



Little Boy, Fat Man
and their offspring

Description

Gordon Edwards lecture presents an accurate overview of the nuclear dilemma

By **Byron Toben**

Seventy-four years ago, in August 1945, the atomic age was ushered in with the explosion of the first two nuclear bombs (and so far only) used in war, dropped on Japanese cities **Hiroshima** (August 6) and **Nagasaki** (August 9) by the USA.

Called respectively, **Little Boy** and **Fat Man**, these bombs (both named after characters in mystery writer Dashiell Hammett novels) wrought such damage that World War II was soon ended with unconditional surrender by Japan.

However, the **cold war** ensued and the arms race ended up with major countries vying to acquire the technology and huge inventories of such bombs, resulting in nuclear proliferation. Each current bomb has firepower many times more powerful than the first two. The USA alone is estimated to maintain 20, 000 nuclear bombs at the ready. After the near scare of the 1962 US/Russia standoff over Cuba, various treaties gradually eased the fear of actual deployment.

In Canada, the non-profit Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility has been a valuable voice pointing out the dangers of nuclear use in many areas.

However, 74 years after the use of such fearsome (and vastly even more powerful) weapons, things are heating up again with hostilities between India and Pakistan and tensions between the USA, Russia and China, not to mention North Korean threats.



All these are military threats. In addition, civil use has its own dangers, witness **Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima**.

In Canada, the non-profit **Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility** has been a valuable voice pointing out the dangers of nuclear use in many areas.

Founded in 1978 by its chairman, professor **Gordon Edwards**, PhD, a now retired math teacher, it has been a “go to” entity for objective advice and analysis.

Edwards himself has appeared on many talk show and interviews of note, including with Canadian icons such as David Suzuki and Pierre Berton.

I myself organized a lecture by him in 2012 at the **Atwater Library** before the Montreal Press Club of which I was then president. We recently re-discovered a DVD of that lecture and Edwards has placed it on YouTube. It is somewhat long, 71 minutes, but still useful as an overview and resource.

Westmount Magazine viewers may also recall my **two-part series** on the problems of disposal of Nuclear Waste, which Edwards chaired at the **Montreal World Social Forum** in August 2016:

[Focus on nuclear at World Social Forum](#)

[Nuclear Forum at WSF – Part 2](#)

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