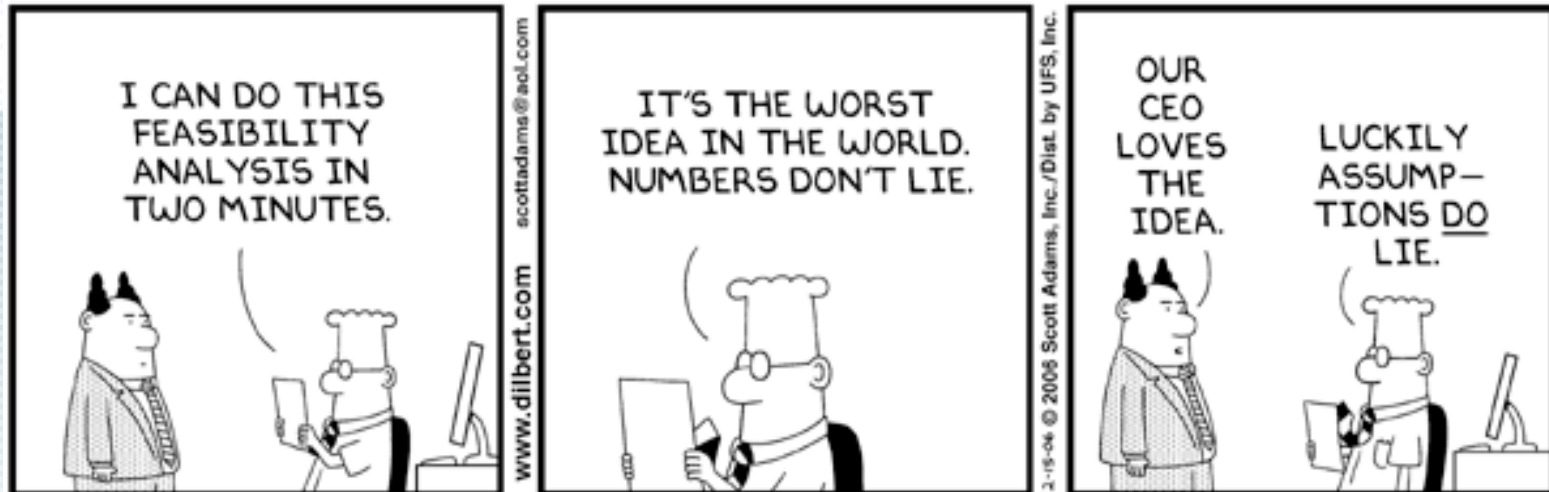


**SECTION 3:**  
**Radiological Releases**



# How Bad Was It?

The Secret Is In The Assumptions



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## **Assumption 1: Containments Maintain Their Integrity**

- Not true as proved by the Fukushima Daiichi triple meltdown and extensive radiation releases.
- There was a detonation shock wave at Unit 3.

## **NRC Chuck Casto, March 16, 2011:**

“...of course, that Mark 1 containment is the worst one of all the containments we have, and it's literally, you know, this NUREG tells you that in a station blackout you're going to lose containment. There's no doubt about it.”

[ML12052A108](#)

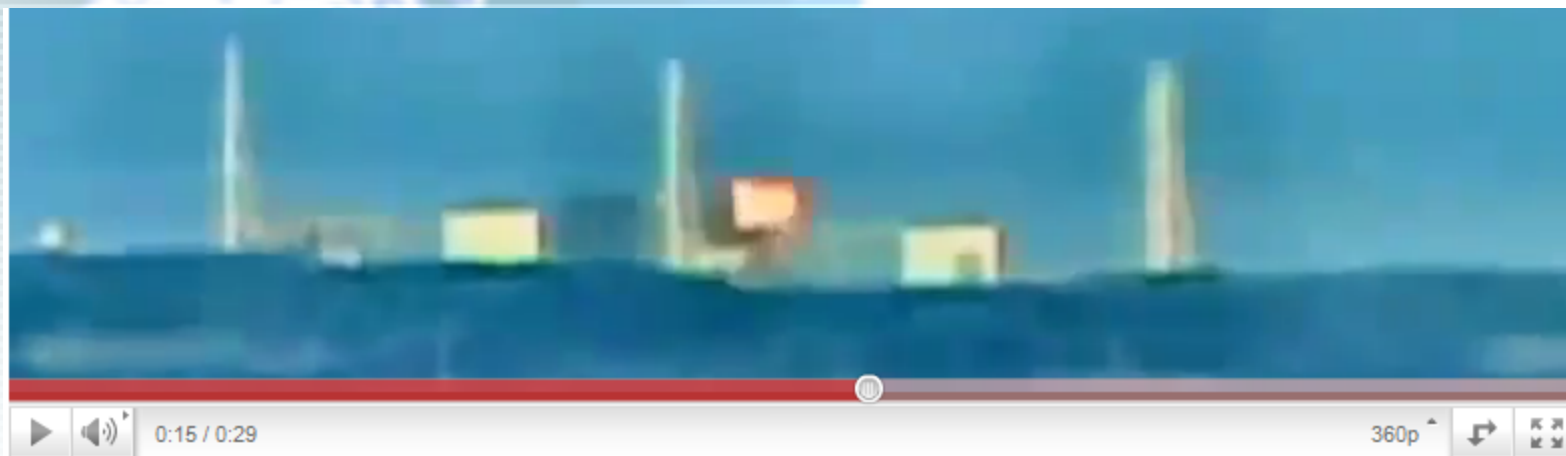
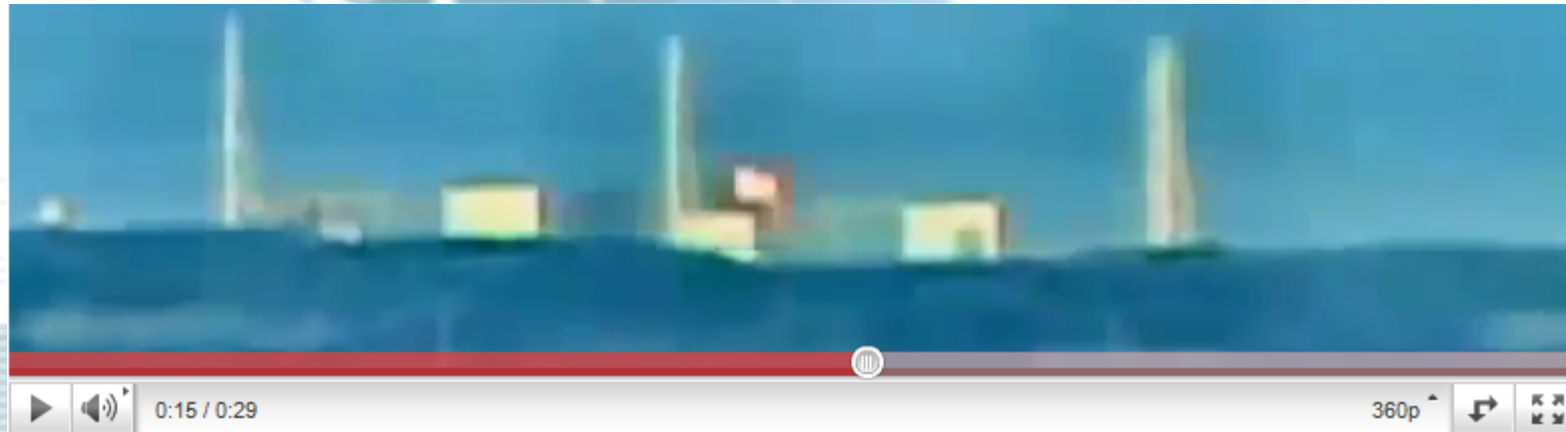
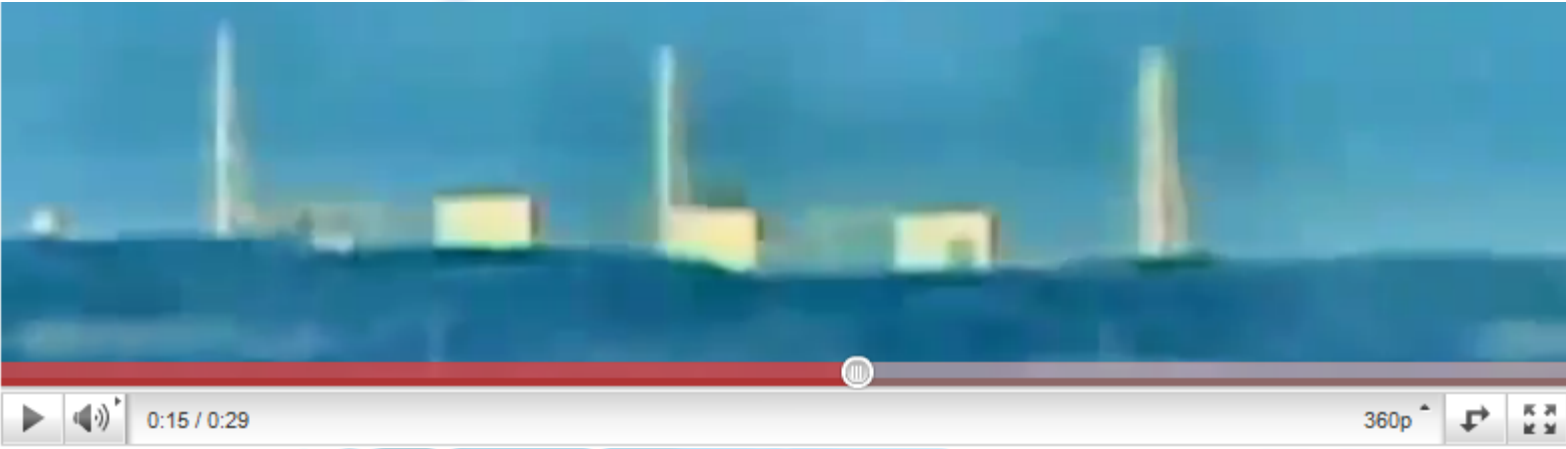


