### 1AC Plan – with S-PRISM

#### The United States federal government should substantially increase loan guarantees for integral fast reactors using the S-PRISM design.

### Nuclear Leadership

#### Nuclear power is inevitable – Inaction on IFRs is killing US nuclear leadership

**Shuster 11** [Joseph Shuster, founder of Minnesota Valley Engineering and Chemical Engineer, 9-8-2011, "Response to Draft Report From Obama’s Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) on America’s Nuclear Future dated July 29, 2011," Beyond Fossil Fools]

Contrary to the commission’s declarations on the matter, the U.S. is in danger of losing its once ¶ strong nuclear leadership. As a result we would have less to say about how nuclear materials are ¶ to be managed in the world and that could expose the U.S. to some inconvenient if not downright ¶ dangerous consequences. China is now building a large pilot plant said to be identical to our ¶ successful EBR-II plant that proved the design of the IFR. Meanwhile in the U.S. after complete ¶ success, EBR II was shut down, not for technical reasons but for political reasons during the ¶ Clinton administration, a decision destined to be one of the worst in our nation’s history.¶ Much of the world is already committed to a nuclear future with some countries eagerly waiting ¶ to license the American version of Generation IV Fast Reactors—the IFR. We still have the best ¶ IFR technology in the world but have squandered much of our lead, partly by allowing a largely ¶ unqualified commission two years of useless deliberation. What we really did was give our ¶ competitors an additional two years to catch up.

#### IFR restores leadership on nuclear issues – key to contain proliferation

**Stanford 10** (Dr George S. Stanford, nuclear reactor physicist, retired from Argonne National Laboratory, "IFR FaD context – the need for U.S. implementation of the IFR," 2/18/10) http://bravenewclimate.com/2010/02/18/ifr-fad-context/-http://bravenewclimate.com/2010/02/18/ifr-fad-context/

ON THE NEED FOR U.S. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRAL FAST REACTOR¶ The IFR ties into a very big picture — international stability, prevention of war, and avoiding “proliferation” (spread) of nuclear weapons.¶ – The need for energy is the basis of many wars, including the ones we are engaged in right now (Iraq and Afghanistan). If every nation had enough energy to give its people a decent standard of living, that reason for conflict would disappear.¶ – The only sustainable energy source that can provide the bulk of the energy needed is nuclear power.¶ – The current need is for more thermal reactors — the kind we now use.¶ – But for the longer term, to provide the growing amount of energy that will be needed to maintain civilization, the only proven way available today is with fast-reactor technology.¶ – The most promising fast-reactor type is the IFR – metal-fueled, sodium-cooled, with pyroprocessing to recycle its fuel.¶ – Nobody knows yet how much IFR plants would cost to build and operate. Without the commercial-scale demo of the IFR, along with rationalization of the licensing process, any claims about costs are simply hand-waving guesses.¶ \* \* \* \*¶ Background info on proliferation (of nuclear weapons). Please follow the reasoning carefully.¶ – Atomic bombs can be made with highly enriched uranium (90% U-235) or with good-quality plutonium (bomb designers want plutonium that is ~93% Pu-239).¶ – For fuel for an LWR, the uranium only has to be enriched to 3 or 4% U-235.¶ – To make a uranium bomb you don’t need a reactor — but you do need access to an enrichment facility or some other source of highly enriched uranium…¶ – Any kind of nuclear reactor can be used to make weapons-quality plutonium from uranium-238, but the uranium has to have been irradiated for only a very short period. In other words, nobody would try to make a plutonium weapon from ordinary spent fuel, because there are easier ways to get plutonium of much better quality.¶ – Plutonium for a weapon not only has to have good isotopic quality, it also has to be chemically uncontaminated. Thus the lightly irradiated fuel has to be processed to extract the plutonium in a chemically pure form. But mere possession of a reactor is not sufficient for a weapons capability — a facility using a chemical process called PUREX is also needed.¶ – Regardless of how many reactors a country has, it cannot have a weapons capability unless it has either the ability to enrich uranium or to do PUREX-type fuel reprocessing.¶ – Therefore, the spread of weapons capability will be strongly inhibited if the only enrichment and reprocessing facilities are in countries that already have a nuclear arsenal.¶ – But that can only happen if countries with reactors (and soon that will be most of the nations of the world) have absolutely ironclad guarantees that they can get the fuel they need even if they can’t make their own, regardless of how obnoxious their political actions might be.¶ – Such guarantees will have to be backed up by some sort of international arrangement, and that can only come to pass if there is effective leadership for the laborious international negotiations that will have to take place. (For a relevant discussion, see here)¶ – At present, the only nation that has a realistic potential to be such a leader is the United States.¶ – But a country cannot be such a leader in the political arena unless it is also in the technological forefront.¶ – The United States used to be the reactor-technology leader, but it abandoned that role in 1994 when it terminated the development of the IFR.¶ – Since then, other nations — China, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia, France — have proceeded to work on their own fast-reactor versions, which necessarily will involve instituting a fuel-processing capability.¶ – Thus the United States is being left behind, and is rapidly losing its ability to help assure that the global evolution of the technology of nuclear energy proceeds in a safe and orderly manner.¶ – But maybe it’s not too late yet. After all, the IFR is the fast-reactor technology with the post promise (for a variety of reasons), and is ready for a commercial-scale demonstration to settle some uncertainties about how to scale up the pyroprocess as needed, to establish better limits on the expected cost of production units, and to develop an appropriate, expeditious licensing process.¶ – Such a demo will require federal seed money. It’s time to get moving.

