

# **ATOMS FOR PEACE + 50**

## **Nuclear Energy & Science**

### **for the 21st Century**

October 22, 2003  
The Watergate Hotel  
Washington, DC

Donald C. Hintz, President, Entergy Corporation,  
and Chairman, Nuclear Energy Institute

**Panel Chairman:**

**Robert G. Card**, Under Secretary for Energy, Science and Environment

**The State of the Commercial Industry**

**CARD:** Our first speaker will be Don Hintz. Let me elaborate a bit on the bio that you have in your pamphlet. Don is head of Entergy, one of the most important providers of nuclear energy in the United States. Entergy owns power plants all over the place in addition to their primary service area. But Don, personally, I must say is one of the very top few active spokespeople and thinkers on nuclear power. And I imagine if you do a search on him, you will see speeches and articles left, right and center.

I've enjoyed hearing Don's perspectives over more than a decade while he has been in a primary spokesman position. This year he also happens to be Chairman of the Nuclear Energy Institute, so he is the official industry spokesperson. So, Don, we are pleased to have you and thank you so much. And with that we will get started.

**HINTZ:** Thank you Bob and good morning. I do have a few slides, except I don't know how to put them up here. And I can go ahead without, but--

**CARD:** Do we have the media people? You can give Alain's talk.

**HINTZ:** I have a hard enough time giving mine. [pause] It's an honor for me to be here today to help commemorate one of the great events in the history of the global energy industry. In his historic speech, "Atoms for Peace," President Eisenhower told the United Nations General Assembly, "The United States knows that peaceful power from atomic energy is no dream of the future. That capability is proven. It is here. It is now. It's today." Two years before Eisenhower's celebrated speech, in the windswept desert of Idaho, four light bulbs, casually strung across the turbine building at a governmental experimental reactor had been lit, the first electricity produced from nuclear energy.

The private sector took notice as well and, earlier, in 1953, 23 companies came together to form the Atomic Industrial Forum. And that was really the beginning of the commercial nuclear industry in the United States. The “Atoms for Peace” speech was a quantum leap forward, a clear and dramatic signal that a popular president supported nuclear energy. The following year, U.S. Congress responded by ending the government monopoly on nuclear technologies and President Eisenhower gave the signal to start construction of the first nuclear plant used exclusively for civilian purposes at Shipping Port, Pennsylvania.

A half century later, commercial nuclear applications are invaluable in our daily lives, with thousands of industrial, agricultural, and medical applications, but none is more visible than nuclear energy industry. Nuclear energy generates electricity for one out of every five American homes and businesses and, along with coal, is the foundation of the U.S. electricity generation mix. Nuclear is safe, economical, reliable and emission free.

Of these important attributes, I believe, the reliability and air quality benefits are of growing importance as we meet the needs of an economy increasingly dependent on an uninterrupted power supply and a power supply that is environmentally friendly. The first 50 years of commercial nuclear industry in the United States, have been extremely, extraordinarily productive. President Eisenhower’s vision of a thriving international nuclear industry is today, I believe, a reality.

Nuclear energy supplies more than 16% of the world’s electricity and nuclear energy is poised to make even more meaningful strides towards improving our quality of life across the globe. As the commercial nuclear industry in the U.S. turns 50, we are experiencing what many have characterized by the media, as a renaissance. America’s 103 commercial nuclear power plants have set new records in each of the last five years for electricity production and efficiency. Most companies have already applied to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to extend the operation of their nuclear plants for an additional 20 years. And Entergy, Exelon(?), and Dominion energy are seeking early site permits for advanced reactors, which is a preliminary step toward possibly building new plants.

Safe and efficient nuclear plant performance is the bedrock of the nuclear renaissance. Since 1990, power operates and capacity factor gains have added the equivalent of 26 new large reactors to our electricity grid, 26. We haven’t built a new plant but the amount that’s coming out of these plants is equivalent to 26 new, large reactors. I believe that is one of the most successful energy efficiency stories in the history of our industry.

As a result, US nuclear electricity output in 2002 was a record 780-billion kilowatt-hours and that was a 1.5% increase above the 2001 levels. Yet, I don’t believe that we’ve seen nuclear’s full potential. Electricity generation from nuclear will continue to increase as long as we don’t allow ourselves to become self-satisfied and complacent in our pursuit of excellence by all operators. One of the industry goals in its Vision 2020 Plan is to increase electricity production at our existing nuclear plants by an additional ten thousand megawatts by 2020.