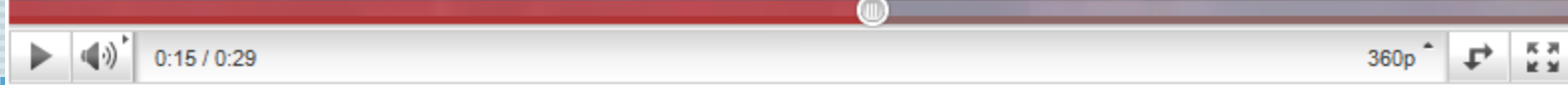
# **U.S.NRC**

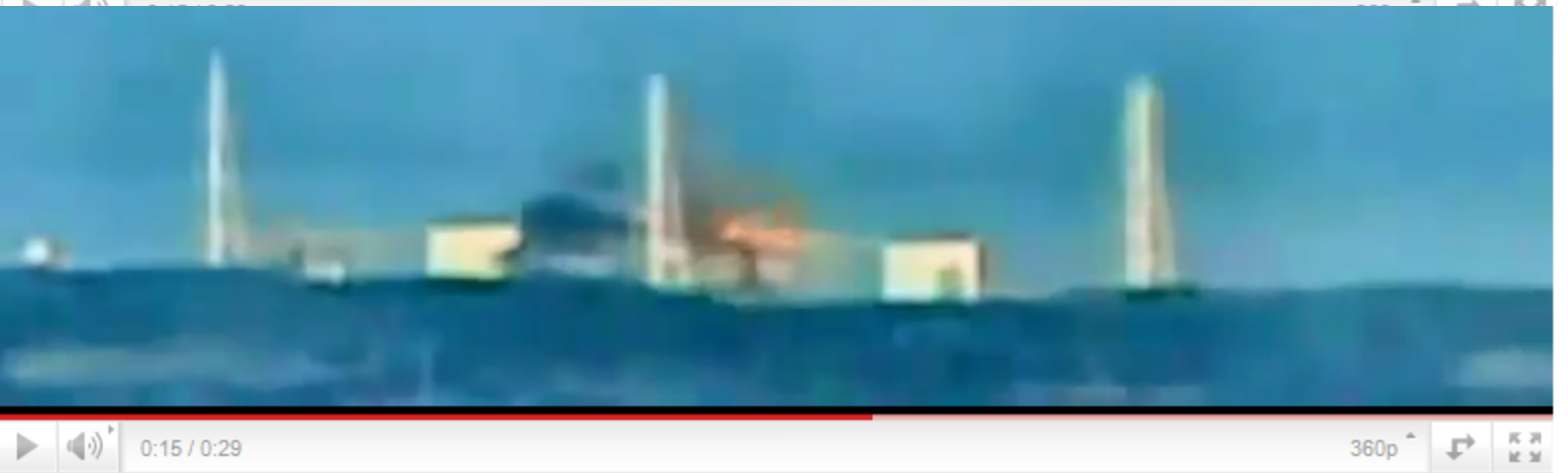
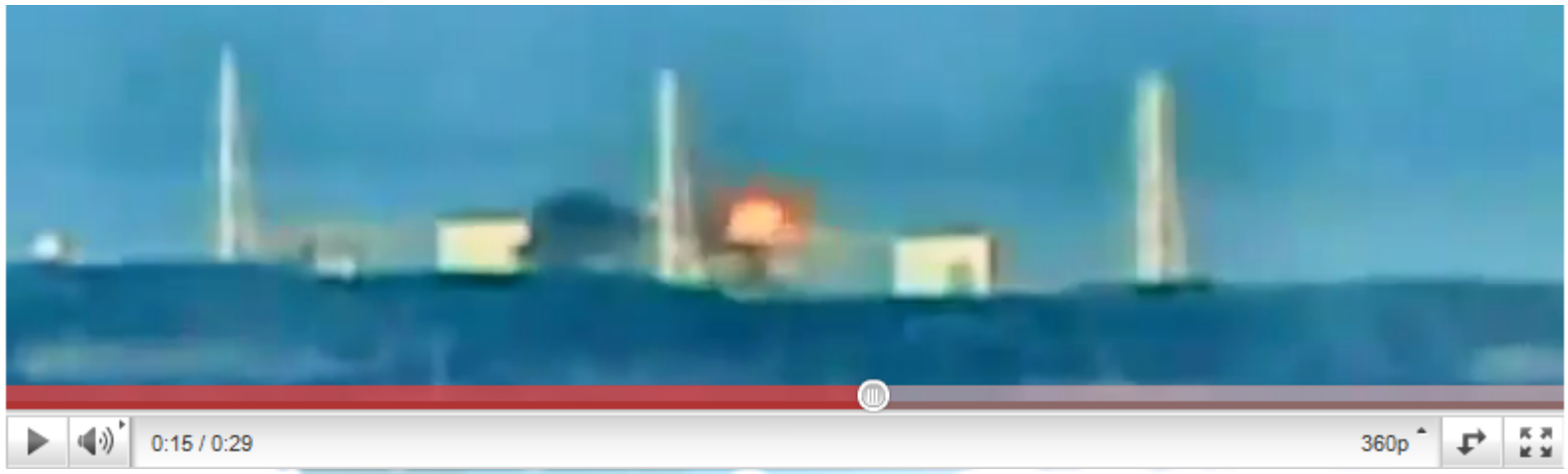
# What Does A Meltdown Look Like?