#### Several impacts – 1st prolif

#### Transition to IFRs create a global proliferation resistant fuel cycle

**Stanford 10** (Dr George S. Stanford, nuclear reactor physicist, retired from Argonne National Laboratory, "Q%26A on Integral Fast Reactors – safe, abundant, non-polluting power," 9/18/10) <http://bravenewclimate.com/2010/09/18/ifr-fad-7/-http://bravenewclimate.com/2010/09/18/ifr-fad-7/>

Thermal reactors with reprocessing would do at least a little better.¶ Recycling (it would be with the PUREX process, or an equivalent) could stretch the U-235 supply another few decades—but remember the consequences: growing stockpiles of plutonium, pure plutonium streams in the PUREX plants, and the creation of 100,000-year plutonium mines.¶ If you’re going to talk about “PUREX” and “plutonium mines” you should say what they are. First, what’s PUREX?¶ It’s a chemical process developed for the nuclear weapons program, to separate plutonium from everything else that comes out of a reactor. Weapons require very pure plutonium, and that’s what PUREX delivers. The pyroprocess used in the IFR is very different. It not only does not, it cannot, produce plutonium with the chemical purity needed for weapons.¶ Why do you keep referring to “chemical” purity?¶ Because chemical and isotopic quality are two different things. Plutonium for a weapon has to be pure chemically. Weapons designers also want good isotopic quality—that is, they want at least 93% of their plutonium to consist of the isotope Pu- 239. A chemical process does not separate isotopes.¶ I see. Now, what about the “plutonium mines?”¶ When spent fuel or vitrified reprocessing waste from thermal reactors is buried, the result is a concentrated geological deposit of plutonium. As its radioactivity decays, those deposits are sources of raw material for weapons, becoming increasingly attractive over the next 100,000 years and more (the half-life of Pu-239 being 24,000 years).¶ You listed, back at the beginning, some problems that the IFR would ameliorate. A lot of those problems are obviously related to proliferation of nuclear weapons.¶ Definitely. For instance, although thermal reactors consume more fuel than they produce, and thus are not called “breeders,” they inescapably are prolific breeders of plutonium, as I said. And that poses serious concerns about nuclear proliferation. And proliferation concerns are even greater when fuel from thermal reactors is recycled, since the PUREX method is used. IFRs have neither of those drawbacks.¶ Why does it seem that there is more proliferation-related concern about plutonium than about uranium? Can’t you make bombs from either?¶ Yes. The best isotopes for nuclear explosives are U-235, Pu- 239, and U-233. Only the first two of those, however, have been widely used. All the other actinide isotopes, if present in appreciable quantity, in one way or another complicate the design and construction of bombs and degrade their performance. Adequate isotopic purity is therefore important, and isotopic separation is much more difficult than chemical separation. Even so, with plutonium of almost any isotopic composition it is technically possible to make an explosive (although designers of military weapons demand plutonium that is at least 93% Pu-239), whereas if U-235 is sufficiently diluted with U-238 (which is easy to do and hard to undo), the mixture cannot be used for a bomb.¶ High-quality plutonium is the material of choice for a large and sophisticated nuclear arsenal, while highly enriched uranium would be one of the easier routes to a few crude nuclear explosives.¶ So why the emphasis on plutonium?¶ You’re asking me to read people’s minds, and I’m not good at that. Both uranium and plutonium are of proliferation concern.¶ Where is the best place for plutonium?¶ Where better than in a reactor plant—particularly an IFR facility, where there is never pure plutonium (except some, briefly, when it comes in from dismantled weapons), where the radioactivity levels are lethal, and where the operations are done remotely under an inert, smothering atmosphere? Once enough IFRs are deployed, there never will need to be plutonium outside a reactor plant—except for the then diminishing supply of plutonium left over from decades of thermal-reactor operation.¶ How does the IFR square with U.S. policy of discouraging plutonium production, reprocessing and use?