Through power operates and capacity factor improvements, now and underway, along with the planned restart of Tennessee Valley Authority’s Brown’s Ferry one reactor, we will already be

more than halfway there within four years. Here's how much we have improved in efficiency. Industry-wide capacity factor, which is the measure of the actual output as a percentage of the potential output, didn't exceed 60% until 1998. Last year we were above 90% for the third straight year.

And we are far from reaching the limits of plant efficiency because the top quartile of the industry operates at a three-year rolling average of nearly 96% capacity factor while the lowest quartile is at only 82%. If we can just bring the trailing quartile up, we can realistically expect the industry-wide capacity factor to hit 95% with some consistency. Greater output and efficiency translates into improved economic performance and affordable electricity for our customers. Nuclear energy is the lowest cost expandable electricity source.

And production costs from nuclear power is really holding very steady while the cost of other fuels continues to escalate. Production costs at nuclear power plants are cheaper than coal and little more than half the cost of electricity generated using natural gas and oil. Our safety record, the lynchpin of our resurgent public support, also continues to be outstanding. And nuclear power's industrial safety record is unmatched by another manufacturing industry in this country.

Nuclear energy's performance and safety record has earned solid public and policy maker's support. Even at this time on national uncertainty, the percentage of the public favoring nuclear power is 64% and that's close to an all time high according to an independent public opinion research that was done for the Nuclear Energy Institute.

That support also extends to Washington's policy makers. Like President Eisenhower, the Bush administration and Congress realize the value of nuclear energy to our energy security, national security and environmental protection. Secretary of Energy, Spencer Abraham, and the other distinguished representatives of the Department of Energy on this program will describe the administration's initiative in detail. Let me simply note, the bipartisan support we have for Yucca Mountain, DOE's Nuclear Power 2010 Program and the support for new nuclear plants.

And nuclear energy is also included in the President's hydrogen initiative. I believe these policy actions are clear indications that the technology championed by President Eisenhower is poised for another half century of success. Energy and environmental policies are now more closely linked than ever before. And so it is more important than ever that nuclear plant's environmental benefits are well understood by all the public.

The value of nuclear energy to the world, environmental health of the U.S. and the world is undeniable. A recent study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, co-chaired by two former under secretaries of the Department of Energy, Drs. John Deutsch and Ernest Mones(?) concluded the nuclear option should be retained precisely because it is an important carbon free source of power that can potentially make a significant contribution to the future energy supply.

The nuclear industry is implementing an ambitious plan, which we call 2020. This plan is to insure that nuclear energy achieves its full potential to enhance the economic health, environmental qualities of our country in the future. The goal of Vision 2020 is to bring 50

thousand megawatts of new nuclear capacity. That's roughly 50 large nuclear plants online by the second decade of this century. Given the lack of large power plant construction in recent years, I understand this is an ambitious goal. But I believe it is a strategically important goal for this country.

Nuclear energy produced three quarters of all the emission free generation on the U.S. grid today. Though renewables provide about 2% of the total electricity supply and hydropower generates about 10%, nuclear energy is the only readily expandable emission free source available. The Department of Energy projects the electricity demand will increase by more than 40% by 2020. The addition of 50 thousand megawatts of new nuclear generation along with the ten thousand megawatts of expansion of current capacity would only increase the percentage of emission free generation by 1%, even factoring in potential expansion capacity from solar, wind, and other renewables.

This country will need increased contribution from renewables, just as we will need additional capacity from natural gas, clean coal and every other source we can muster to meet the growing demand but we will still need nuclear energy for economic and environmental advantages and for the value and maintain the security that a diverse energy supply mix brings to this country.

The need for nuclear energy internationally, is even greater than ours in the United States. President Eisenhower said 50 years ago that nuclear energy should be harnessed to the needs of agriculture, medicine, and other peaceful activities including abundant electric energy for the power-starved areas of the world. Globally, six new reactors came on line last year, joining the more than 400 reactors already in operation.