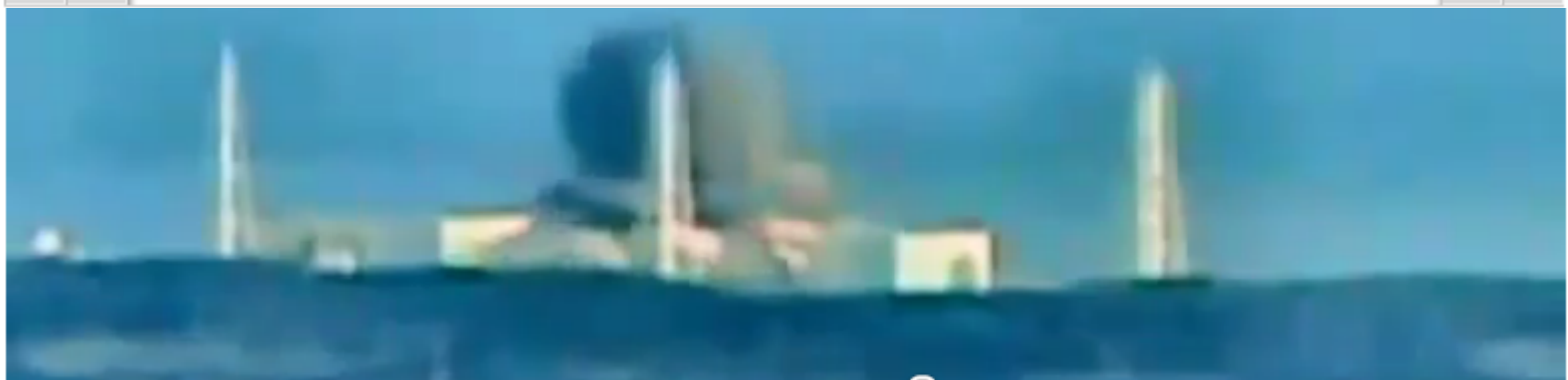
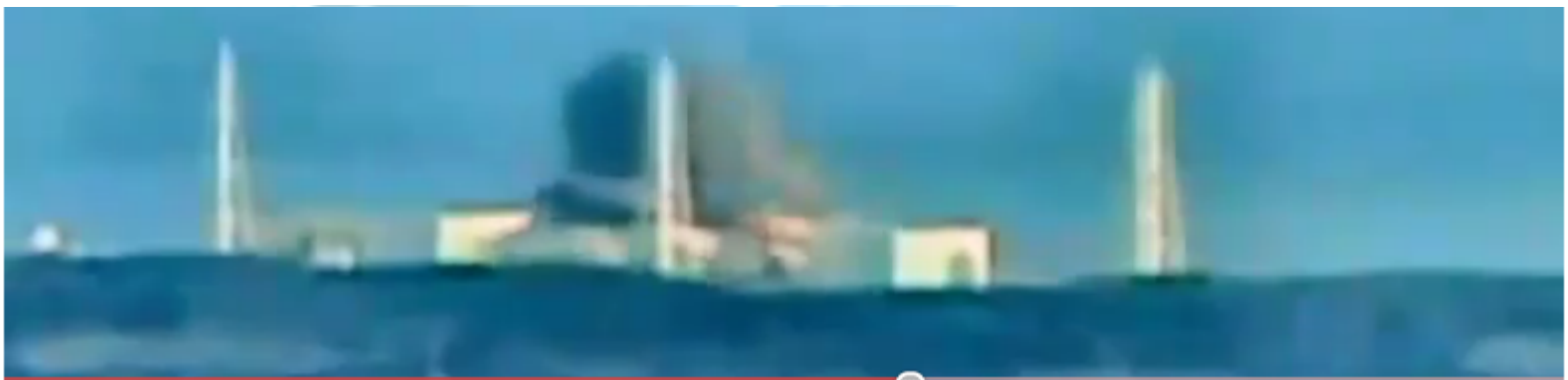
0:15 / 0:29 360p