¶ It is entirely consistent with the intent of that policy—to render plutonium as inaccessible for weapons use as possible. The wording of the policy, however, is now obsolete.¶ How so?¶ It was formulated before the IFR’s pyroprocessing and electrorefining technology was known—when “reprocessing” was synonymous with PUREX, which creates plutonium of the chemical purity needed for weapons. Since now there is a fuel cycle that promises to provide far-superior management of plutonium, the policy has been overtaken by events.¶ Why is the IFR better than PUREX? Doesn’t “recycling” mean separation of plutonium, regardless of the method?¶ No, not in the IFR—and that misunderstanding accounts for some of the opposition. The IFR’s pyroprocessing and electrorefining method is not capable of making plutonium that is pure enough for weapons. If a proliferator were to start with IFR material, he or she would have to employ an extra chemical separation step.¶ But there is plutonium in IFRs, along with other fissionable isotopes. Seems to me that a proliferator could take some of that and make a bomb.¶ Some people do say that, but they’re wrong, according to expert bomb designers at Livermore National Laboratory. They looked at the problem in detail, and concluded that plutonium-bearing material taken from anywhere in the IFR cycle was so ornery, because of inherent heat, radioactivity and spontaneous neutrons, that making a bomb with it without chemical separation of the plutonium would be essentially impossible—far, far harder than using today’s reactor-grade plutonium.¶ So? Why wouldn’t they use chemical separation?¶ First of all, they would need a PUREX-type plant—something that does not exist in the IFR cycle.¶ Second, the input material is so fiendishly radioactive that the processing facility would have to be more elaborate than any PUREX plant now in existence. The operations would have to be done entirely by remote control, behind heavy shielding, or the operators would die before getting the job done. The installation would cost millions, and would be very hard to conceal.¶ Third, a routine safeguards regime would readily spot any such modification to an IFR plant, or diversion of highly radioactive material beyond the plant.¶ Fourth, of all the ways there are to get plutonium—of any isotopic quality—this is probably the all-time, hands-down hardest.¶ The Long Term¶ Does the plutonium now existing and being produced by thermal reactors raise any proliferation concerns for the long term?¶ It certainly does. As I said earlier, burying the spent fuel from today’s thermal reactors creates geological deposits of plutonium whose desirability for weapons use is continually improving. Some 30 countries now have thermal-reactor programs, and the number will grow. To conceive of that many custodial programs being maintained effectively for that long is a challenge to the imagination. Since the IFR can consume plutonium, it can completely eliminate this long-term concern.¶ Are there other waste-disposal problems that could be lessened?¶ Yes. Some constituents of the waste from thermal reactors remain appreciably radioactive for thousands of years, leading to 10,000-year stability criteria for disposal sites. Waste disposal would be simpler if that time frame could be shortened. With IFR waste, the time of concern is less than 500 years.¶ What about a 1994 report by the National Academy of Sciences? The Washington Post said that the NAS report “denounces the idea of building new reactors to consume plutonium.”¶ That characterization of the report is a little strong, but it is true that the members of the NAS committee seem not to have been familiar with the plutonium-management potential of the IFR. They did, however, recognize the “plutonium mine” problem. They say (Executive Summary, p.3):¶ Because plutonium in spent fuel or glass logs incorporating high-level wastes still entails a risk of weapons use, and because the barrier to such use diminishes with time as the radioactivity decays, consideration of further steps to reduce the long-term proliferation risks of such materials is required, regardless of what option is chosen for [near-term] disposition of weapons plutonium. This global effort should include continued consideration of more proliferation-resistant nuclear fuel cycles, including concepts that might offer a long-term option for nearly complete elimination of the world’s plutonium stocks. The IFR, obviously, is just such a fuel cycle—a prime candidate for “continued consideration.”