In the first 50 years, commercial nuclear technology has brought many improvements to humankind, medicine, agriculture, space exploration, and many other areas. But we are recognized largely for the production of electricity. In the next 50 years and beyond, we have the opportunity to make a boundless contribution to the capability of this planet to support a population that will double by mid-century.

The ability to generate electricity with nuclear energy will grow even more important but it may be eclipsed by the potential to produce hydrogen using nuclear technology, leading to a hydrogen economy. The years ahead represent not only an opportunity for our industry, but I believe a responsibility to play an even greater role in bringing light where there is darkness, food where there is hunger, prosperity where there is poverty.

We in the nuclear industry believe we are up to the task and we are eager in the spirit in which we responded to President Eisenhower's leadership a half century ago, to advance even further the possibilities of nuclear energy that he saw so clearly. Thank you.

[applause]

**Questions and Answers:**

**CARD:** Thank you. Unless my watch is horribly off, we have a generous amount of time for questions, challenges, comments, whatever from the audience. I would just ask the commenter to please state their name and affiliation with the question. I think we have people with microphones so here we have a question and then back there, next, and then over here next and over there. Well, we're all over. We will go here and there and then we'll start over again.

**COZARELLI(?):** I'm Nick Cozarelli from UC Berkeley and my question is that we've heard several people talk about the hydrogen fuel cell but, obviously, the amount of energy you are going to get out of the hydrogen fuel cell is going to be less than the amount of energy you put in to making that hydrogen and, given the fact of what we've been hearing about this morning, about how far off any kind of really substantial nuclear power is, the hydrogen fuel cell is more polluting than any other form, than just gasoline for running a car.

So I was wondering if anyone would like to respond to this negative aspect of the hydrogen fuel cell idea?

**CARD:** Does anyone on the panel want to take a shot at that?

**MAGWOOD:** Sure, I'll-- I think first I'll say that I don't entirely agree with your postulate. First, I think that hydrogen fuel cells, especially the advanced fuel cells that DOE is doing research on now, has a great potential for very high efficiencies and I think that if we're successful in having very efficient means of producing hydrogen, that the overall efficiency will be very good. I think we will be very competitive. What we're trying to accomplish is not necessarily to achieve an alternative to petroleum that is going to be cheaper than petroleum.

I mean the reason that we use petroleum is because it is cheap. What we like to do is have a viable alternative to petroleum that is not vastly more expensive but yet has huge environmental and economic security benefits for the country. And discussing this in the context of a lot of the overseas meetings, I've been to, there are many countries that agree with that point of view. So I actually am an optimist on both the fuel cell development and also and possibly for having nuclear technology appear in the foreseeable future, in the next decade or two that will fuel those fuel cells especially.

**CARD:** Thank you Bill. I will attempt to weigh in just a bit on that. Right now, today I think well-to-wheels efficiency probably would favor a diesel or a diesel hybrid. But we really see an addition to the strategic diversity issues that Bill mentioned, which are vitally important, we're really shooting for breakthrough technologies. When you couple that with the possibility of fuel price increases and other inputs, we think the hydrogen system is an extremely important alternative.

Okay. I just wanted to make sure I had the right person.

**NEFF:** I don't know if I'm the right person. I think I am. I'm Tom Neff from MIT. I just had a question and a comment about renewables. Everybody there on the panel I think said something very kind about renewable resources and energy and nuclear but there is a link and not much has made of it. It is actually an old point. I wrote a book about it about 25 years ago. Most new

energy technologies have payback times. They take two, three, five years even to generate as much energy as it took to make them.

So if you and to get from a low installed base for renewables to a large installed base, you need to expand a lot of traditional forms of energy in order to get that base installed. It takes aluminum. It takes-- Whether it's wind, wave, solar panels or whatever or hydrogen fuel cells. For example, if you want a gigawatt of solar next year, you've got to use about three gigawatts this year. I'm not sure why the point has not been made that, in order to have, say, expansion of renewable resources over the next 50 years or 100 years, we actually need to build a lot more conventional capacity.

We have two choices, basically. Gas is saturated. We have nuclear and we have coal. And I think it's a great argument for nuclear. Nuclear power plants can generate the electricity that is largely used to make the facilities necessary for renewable for energy generation. And I think that might help disarm a certain amount. There is a certain dichotomy here between those who sort of favor the soft energy path, the renewable resource path as a simple, totally separate kind of path to go forward. But there is no such simple, separate path. They are linked.