0:16 / 0:29 360p



0:16 / 0:29 360p









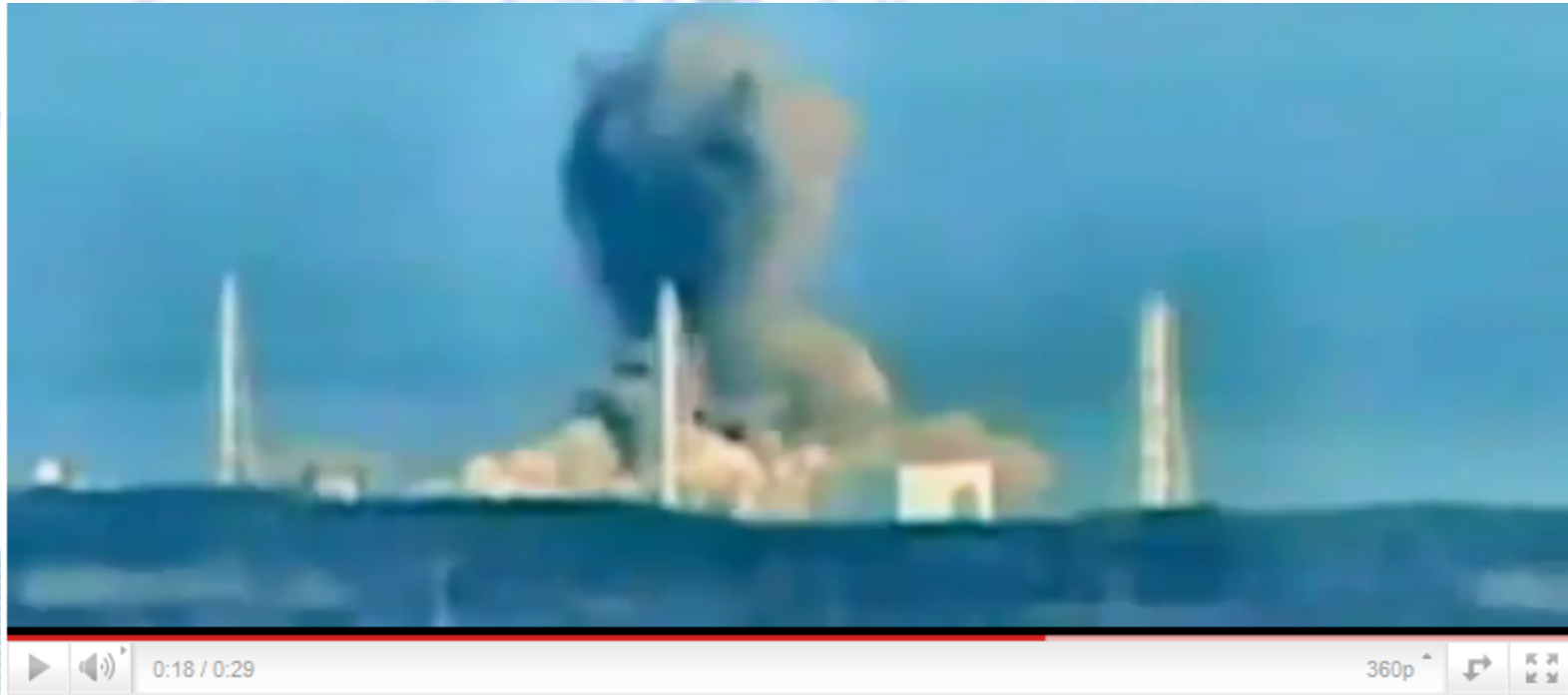




0:18 / 0:29 360p



0:18 / 0:29 360p





















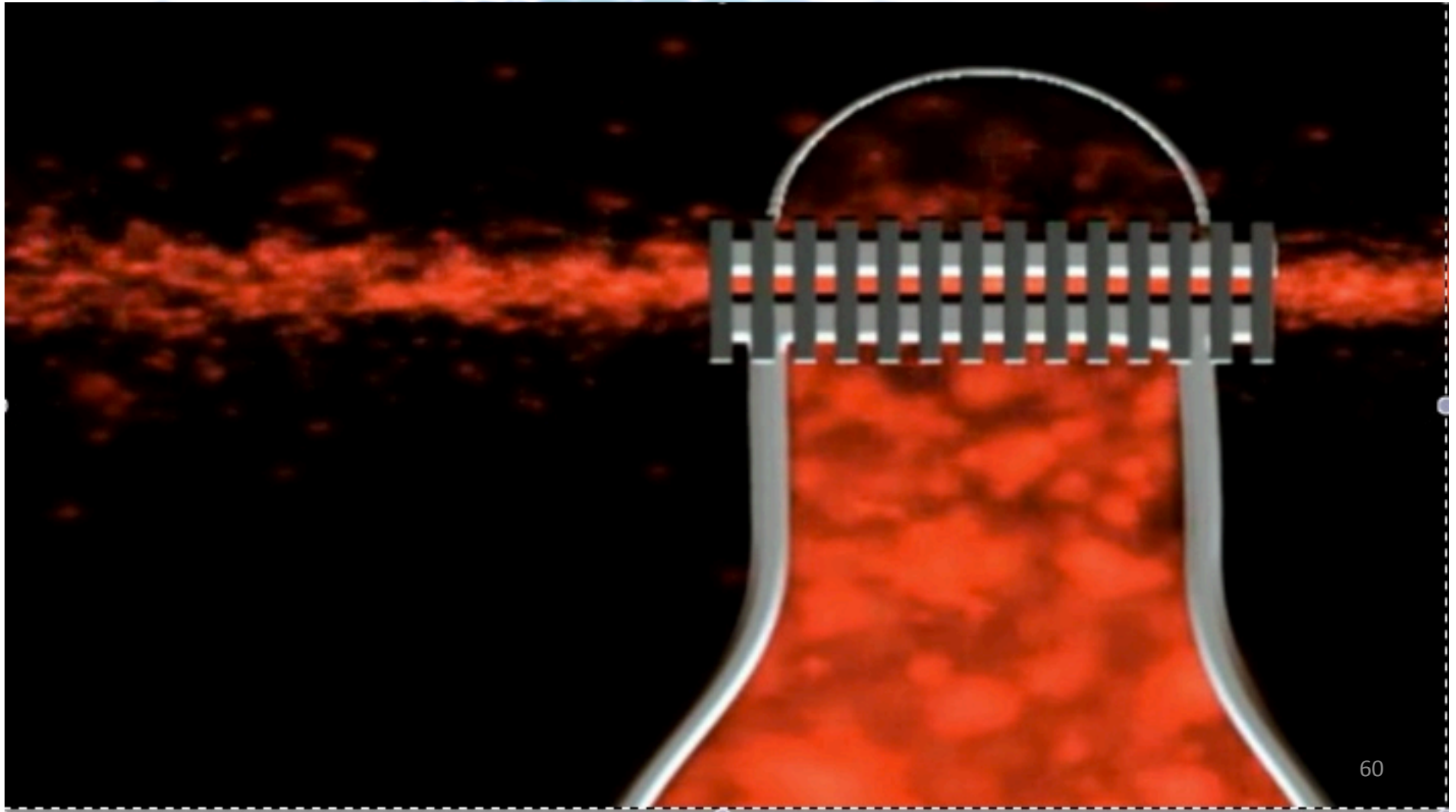








# Assumption 2: Containment Leakage



# The Containments Leaked Before The Vents Were Opened

- What was the containment leak rate?
- NRC assumes 1% per day as design basis.
- Mr. Reis, NRC Representative (telephone call):  
**“The original data we got was actually 300 percent and we assumed what that meant was three containment turnovers per day.”** [Emphasis Added]

## **Assumption 3: Noble Gas Releases**

- Xenon 400,000 times normal found in Chiba air immediately after Fukushima nuke accident.
- The average amount of xenon-133 in the atmosphere was 1,300 Becquerels per cubic meter of air in Chiba between March 14 and 22.