#### We’re on the brink of rapid prolif – access to tech is inevitable and multilateral institutions fail

**CFR 12** [CFR 7-5-2012, "The Global Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime," Council on Foreign Relations]

Nuclear weapons proliferation, whether by state or nonstate actors, poses one of the greatest threats to international security today. Iran's apparent efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, what amounts to North Korean nuclear blackmail, and the revelation of the A.Q. Khan black market nuclear network all underscore the far-from-remote possibility that a terrorist group or a so-called rogue state will acquire weapons of mass destruction or materials for a dirty bomb.¶ The problem of nuclear proliferation is global, and any effective response must also be multilateral. Nine states (China, France, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) are known or believed to have nuclear weapons, and more than thirty others (including Japan, Germany, and South Korea) have the technological ability to quickly acquire them. Amid volatile energy costs, the accompanying push to expand nuclear energy, growing concerns about the environmental impact of fossil fuels, and the continued diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge, access to dual-use technologies seems destined to grow.¶ In the background, a nascent global consensus regarding the need for substantial nuclear arms reductions, if not complete nuclear disarmament, has increasingly taken shape. In April 2009, for instance, U.S. president Barack Obama reignited global nonproliferation efforts through a landmark speech in Prague. Subsequently, in September of the same year, the UN Security Council (UNSC) unanimously passed Resolution 1887, which called for accelerated efforts toward total nuclear disarmament. In February 2012, the number of states who have ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty increased to 157, heightening appeals to countries such as the United States, Israel, and Iran to follow suit.¶ Overall, the existing global nonproliferation regime is a highly developed example of international law. Yet, despite some notable successes, existing multilateral institutions have failed to prevent states such as India, Pakistan, and North Korea from "going nuclear," and seem equally ill-equipped to check Iran as well as potential threats from nonstate, terrorist groups. The current framework must be updated and reinforced if it is to effectively address today's proliferation threats, let alone pave the way for "the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

#### New proliferators will be uniquely destabilizing -- guarantees conflict escalation.

Cimbala, ‘8

[Stephen, Distinguished Prof. Pol. Sci. – Penn. State Brandywine, Comparative Strategy, “Anticipatory Attacks: Nuclear Crisis Stability in Future Asia”, 27, InformaWorld]

