

DEBUNKING THE NUKE MYTHS

The nuclear power industry has spent millions to perpetrate a series of dangerous, destructive myths about the 50-year failure of its unworkable technology. Here are just a few:

NUKES CAN HELP FIGHT GLOBAL WARMING:

In fact, mining, milling, enriching and moving nuclear fuel all create greenhouse gases, as does managing the highly radioactive waste rods and trash from reactor operation. Nukes generate huge quantities of waste heat that directly warm rivers, lakes, oceans and the atmosphere. Reactor construction and decommissioning consume large quantities of fossil fuels. The multi-year lead time between licensing and firing up a reactor ties up billions of dollars that could otherwise be spent in the interim on increased efficiency, conservation and renewables.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080421123231.htm>

<http://www.alternet.org/environment/91198/?page=entire>

http://www.nirs.org/climate/background/climatetalk_mary_un_050306.htm

<http://www.nirs.org/mononline/nukesclimatechangereport.pdf>

NUKES ARE COST-COMPETITIVE

In fact, the technology once touted as “too cheap to meter” cannot now compete with wind, solar or other renewable forms of electric power generation. A dollar spent on efficiency can save seven times the energy a dollar invested in nukes can produce. Reactor costs are already soaring, as they did in the 1970s. A “new generation” reactor under construction for two years in Finland is already two years behind schedule and \$2.5 billion over budget. Reactor builders refuse to even give firm cost estimates for new construction. No private investors will back reactor construction without massive government guarantees and subsidies, or advance financing from ratepayers. The worldwide supply of uranium is limited, meaning its cost is guaranteed to go up, unlike that of the wind and sun.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/environmentalcapital/2008/05/12/its-the-economics-stupid-nuclear-powers-bogeyman/>

http://www.plentymag.com/features/2008/05/the_price_of_power_nuclear_pow.php

<http://www.nirs.org/neconomics/jimharding382007.pdf>

<http://www.nirs.org/neconomics/bradfordtestimonyscp32008.pdf>

NUCLEAR FUEL CAN BE “RECYCLED”

In fact, spent fuel reprocessing has failed in the US, France and elsewhere. It is prohibitively expensive. It creates significant quantities of plutonium that could be used in nuclear weapons and terror attacks. It is exceedingly dirty—French reprocessing continually draws angry protests from its European neighbors over lethal radioactive emissions that pour into the environment.

<http://www.fpif.org/fpifxt/5351>

<http://www.ieer.org/ensec/no-2/france.html>

http://www.nirs.org/radwaste/reprocessing/gpfs_gnep.pdf
<http://www.nirs.org/radwaste/reprocessing/rr05.pdf>

NUKES ARE SAFE

In fact, no reactor could withstand a jet crash as per 9/11/2001, or innumerable other forms of terrorist attack. Even without a containment breach, all reactors are vulnerable on too many levels to be fully protected. The accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl were both ruled “impossible” before they happened,. Human error is inevitable. Astonishing cases of negligence, such as a boric acid leak that nearly caused a melt-down in Ohio, continue to plague an industry whose trained staff is aging and diminishing. Dr. John Gofman, first chief health researcher for the Atomic Energy Commission, warned in the late 1960s that even without an accident, “routine” reactor emissions were already killing thousands of Americans annually. Thousands of uranium miners have already died from radioactive sickness

http://www.citizen.org/cmep/energy_enviro_nuclear/nuclear_power_plants/reactor_safety/
http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/topics/dokbin/181/181995.residual_risk@en.pdf
<http://www.nirs.org/factsheets/chernobylcanhappenhere2005.pdf>
<http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/aging/presentationricfuelperformance03082005.pdf>

NUKES ARE “GREEN”

In fact, reactor pollution takes many “unseen” forms, including massive chemical toxicity at uranium mines and mills, and radon gas releases from uranium tailings piles. Toxic runoff from pipes inserted into the ocean at California’s Diablo Canyon killed thousands of abalone long before the reactors ever operated. Chemically treated steam from cooling towers can thoroughly pollute an entire region. Heat from reactors in France and Alabama has raised water temperatures in rivers to 90F degrees, forcing them shut. Millions of fish die annually at reactor intake and outtake pipes. The mere act of building a reactor causes substantial environmental destruction, especially in places like Florida’s Everglades and the salt marshes of New Hampshire.

http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/topics/dokbin/181/181995.residual_risk@en.pdf
<http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/licensetokill/executivesummary.htm>
<http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/natureandnukes/monitorarticle082003fishkills.pdf>
<http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/water/20071204ucsbriefgotwater.pdf>

NUKES CAN BRING ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

In fact, atomic power displaces virtually no oil, while consuming huge quantities of it in the construction and decommissioning, fuel and waste transportation processes. A very small percentage of our electricity is generated with imported oil, and a very small percentage of our oil use can be displaced by nuke power. A single major disaster could result in a forced shut-down of all reactors, leaving the US more vulnerable than ever.

http://www.greenenergysummit.platts.com/Nuclear/highlights/2008/nucp_nf_060608.xml
<http://www.moneyweek.com/file/21052/how-to-profit-from-uranium-shortages.html>

<http://www.nirs.org/factsheets/wallstreet.pdf>
<http://www.nirs.org/factsheets/fctsht.htm/quickeconfact208.pdf>

RENEWABLES AND EFFICIENCY CAN'T DISPLACE NUKES

In fact, increased efficiency and conservation, plus wind, solar, properly raised bio-fuels and other truly green sources, could supply all the world's energy while ending the use of fossil as well as nuclear fuels. With currently available technology, North Dakota, Kansas and Texas alone have enough wind potential to supply 100% of the electricity the US uses; the Great Plains states could supply 300%. Photovoltaic solar cells deployed on top of only 1% of the available buildings and parking lots throughout the US could supply a substantial percentage of all used electricity while virtually eliminating transmission costs and powering automobiles. Increased efficiency and revived mass transit can far more cheaply and quickly displace energy use than nukes can produce it. Major breakthroughs in plug-in/electric cars, cellulosic bio-fuels, amorphous silicon solar cells and much more are changing our future. A truly green-powered Earth will be ecologically sustainable, economically sound, massively employed and secure from terror attacks on its power supply. No city will ever be irradiated by an assault on its solar panels.

http://www.rmi.org/images/PDFs/Energy/E08-01_AmbioNuclIllusion.pdf

www.ases.org

www.awea.org

www.nrel.gov

NUCLEAR POWER WORKS IN FRANCE

In fact, France's nuclear industry is expensive, unreliable and unpopular. The majority of French citizens favor wind power over nukes for new generation. Because its reactors cannot easily shut down or start up as demand requires, France must import electricity at a high cost some of the year while exporting it below cost at other times. True costs of government-owned nuke-generated electricity are impossible to obtain because the reactors are owned by the government, which has an interest in exporting the technology. French atomic power is a form of national socialism, with little private ownership and the government regulating reactors it owns. France has no proven permanent solution to the radioactive waste problem. Its reprocessing industry is bitterly criticized throughout Europe for its radioactive leaks. The French reactor under construction in Finland is vastly behind schedule and over budget and the only new reactor being built in France has been plagued by similar construction and budget overruns.

<http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/features/the-reality-of-frances-aggressive-nuclear-power-push>

<http://www.ieer.org/ensec/no-2/france.html>

<http://network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs/fpcomment/archive/2008/05/22/french-power-myths.aspx>

<http://www.npec-web.org/Presentations/20080317-Schneider-NuclearPowerInFrance.pdf>