# Fukushima Prefecture Data

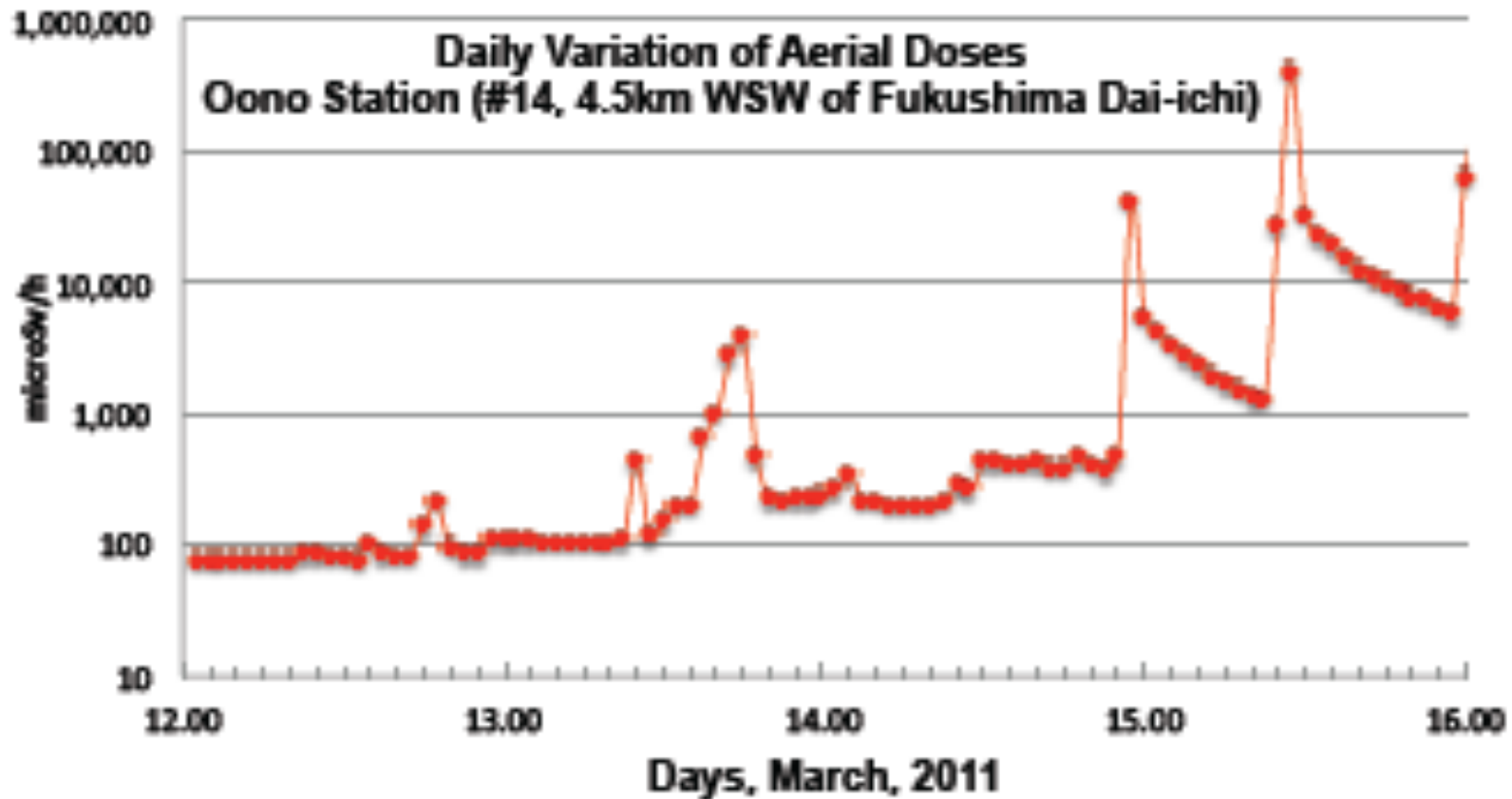
## Four Monitors Indicate That Radiation Levels Rose Long Before TEPCO Opened Vents

- Background – 0.04 and 0.05 microsieverts ( $\mu\text{sv}$ )/hr
- March 12 5 am – 0.48  $\mu\text{sv/hr}$  – 10 x background
- March 12 6 am – 2.94  $\mu\text{sv/hr}$  – 60 x background
- March 12 9 am – 7.8  $\mu\text{sv/hr}$  – 150 x background
- March 12 10 am – 32.47  $\mu\text{sv/hr}$  – 720 x background.
- March 12 2:15 pm – Containment vents open for first time
- March 12 3 pm – 1,591  $\mu\text{sv/hr}$  – 30,000 x background
- NOTE: Only 4 stations operable – these likely are not the highest exposure values