If the possibility existed of a mistaken preemption during and immediately after the Cold War, between the experienced nuclear forces and command systems of America and Russia, then it may be a matter of even more concern with regard to states with newer and more opaque forces and command systems. In addition, the Americans and Soviets (and then Russians) had a great deal of experience getting to know one another’s military operational proclivities and doctrinal idiosyncrasies, including those that might influence the decision for or against war. Another consideration, relative to nuclear stability in the present century, is that the Americans and their NATO allies shared with the Soviets and Russians a commonality of culture and historical experience. Future threats to American or Russian security from weapons of mass destruction may be presented by states or nonstate actors motivated by cultural and social predispositions not easily understood by those in the West nor subject to favorable manipulation during a crisis. The spread of nuclear weapons in Asia presents a complicated mosaic of possibilities in this regard. States with nuclear forces of variable force structure, operational experience, and command-control systems will be thrown into a matrix of complex political, social, and cultural crosscurrents contributory to the possibility of war. In addition to the existing nuclear powers in Asia, others may seek nuclear weapons if they feel threatened by regional rivals or hostile alliances. Containment of nuclear proliferation in Asia is a desirable political objective for all of the obvious reasons. Nevertheless, the present century is unlikely to see the nuclear hesitancy or risk aversion that marked the Cold War, in part, because the military and political discipline imposed by the Cold War superpowers no longer exists, but also because states in Asia have new aspirations for regional or global respect.12 The spread of ballistic missiles and other nuclear-capable delivery systems in Asia, or in the Middle East with reach into Asia, is especially dangerous because plausible adversaries live close together and are already engaged in ongoing disputes about territory or other issues.13 The Cold War Americans and Soviets required missiles and airborne delivery systems of intercontinental range to strike at one another’s vitals. But short-range ballistic missiles or fighter-bombers suffice for India and Pakistan to launch attacks at one another with potentially “strategic” effects. China shares borders with Russia, North Korea, India, and Pakistan; Russia, with China and NorthKorea; India, with Pakistan and China; Pakistan, with India and China; and so on. The short flight times of ballistic missiles between the cities or military forces of contiguous states means that very little time will be available for warning and attack assessment by the defender. Conventionally armed missiles could easily be mistaken for a tactical nuclear first use. Fighter-bombers appearing over the horizon could just as easily be carrying nuclear weapons as conventional ordnance. In addition to the challenges posed by shorter flight times and uncertain weapons loads, potential victims of nuclear attack in Asia may also have first strike–vulnerable forces and command-control systems that increase decision pressures for rapid, and possibly mistaken, retaliation. This potpourri of possibilities challenges conventional wisdom about nuclear deterrence and proliferation on the part of policymakers and academic theorists. For policymakers in the United States and NATO, spreading nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in Asia could profoundly shift the geopolitics of mass destruction from a European center of gravity (in the twentieth century) to an Asian and/or Middle Eastern center of gravity (in the present century).14 This would profoundly shake up prognostications to the effect that wars of mass destruction are now passe, on account of the emergence of the “Revolution in Military Affairs” and its encouragement of information-based warfare.15 Together with this, there has emerged the argument that large-scale war between states or coalitions of states, as opposed to varieties of unconventional warfare and failed states, are exceptional and potentially obsolete.16 The spread of WMD and ballistic missiles in Asia could overturn these expectations for the obsolescence or marginalization of major interstate warfare.

#### Extinction.

Krieger, ‘9

[David, Pres. Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Councilor – World Future Council, “Still Loving the Bomb After All These Years”, 9-4, https://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2009/09/04\_krieger\_newsweek\_response.php?krieger]