**CARD:** Thank you Tom. Does anybody want to expand on that before we go on to the next question? [pause] Let's look over here. Burt, I think I saw your hand up and then we'll go there and over here and back.

**RICHTER:** I think all the technical people certainly agree that nuclear power is the way to go.

**CARD:** Burt, you want to tell us who you are?

**RICHTER:** I'm Burt Richter, physicist, Stanford. All the techies agree, nuclear power is wonderful and we should go that way. I have a question I want to direct toward Mr. Hintz and I want to start with three comments, first. The present nuclear power plants are gold mines because of the life extension programs, their capital costs are paid off and the utilities that own them are making a fortune. That's wonderful. (Laughter)

Second, fossil fuels get a huge subsidy in our system because they're not required to pay for the disposal of waste product, carbon dioxide. Because of that subsidy, fossil fuels and new power plants in fossil fuels are cheaper, generate cheaper electricity than nuclear, at least according to all the studies I've seen. Now, Mr. Hintz talked about building new nukes in the United States. The question is, is industry really going to do that without some incentives? What does the government have to do to strike the appropriate economic balance to make up for the subsidy that fossil fuel is getting?

**HINTZ:** Well, I don't know if I agree with you that we're making tons of money on the existing plants (laughter) but they are very profitable and that's primarily because the production cost is very low compared to other ways of generating power. But getting back to what it would take for say, Entergy to build a new nuclear plant, I guess it's been about two years ago, I made a presentation. And the title of the presentation was, "The Stars are Aligning" and the theme was

that it does seem like everything is starting to come together that would allow us to go ahead and build new nuclear plants.

And the stars I was talking about was, I think the public opinion is continuing to get better. We're seeing plant operational performance not only being better but I think we have a lot of confidence that we can operate them consistently at high performance levels. And I'd say ten years ago we weren't sure of that because it always seemed like you could operate them well but then you would end up with a long-term shut down for some reason or another. The safety record has been extremely good.

We still see that operating costs are decreasing or at least stable and we're seeing most other fuels, the fuel costs are continuing to escalate. And so I mean it looks like everything is coming together that, why aren't utilities jumping at the chance to build a new nuclear plant? Probably the biggest reason I think is that the capital costs are still quite high. And I know the vendors have done a lot of work in trying to reduce the costs and trying to make the plants a little simpler and having more passive systems and things like that.

But the issue is, with the special things associated with nuclear, a lot of capital dollars, it takes a long time to build them and things like that, that the capital costs are still such that the other forms of generating electricity are more attractive. But it is getting close and I get a lot of questions now, when people see what happens to the price of gas. Well, surely, now, that's going to be the final thing that's going to tip it. And I think everybody's got a different view on natural gas and I'll give you Entergy's, which I'm sure is wrong. We've never been right on it in the past, but (laughter) we see natural gas is going to be very volatile. I mean you are going to see \$10 dollar gas and, we used to say, \$2 dollar gas. I don't think you are going to see that again, probably.

But you are going to see, we believe, fairly low-priced gas. You're going to have the volatility. So, when you are building a plant, like a nuclear plant, you've got to figure out, on average, what's the price of natural gas going to be? And we're not convinced on the average that it's going to be greater than \$5 dollars. And if you're somewhere between \$4 and \$5 dollars, these capital costs are still too much. But I think if we got any credit or much credit for the environmental advantages of nuclear, I think that would be enough to tip the table and I'd be surprised if you wouldn't see someone going ahead it.

Let me just say. I know I am taking much too much time. But let me just say one of the problems that you have with building a nuclear plant, besides large capital costs, we can't get debt on them. And maybe we can't today, but we built a gas-fired plant with 90% debt and we're building this nuclear plant with 100% equity. And it could be the greatest technology in the world and vendors can do a great job of getting costs down, but when you're building something with 100% equity, that does change the financial situation of that plant. I think we're close but we're not quite there yet.

**CARD:** Thank you Don. I think it was important to have that dialogue so that the audience understood that it is not a national policy issue -- why we are not seeing more nuclear plants. It's the financial structure and the thing the Don didn't delve into but I think is a big deal is that since

we have liberalized the market and we're in favor of that and Europe is doing the same thing, when you apply corporate rate of return to that capital, it makes it very hard to recognize the long-term investment potential of a nuclear power plant.