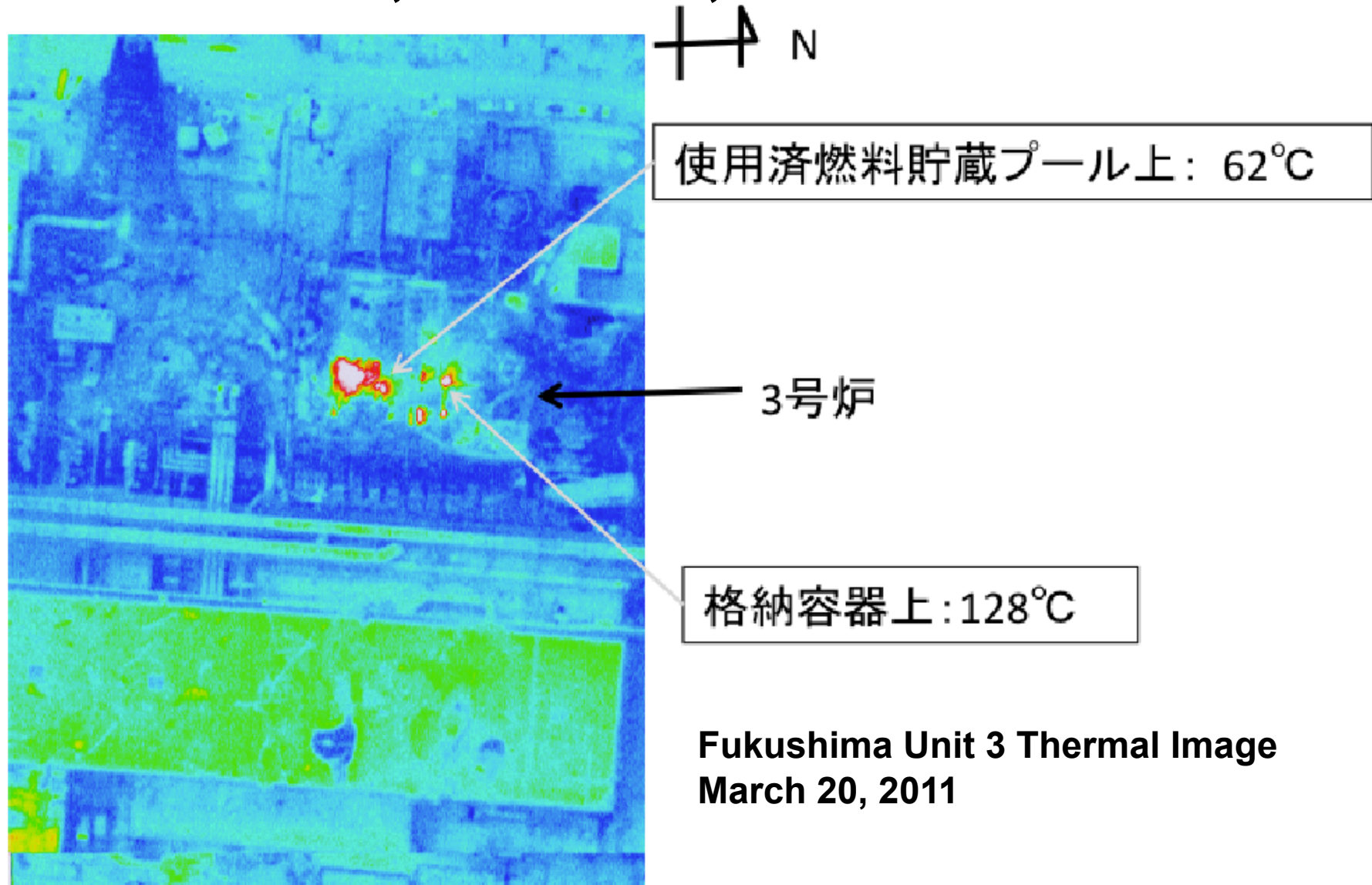
# No Correlation Between Exposure Peaks, Explosions, And Venting



# Assumption 4: Decontamination Factor for Cesium

- $DF = 100$  for water below  $100^{\circ}C$ .
- $DF = 1.0$  for water at or above boiling.
- The suppression pools at Fukushima Daiichi boiled.
- At Fukushima Daiichi, no cesium retention in suppression pool water.

# 128°C Thermal Flare Proves Hot Radioactive Gases, Not Steam, Were Released



使用済燃料貯蔵プール上: 62°C

3号炉

格納容器上: 128°C

Fukushima Unit 3 Thermal Image  
March 20, 2011

# Assumption 5: Hot Particles



# Soil Samples: 7,000 Bq/kg In Tokyo Qualifies As Radioactive Waste in US

location	Spectrum	wgt. (g)	time (s)	pk ht. Cs134	pk ht. Cs137	pk ht. Co60	present(Y/N) U235	pCi/g Cs134	pCi/g Cs137	pCi/g Co60
Shibuya District #1	678	8.8	600	417	507	72	negative	137	167	40
Kamakura #2	677	20.4	600	154	157	58	positive	17.9	18	14.1
Chiyoda-Ku playground #3	675	33.6	600	371	437	-	trace	26	31	ND
Chiyoda-Ku roof #4	674	15.4	600	305	307	-	trace	47	47	ND
Hibiya Park #5	676	39.1	600	318	373	72	trace	19	23	9.1
40.1 nCi Cs137			600	-	16882	-	negative	<b>Results are wet wghts.</b>		
48.2 nCi Co60			600	-	-	9736	negative			

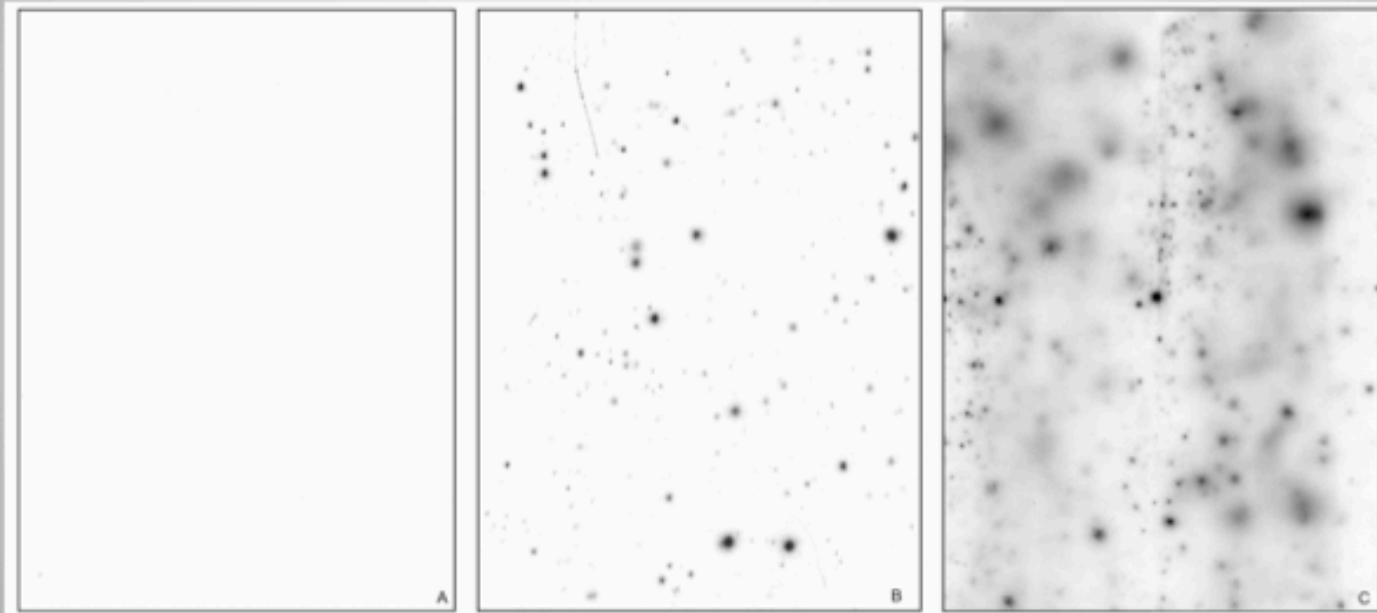
# Autoradiographs – car air filters

April 2011, X-ray film image and uR/hr.

