

“The discovery of nuclear chain reactions need not bring about the destruction of mankind any more than did the discovery of matches. We only must do everything in our power to safeguard against its abuse.” This quote from Albert Einstein illustrates the dangerous potential of the less-than-a-century old technology of nuclear power. Any increase in the use of this potent energy source will result in the abuse of America’s finances and the safety of her people. This is why my partner and I must negate today’s resolution.

**Resolved:** *The United States should significantly increase its use of nuclear energy.*

**Definitions:** To clarify today’s resolution I would like to offer the following definition from the American Heritage Dictionary: Significant, meaning “fairly large in amount or quantity”.

**Contention 1: Significantly increasing our country’s use of nuclear energy would incur staggering financial costs and be fiscally irresponsible.** First of all, according to the World Nuclear Association, only 4% of the world’s supply of uranium ore is mined within the United States. This means that on top of the already formidable startup costs of constructing the infrastructure needed for nuclear energy, there would be an additional cost in dollars and the health of our miners by increasing mining within our borders. The only way to avoid that would be to do the unthinkable and perpetuate our dependence on foreign energy by importing the significant amount of uranium ore that the U.S. would now need. Furthermore, the method of financing such a significant project would be through the borrowing of money from financial institutions. Considering the current global financial crisis, U.S. Secretary of Energy, Samuel Bodman, said in an Associated Press interview on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 that long-term projects like nuclear plant building are quote: “the ones that are going to be the most difficult to finance”. This arouses the question as to what the U.S. can finance in the mean time to help offset skyrocketing energy costs. Continuing from the Energy Secretary’s interview, he says that quote

“while long-term nuclear projects are at risk, short-term projects such as oil drilling shouldn’t be affected because the industry is less reliant on bank borrowing.” Therefore, while there is a more cost-effective energy option available, like oil drilling, the United States should not put further strain on its economy by allocating even more resources towards a significant increase of nuclear energy.

**Contention 2: Significantly increasing our country’s use of nuclear energy is a national security threat.** Terrorists around the world will only see the increased amount of nuclear plants in the United States as an increased amount of targets. According to a September 2006 article by the Los Angeles Times, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission found that more than half of the nuclear power plants in America failed to prevent a simulated attack on their facilities. U.S. citizens should be very worried, for if the security of the current American nuclear plants cannot be ensured, how can a significantly increased amount of nuclear facilities be protected? The fact is, is that we can’t be sure of their defense. But we can be sure that there are terrorists who want to martyr themselves with the destruction of nuclear plants. According to a November 2005 Washington Post article, eight suspected Islamic Terrorists in Sydney, Australia were arrested before carrying out their premeditated plans of blowing up the nation’s only nuclear facility. Australia has had real threats on their only nuclear plant and over FIFTY of U.S. nuclear plants have failed attack simulations. For the sake of America’s national security now is NOT the time to significantly increase the use of nuclear Energy.

**Conclusion:** Overall, the significant increase in the use of nuclear energy is something that the United States of America cannot afford. Using a cost-benefit analysis, it is evident that the cost in dollars and the cost to the security of American citizens outweighs any benefit that may come from nuclear power. Therefore I must urge a **CON** ballot in today’s debate.

Sources

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