Finland, TVO, the buyer of the Fin Five plant was using a 5% rate of return in their calculation, which is a third to a fifth of what Don would have to use for his company.

We have a question down here and then I'll take the next one from over here.

**WAGNER:** Henry Wagner, Johns Hopkins. I would like to ask the panel what role nuclear energy has in desalination. Fresh water availability is a major, major problem for the future. And sometimes I dream of seeing a nuclear submarine temporarily parked outside the island of Kauai(?) in Hawaii, making enough fresh water for next year and then moving on to another place and producing more fresh water. Could somebody comment on the role of nuclear energy in desalination?

**CARD:** Since you mentioned submarines, Alain or Skip, do you want to comment on that?

**BOWMAN:** I see a golden opportunity to use nuclear power in desalinization. I see less opportunity for using a nuclear submarine to do that. First of all, just very quickly, we need all the nuclear submarines that we can get and then some to do what's going on in the world today. It's not that outlandish a proposition, by the way. I've been approached several times in the seven years I've been in this job to back a submarine into the piers in New Hampshire and perhaps feed the energy grid there.

The truth of the matter is, if you look at the size of our reactors and you look at the devotion of the majority of that energy to propulsion power and not to electrical generating power, you will see that it is a non-starter from the standpoint of contributing measurably to any of our deficits. But nuclear energy as a means of desalinization, you're right, we do that onboard our nuclear powered aircraft carriers and submarines today and it certainly, with the advent of new systems, reverse osmosis systems for desalinization, I think it is another thing we should be thinking about.

We talk mostly about cracking water for hydrogen today as out-of-the-box ways to use nuclear power. But I think desalinization is certainly another one.

**CARD:** Alain.

**BUGAT:** Yes, I can add some more on the subject. We are studying 300- megawatt electric co-generation nuclear plant for electricity and desalination and it works. The Indian people are studying too. But roughly speaking, with the 300- megawatts you can use 250 for electricity and use 50 megawatts for desalination and with that 50 megawatts you can produce 200 thousand cubic meters by day. So that means that that kind of is able to furnish electricity and water for one million people, an area of one million people.

So it cannot be-- We are not plenty of that kind of population who need the water. That is tropical countries with networks and are able to transfer the electricity. And more of that, what is important, the cost of the kilowatt that is produced is two times the cost of one thousand megawatt plant, which means, how do you build the investment? How do you build the capital for the investment? It was a question on which every company is locked(?) now.

**CARD:** There is another example that comes to mind that is being mused about. I don't know if anything will happen, but Canada, and its oil sands in Alberta is looking to consume two billion cubic feet a day of natural gas to turn oil sands into oil and produce one to 200 million metric tons a year of CO<sub>2</sub>. So people wonder, would that be a good application. We will see what happens there. Is there a question? Yes.

**DOWNEY:** Good morning. Lieutenant Colonel Jim Downey. I'm currently a fellow at Harvard University. And I want to ask just a little off question. We've spoken about nuclear power and land and also the sea. I'm interested in the medium of space. NASA has a new program to develop a nuclear reactor based propulsion system for deep space. And what surprises me is so far, it has not received a lot of attention in perhaps the environmental concern arena, although it may in a couple of years.

But I wonder is how any of you might feel about that program and does it inform, help or hinder development of nuclear energy in general.

**CARD:** Well, Naval Reactors has actually been assigned that mission. So, Skip, do you want to take a first shot at it?

**BOWMAN:** Yes, Secretary Carter, the truth is we haven't been officially assigned it, but we anticipate that to happen.

**CARD:** So, no breaking news.

**BOWMAN:** I'm still developing some understandings. I believe it will forward the cause of nuclear energy. I suggest that your opening salvo may come true sooner than we want, that the environmentalists will notice and we will begin having to answer some questions about it. But the idea would be-- The first idea that NASA is working on is an orbiter unmanned for the icy moons of Jupiter and the JIMO project. It's funded. It has received funding for the past two years in NASA and, indeed, the possibility that Naval Reactors will be delivered another national mandate similar to the two that I discussed earlier, that Admiral Rickover received is very real and we're looking at that even as we speak.