Seattle  $m=11.7$

Tokyo  $m=18.9$

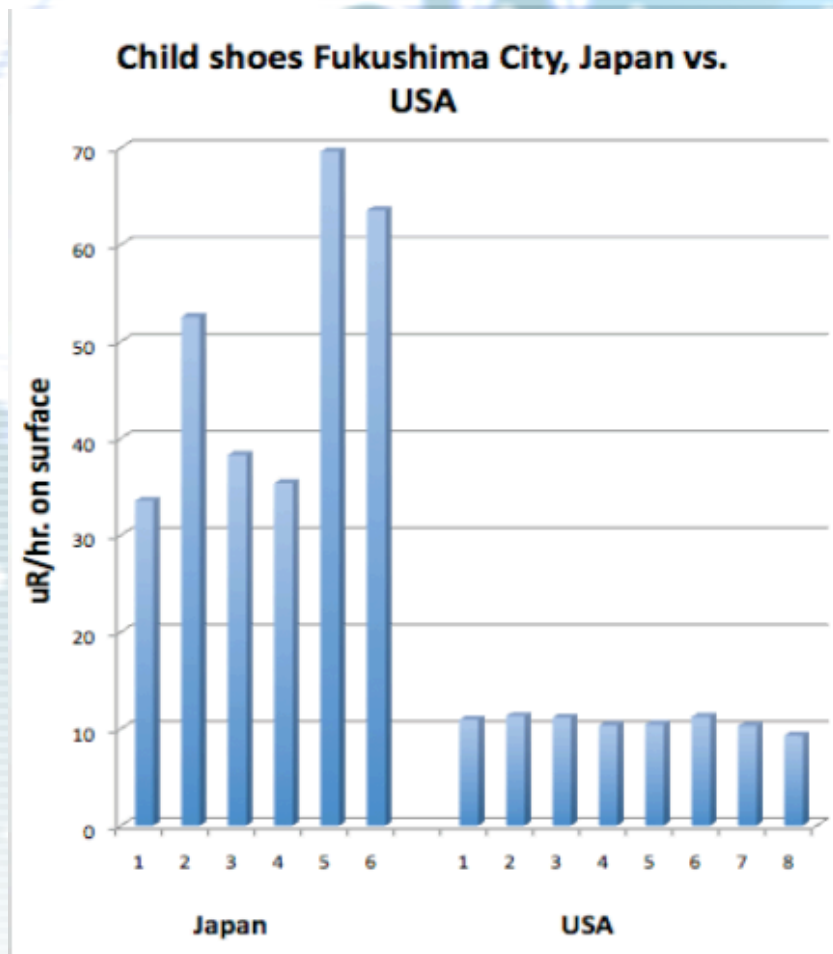
Fukushima City  $m=199$



# Radiation Exposure To The Population In Japan After The Earthquake, Marco Kaltofen, MS, PE (Civil, MA)

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.

Presented October 31, 2011 at the 139th Annual Meeting of the  
American Public Health Association, Washington, DC



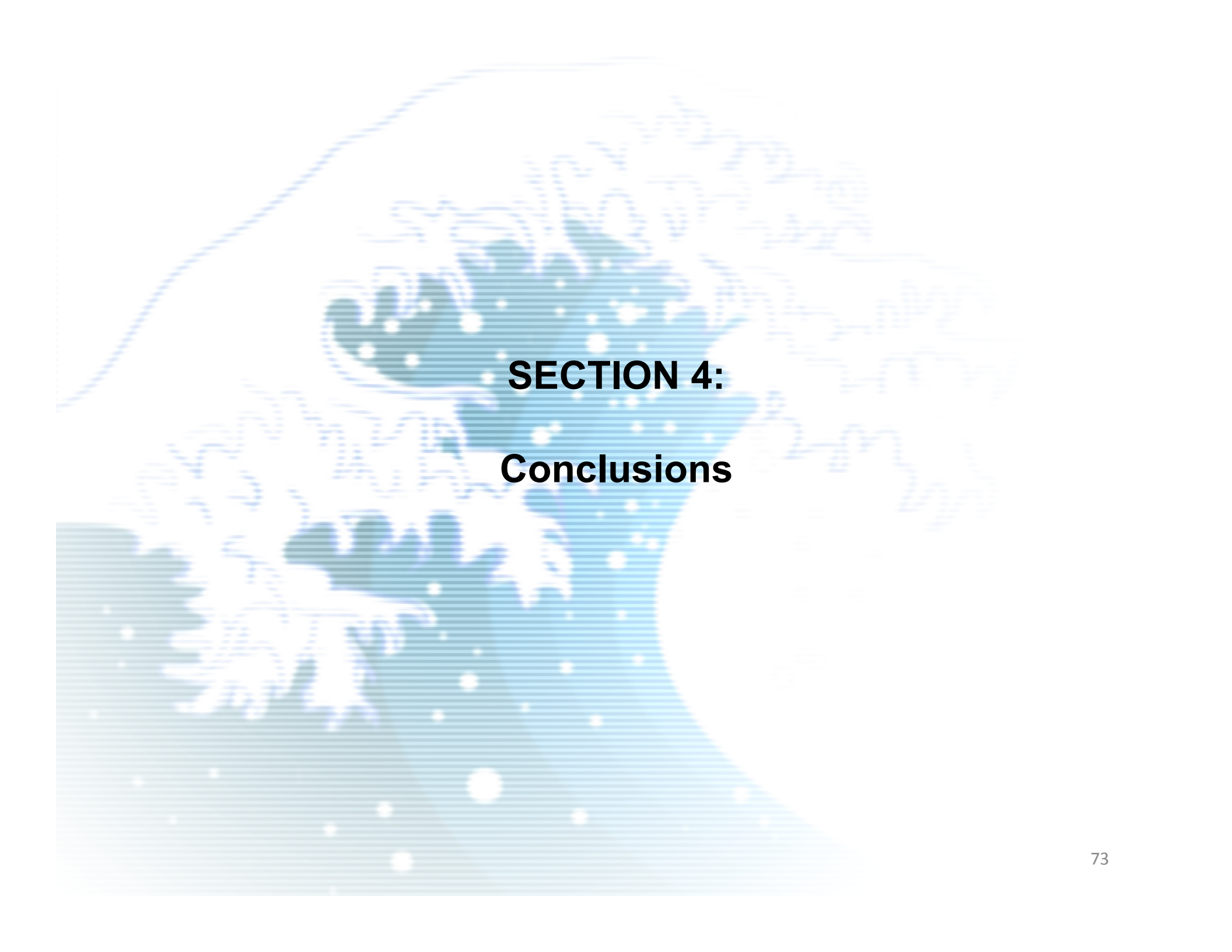
## Chernobyl Cesium 137 Inventory and Release–UNSCEAR

