Re: Are nukes the answer to global warming?

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From: BlackWater (*bw_at_barrk.net*)
Date: 02/07/05

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On Mon, 07 Feb 2005 13:34:08 GMT, Steve Spence
<spence@green−trust.org> wrote:

>I don't subscribe to the global warming theory, I subscribe to the
>global climate change theory, without being convinced that man has had a
>catastrophic impact on that change. I do believe that increasing
>concentrations of CO2 can have an effect on climate change, and would
>prefer to see co2 neutral biofuels, wind, solar, hydro, and yes, nuclear
>if we must, replace coal and oil. I do believe nuclear is the only way
>to a "hydrogen economy", if there ever is one.

And how will we MAKE the hydrogen ? Magic wands
have surely been tried − and failed. If you want
H2, you've gotta put IN as least as much energy,
usually electricity, as you plan to get out. It's
The Law.

And electricity ... it cometh from coal, oil and
gas mostly − all of which generate CO2. We might
build nuke plants, but the same greenies who whine
about CO2 also whine about nuclear power. Most of
the good hydroelectric spots are already used, and
the greenies will whine about eco−damage caused by
new dams and their associated reservoirs.

Yea, yea ... wind, tide and sun ... alas they just
don't seem up to the challenge. Priced photoelectric
arrays recently ? We keep hearing about 'alternative'
energy, but it's beginning to sound like Hitlers
promises of 'wonder weapons' to save Germanys bacon.
Possible, but never quite practical − drawing boards
pipe−dreams.

Oh yea ... hydrogen isn't environmentally neutral
either − and being an itty−bitty molecule it's prone
to leaking. Leaks, even small ones, also bring
EXPLOSIONS when consumers are involved. Then there
is the STORAGE bugaboo ... while they're doing better

you STILL can't carry−around much of the gas and the
storage media are expensive.

Really though, there's nothing really "wrong" with
the hydrogen idea ... but there are a lot of gotchas
to be worked out. Hydrogen MIGHT be better used not
to reduce global CO2 emissions, but to shift POLLUTANT
emissions away from urban areas. Put the big smokey
powerplants well outside town and run in−town cars
on H2.

Even thus, hydrogen + oxygen + NITROGEN + heat−&−pressure =
nitrogen oxides and ozone to some extent and those = SMOG.
Only practical fuel cells can prevent that ... and they're
still about ten or twenty years away from being really
practical/reliable/affordable. Consumer apps are gonna be
ROUGH service with SPOTTY maintenence.

Personally, I advocate switching to METHANOL derived from
coal/water and/or biomethane synthesis. It's a convenient
liquid − compatible with the existing infrastructure − it
burns very clean, burns in existing IC engines with just
trivial adjustments and has the highest hydrogen/carbon
ratio going. Not "perfect", but BETTER. Oh, and they now
DO have methanol fuel cells − the practicality/reliability/
cost factors I'm not sure about.

As for H2 ... it may be more suited for INDUSTRIAL heating
uses − big, fixed facilities with room for tank−farms and
such.

As for 'global warming' ... well ... it's been going on
since the end of the last ice−age. Did WE speed it up ?
Hard to say. Since it doesn't seem practical to deny
anybody their share of carbon−based fuels I'd suggest
finding CHEATS to get−around the CO2 problem. Some have
suggested fertilizing the oceans to increase CO2−eating
plankton. I've suggested injecting precisely−sized dust
into the upper stratosphere as a 'heat shield' that
would last about five years before requiring renewal.
Other approaches may be feasable.