But I think it would be a positive advancement if, obviously, the kinds of reactors that you know we use on our aircraft carriers and submarines are not exactly amenable to space travel, so we would have to branch out and think about other ways to do that and that would involve organizations across the country that have been working in other types of technologies over these years.

**CARD:** --Space nuclear. Bill, did you want to add anything to that?

**MAGWOOD:** Sure, I'll just add that I think that whenever you are able to use nuclear technology to take on an activity such as exploring space that the public gets excited about, I think it's something that has potential benefit all over for nuclear power. I often, in talking to school children about nuclear technology, point out the wonderful pictures we've gotten from the planets, from Jupiter, from Uranus and others-- And to be able to point to that and say, "We wouldn't be able to do that without nuclear technology," I think is a real advantage.

And the fact is that as we've worked with NASA over the years about what their future visions are for space exploration, it became extremely clear to them-- We had to sort of drag them into it but it became very clear to them that they couldn't accomplish their mission without nuclear technology. And someone mentioned earlier there needs to be an education process and that is part of the education process because there are things you can do with nuclear you can't do with other things, not just in space exploration power but also in medical treatment and other things and I getting that story out has to be very important.

**CARD:** We'll begin drifting back this way. Anything else from here? Yes, sir,

**BRODSKY:** Alan Brodsky again, ...(inaudible)RC and Georgetown University. But I'm speaking for myself. Not even my wife approves very much of what I say. (Laughter) I congratulate the nuclear energy industry and the great safety record and I wonder why they don't-- My question is, why don't they spend more advertising funds to educate the public properly. I've made my own miniscule efforts through professional society and have had very little success.

The President, as opposed to the conditions under which President Eisenhower was able to promote nuclear energy, has to face the possibility that he won't be re-elected because so much of the mis-information that some of the people I know have spread through the media to the public. I have some ideas about the proper kinds of information to be given by the public but have not been able to reach anybody in a leadership position who can present this information.

My question is to Mr. Hintz, why doesn't your Entergy spend more money on advertising the things that have been presented at this meeting?

**CARD(?):** Yeah, all that money you're making. (Laughter)

**HINTZ:** Angie(?) Howard is here from NEI and she continually begs for more money to do more advertising. I can't agree with you more that we have a tremendous education undertaking ahead of us and at times we have the discussion whether or not advertising is the best way to do it. It's very expensive but maybe we should do more of it and maybe it is an effective way to get out story out.

You know, I personally think at times we spend too much time educating the people that believe in our product and we're speaking to the choir. So I think we have to look at that more, other ways to educate the public including using more advertising. But, it is costly and when it's been recommended by NEI that the industry spend more money on it, we got sort of mixed support on how much we want to spend on the advertising.

**CARD:** Okay. I have one back here and then you and-- (simultaneous conversations) Let's take this question and we will come back--

**(Unidentified Speaker)**\_\_: Great. So, I'm a physics professor at Michigan and like Bart Richter, I work at high energy accelerators. We're not producers of electricity; we're customers. But I'm going to talk about nuclear engineering. President Eisenhower's 1953 "Atoms for Peace" speech, certainly helped to make nuclear engineering a very exciting field. Therefore it attracted some of the best and brightest young students. As I say, I sure am not a nuclear engineer but for a complex reason, I came to know and admire some of the ex-students about 20 years later in 1973, when there was some problem.

Some of them were ex-nuclear Navy guys, some of the really good ones. However, most of these guys are no longer bright young guys. If some new international crisis comes up, we may have a real shortage of capable people to build all the nuclear reactors that are going to be rapidly needed. And my general feeling was that the guys from the nuclear Navy were the very best.

Is there any plan for DOE or the nuclear power industry to start rapidly providing some scholarships in nuclear engineering for freshman engineers, some fellowships for graduate students in nuclear engineering and some post-doctoral fellowships to keep these young guys occupied so that you can start attracting people? I started talking to some of the kids in my physics class into going into nuclear engineering and I work at it and I got a few. But it's hard when there is not clearly any jobs downstream.