Cesium 137		
Total Inventory	290 PBq	2.9 x 10 <sup>17</sup>
30% of Inventory Released	85 PBq	8.5 x 10 <sup>16</sup>

## Fukushima Daiichi Cesium 137 Inventory

Cesium 137 Inventory in Reactor Cores			
Unit 1	240 PBq	2.4 x 10 <sup>17</sup>	82.7 % of Chernobyl
Unit 2	259 PBq	2.59 x 10 <sup>17</sup>	89.3% of Chernobyl
Unit 3	259 PBq	2.59 x 10 <sup>17</sup>	89.3% of Chernobyl
Total Cesium Inventory in Units 1 - 3	758 PBq	7.58 x 10 <sup>17</sup>	> 260% of Chernobyl





**SECTION 4:**  
**Conclusions**

# Public Health Consequences?

## The Assumptions:

- Radiation Available to be released
- Timing of releases – Noble Gases First
- Containment Leakage – 1% or 300%?
- Decontamination factors for cesium /strontium/ iodine – 1% or 100%?
- Meteorology/terrain –sea coast/inland
- Population density and emergency plans
- Liquid Releases 10 x Chernobyl

# Tokyo City

Capital since 1603

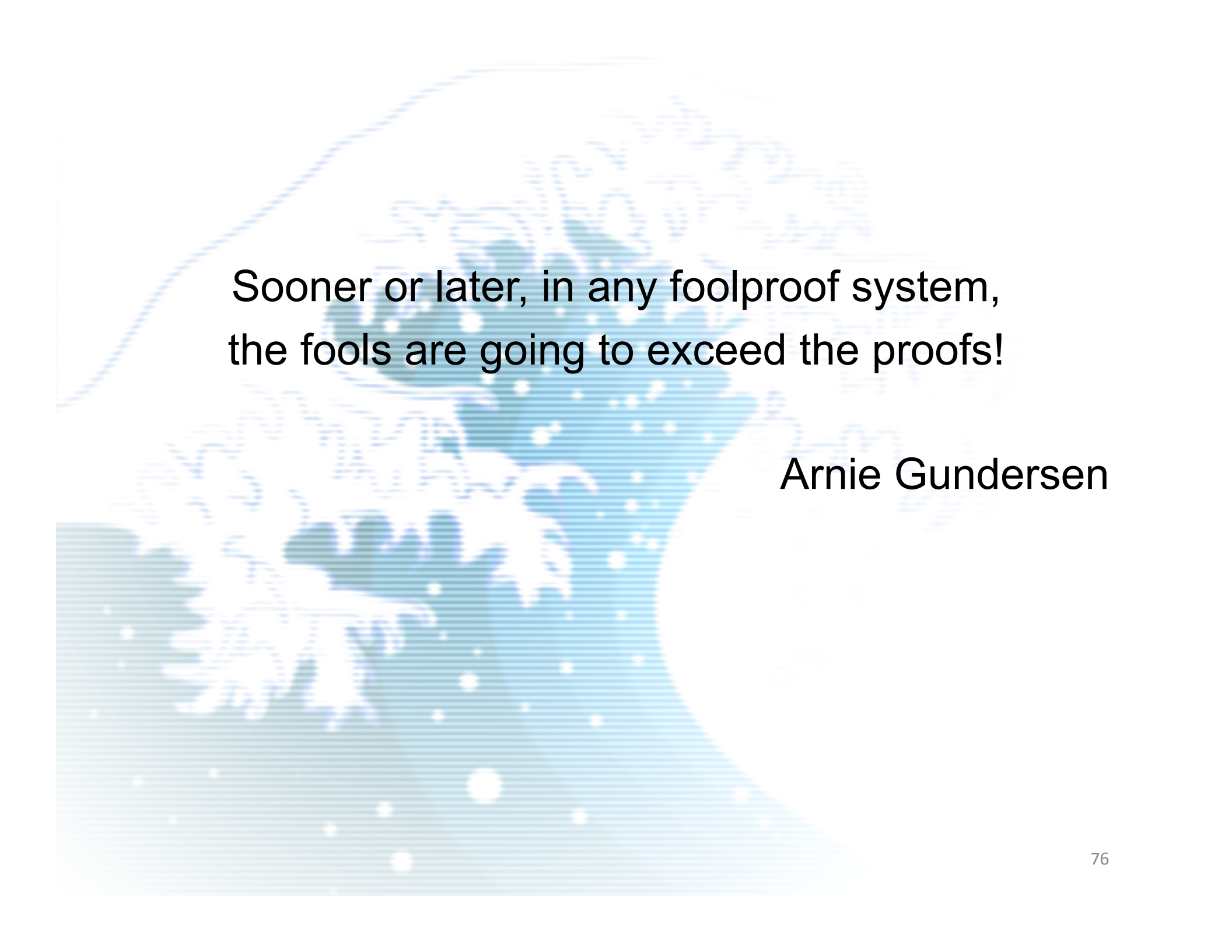
Population: 35+ Million

GDP: US\$ 1.479 Trillion

***“Our existence as a sovereign  
nation was at stake”***

***Prime Minister, Kan Naoto***

When do the risks of a technology become untenable?



Sooner or later, in any foolproof system,  
the fools are going to exceed the proofs!

Arnie Gundersen

## Credits:

- Wave Graphics by keenbeandesign.com, Cody Mix
- Explosion Sequence, Geoff Sutton, UK
- Containment Leak Graphics, Polaris Mediaworks, Kevin Hurley
- Radiation Exposure To The Population In Japan After The Earthquake, Marco Kaltofen, MS, PE (Civil, MA) Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA. Presented October 31, 2011 At the 139th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association, Washington, DC
- Tokyo Graphic, Dr John Downer, Stanton Nuclear Fellow, Center for International Security And Cooperation (CISAC); Stanford University, CA

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42-years of nuclear industry experience and oversight

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Thesis: Cooling Tower Plume Rise

BS NE Bachelor of Science Nuclear Engineering  
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