**CARD:** Burt, is your Nobel Prize inheritable?

**BURT:** Do you want to borrow it?

**CARD:** If we could pass that down, Bill, go ahead.

**MAGWOOD:** We're currently funding about 150 scholarships and fellowships for nuclear engineering students every year. That's not enough. I mean I would like to do twice as many but it's a start and it's a basis to build on. The point you make is absolutely correct. There is a real threat in the United States particularly, that the infrastructure that was built after Atoms for Peace-- It is not just the people. It is the research reactors. It's the program. They're all aging to the point where many schools are abandoning their programs.

We're making a bigger investment. When I first took over the Office of Nuclear Energy, we were spending about \$3 million dollars a year on nuclear engineering. We're now spending about \$20. So we've increased it. I would like to do more. I will do more. But the fact of the matter is there is a limit to how much the government can do unless Don here gets his industry, galvanizes it to build more plants because when we talk to students about the future prospects for nuclear, it's very clear that the people we're seeing are the people really excited by the science and technology.

But when they're thinking about their future careers, they like to know that there really are going to be new nuclear power plants being built in the United States. So I think there is always going

to be a limit to what will be successful in accomplishing until there is really a revival of nuclear power in the United States.

**CARD:** And a follow-up question up here. Can we get the mic up here? I notice in Nobel land we have Mr. Letterman(?) here today also.

**IRVINE:** I'm Reed Irvine the founder of Accuracy in the Media and I want to say that like Alan Brodsky, I was rather amazed to come and have a panel like this where it has indicated that economic reasons were the reasons that we have not built nuclear plants in this country. And, of course, the ...(inaudible) experience, shows that it is fear that has stopped the building of nuclear plants, the misapprehensions that the public has.

And I give you an illustration of ...(inaudible) well they could advertise. But it isn't necessarily a matter of advertising. It's a matter of getting you message out and there are many ways that that can be done. I'll give you an illustration. A couple of years ago The New York Times ran an article in which they said that thousands of people had died as a result of the Chernobyl accident. How many of people here, I wonder believe that thousands of people died at Chernobyl?

**(Unidentified Speaker)\_\_\_:** Not at Chernobyl but as a result.

**IRVINE:** As a result? Well, so it happened that ten years after the accident, there was a conference in Vienna where all the people that had studied the impact of Chernobyl on health met and it may surprise you to know that they agreed at that conference in Vienna that the number of people who died as a result of that accident was less than 50. You may find that incredible but I invite you to go look at the record, the report of that conference, which you can find on the Internet.

**(Unidentified Speaker)\_\_\_:** ...(inaudible)

**IRVINE:** Yes, except they pointed out that there were a lot of lives lost as a result of the abortions because the mothers feared that the babies would be malformed or something like that. So, what you should do, Mr. Blitz is when you see something like that in The New York Times, you might have done what Accuracy in Media did and that is write them a letter and tell them they were wrong and lean on them to persuade them that they are on the wrong track in terrifying people. I'm sure that the people who were resisting putting that \$7 billion dollar plant at Shoreham(?) into operation, were not concerned about economics. They were not even concerned about their taxes or electrical bills. They were concerned about the danger that they perceived even though the industry has an outstanding record for safety.

**CARD:** We're just fortunate we don't have anything like Chernobyl here. So, rather than get into that issue, I want to go all the way over and then we will come back and sweep around this way. All the way in the back over there--

**CONNOR:** Hi, my name is Mike Connor and I'm the President of Nuclear Resources International. But along with Don Hintz, I think I'm one of the few utility people that's here at the conference. I manage the nuclear fuel for the Robert Emmett Gina power plant outside

Rochester, New York. And I just thought after listening to these papers that you might enjoy a small success story. Ginna is 500-megawatt Westinghouse PWR.

It started up in 1969. So we just voted region 33. We did it in 33 days and replaced the reactor head. The plant runs on an 18-month cycle and in the 12 months when it is running continuously, it has 101% capacity factor. So it is possible, even with old plants, small plants, goodies to keep your heads up high in the nuclear industry and to look forward to more days.

I wanted to call your attention on page four of the program, the first bullet says, Three Mile Island and Chernobyl cast a very dark cloud over the nuclear industry. Now that we have greater historical perspective, how should we view these incidents? What have we learned from these events? It was just published two days ago that the other Three Mile Island Plant just hit a record of 680 days continuous operation before it shut down for its refueling outage. So, that's some perspective on Three Mile Island.

**CARD:** Any panelist want to comment on any of that? Skip?

**BOWMAN:** One other-- In the same vein as to the Accuracy in the Media report that we heard. Three Mile Island, of course, I said in my discussion, was a non-event from a radiation standpoint and I truly believe that. The number of the public that received the most radiation from that event was back calculated to have received 37 millirem, which we, in this audience know is not very much, about a little over a tenth of what she would have received in her home anyway, for that year.

Thirty-seven millirem is a little over a third of the allowable non-occupational exposure. The occupational worker who received the most did not exceed the occupational limits on Three Mile Island. So I couldn't agree more with the perspective that more needs to be done in educating the public. I would suggest that along with advertising, we need to, as a group, go ahead and go for the throat and speak to the concerned scientists who are legitimately concerned but need some information, need some education about some of the things that we know that they don't know. Indeed we do sing to much to the choir, preach too much to the choir.

We need to go, maybe to the concerned scientists and sit and walk through some of these facts and figures and we've been in operation long enough now that it might be time that we stop trying to prove the negative and put the onus of responsibility on the other side, bring forward the proof of the bad effects of this rather than challenging me to show that there is no bad effect, that we've been through two and a half generations of Navy nuclear power and there's nothing there; there's nothing to show.

So I think that there is a great deal that can be done in the way of public education outside of full page ads in The New York Times or things that would be, I think, hooted at by the people who hoot today. I think we should go to them and talk softly.

**(Unidentified Speaker)**\_\_: I think there is one other threat that we haven't mentioned, a threat to the commercial nuclear industry. We talk about threats on public opinion and maybe not having the public educated and we talk about the economics of the new nuclear plant. But I think

there is another big threat that industry is dealing with as we speak and that is the consequences of 9/11 and the impact on security on these nuclear plants. I mean we were the most secure major infrastructure in the United States prior to 9/11.

But as a result of 9/11, we are an industry that has been put in the spotlight and we spent a lot of money on security already and it's not over yet. I mean we just have to keep dealing with the bigger bomb and we get that done and we start on something else. And, you know, the industry, we're advocating that at some point in time, we would like to get thrown in with all the other critical infrastructure in this country. And if we were and you compared the threat associated with a nuclear plant compared to chemical plants or any other critical infrastructure, we look, actually, pretty good.

And yet we're spending lots of money and it's not over yet. And, you know, I think we've got to start putting our nuclear plants and the threat from terrorism in perspective with all the other critical infrastructure in this country. And if we can't, we will see that we are going to start seeing some of the small nuclear plants get shut down because of the cost associated with it.

**CARD:** We're technically needing to go to lunch, but I sense a real desire to respond to the Chernobyl comment so we're going to do that and they we're going to wrap it up.

**GARWIN:** I'm Dick Garwin again. In January of this year I published with George Charpak a book, Megawatts and Megatons: The Future of Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons and we did look at all of the accidents including the 1986 accident and the ten years afterward. And our judgment is that (a) a couple of people probably, unidentifiable, died from Three Mile Island. It's a very safe plant. We advocate the wide expansion of nuclear power.

But 24 thousand people, we anticipate, have died, will die from Chernobyl. It is just a tiny fraction of the population. It does not influence the positive views on the expansion of the nuclear industry but we provide the quotes from Abo(?) Gonzales, from the IAEA who never did the multiplication but says the 600 thousand seabirds, 60 million person rem, would correspond to that number of deaths and that's the cost of doing business. You kill many more people from air pollution from coal-fired plants.

But I agree with the Admiral that the way to go forward is to educate people not to propagandize and make the value judgment that with this technology, we can have great benefits for mankind. The key is, though, to get the capital cost down. We cannot build old plants and have them competitive. We need to bring in the new plants at those numbers.

**CARD:** Thank you. With regrets to the at least dozen people who are still waiting for a dialogue on this-- I'm thrilled with the interaction. We're going to go to lunch now. There were some logistical instructions. Do any of the hosts want to-- If it's about lunch we'll do it. Otherwise it will have to wait. Anybody want to offer any directions about what we do for lunch other than just go out the door and look for lunch. That's what we're going to do. Yes, Bob. Bob, do you have a mike?

END OF SESSION 2

© The Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc. - All rights reserved  
[webmaster](#)