Jonathan Tepperman’s article in the September 7, 2009 issue of Newsweek, “Why Obama Should Learn to Love the Bomb,” provides a novel but frivolous argument that nuclear weapons “may not, in fact, make the world more dangerous….” Rather, in Tepperman’s world, “The bomb may actually make us safer.” Tepperman shares this world with Kenneth Waltz, a University of California professor emeritus of political science, who Tepperman describes as “the leading ‘nuclear optimist.’” Waltz expresses his optimism in this way: “We’ve now had 64 years of experience since Hiroshima. It’s striking and against all historical precedent that for that substantial period, there has not been any war among nuclear states.” Actually, there were a number of proxy wars between nuclear weapons states, such as those in Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan, and some near disasters, the most notable being the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Waltz’s logic is akin to observing a man falling from a high rise building, and noting that he had already fallen for 64 floors without anything bad happening to him, and concluding that so far it looked so good that others should try it. Dangerous logic! Tepperman builds upon Waltz’s logic, and concludes “that all states are rational,” even though their leaders may have a lot of bad qualities, including being “stupid, petty, venal, even evil….” He asks us to trust that rationality will always prevail when there is a risk of nuclear retaliation, because these weapons make “the costs of war obvious, inevitable, and unacceptable.” Actually, he is asking us to do more than trust in the rationality of leaders; he is asking us to gamble the future on this proposition. “The iron logic of deterrence and mutually assured destruction is so compelling,” Tepperman argues, “it’s led to what’s known as the nuclear peace….” But if this is a peace worthy of the name, which it isn’t, it certainly is not one on which to risk the future of civilization. One irrational leader with control over a nuclear arsenal could start a nuclear conflagration, resulting in a global Hiroshima. Tepperman celebrates “the iron logic of deterrence,” but deterrence is a theory that is far from rooted in “iron logic.” It is a theory based upon threats that must be effectively communicated and believed. Leaders of Country A with nuclear weapons must communicate to other countries (B, C, etc.) the conditions under which A will retaliate with nuclear weapons. The leaders of the other countries must understand and believe the threat from Country A will, in fact, be carried out. The longer that nuclear weapons are not used, the more other countries may come to believe that they can challenge Country A with impunity from nuclear retaliation. The more that Country A bullies other countries, the greater the incentive for these countries to develop their own nuclear arsenals. Deterrence is unstable and therefore precarious. Most of the countries in the world reject the argument, made most prominently by Kenneth Waltz, that the spread of nuclear weapons makes the world safer. These countries joined together in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, but they never agreed to maintain indefinitely a system of nuclear apartheid in which some states possess nuclear weapons and others are prohibited from doing so. The principal bargain of the NPT requires the five NPT nuclear weapons states (US, Russia, UK, France and China) to engage in good faith negotiations for nuclear disarmament, and the International Court of Justice interpreted this to mean complete nuclear disarmament in all its aspects. Tepperman seems to be arguing that seeking to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons is bad policy, and that nuclear weapons, because of their threat, make efforts at non-proliferation unnecessary and even unwise. If some additional states, including Iran, developed nuclear arsenals, he concludes that wouldn’t be so bad “given the way that bombs tend to mellow behavior.” Those who oppose Tepperman’s favorable disposition toward the bomb, he refers to as “nuclear pessimists.” These would be the people, and I would certainly be one of them, who see nuclear weapons as presenting an urgent danger to our security, our species and our future. Tepperman finds that when viewed from his “nuclear optimist” perspective, “nuclear weapons start to seem a lot less frightening.” “Nuclear peace,” he tells us, “rests on a scary bargain: you accept a small chance that something extremely bad will happen in exchange for a much bigger chance that something very bad – conventional war – won’t happen.” But the “extremely bad” thing he asks us to accept is the end of the human species. Yes, that would be serious. He also doesn’t make the case that in a world without nuclear weapons, the prospects of conventional war would increase dramatically. After all, it is only an unproven supposition that nuclear weapons have prevented wars, or would do so in the future. We have certainly come far too close to the precipice of catastrophic nuclear war. As an ultimate celebration of the faulty logic of deterrence, Tepperman calls for providing any nuclear weapons state with a “survivable second strike option.” Thus, he not only favors nuclear weapons, but finds the security of these weapons to trump human security. Presumably he would have President Obama providing new and secure nuclear weapons to North Korea, Pakistan and any other nuclear weapons states that come along so that they will feel secure enough not to use their weapons in a first-strike attack. Do we really want to bet the human future that Kim Jong-Il and his successors are more rational than Mr. Tepperman?

#### 2nd terrorism – Nuclear terrorism is extremely likely

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(Zafar Nawaz, “Nuclear/Radiological Terrorism: Myth or Reality?”, Journal of Political Studies, Vol. 19, Issue - 1, 2012, 91:111, dml)

The misperception, miscalculation and above all ignorance of the ruling elite about security puzzles **are perilous** for the national security of a state. Indeed, in an age of transnational terrorism and **unprecedented dissemination of dualuse nuclear technology**, ignoring nuclear terrorism threat is an imprudent policy choice. The incapability of terrorist organizations to engineer fissile material **does not eliminate** completely the possibility of nuclear terrorism. At the same time, the absence of an example or precedent of a nuclear/ radiological terrorism **does not qualify the assertion** that the nuclear/radiological terrorism ought to be remained a myth. Farsighted rationality obligates that one should not miscalculate **transnational terrorist groups** — whose behavior suggests that they have a death wish — of acquiring nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological material producing capabilities. In addition, one could be sensible about the published information that **huge amount of nuclear material** is spread around the globe. According to estimate it is enough to build **more than** 120,000 **Hiroshima-sized nuclear bombs** (Fissile Material Working Group, 2010, April 1). The alarming fact is that a few storage sites of nuclear/radiological materials **are inadequately secured** and continue to be accumulated in unstable regions (Sambaiew, 2010, February). Attempts at stealing fissile material had already been discovered (Din & Zhiwei, 2003: 18). Numerous evidences confirm **that terrorist groups had aspired to acquire fissile material** for their terrorist acts. Late Osama bin Laden, the founder of al Qaeda stated that acquiring nuclear weapons was a“religious duty” (Yusufzai, 1999, January 11). The IAEA also reported that “al-Qaeda was actively seeking an atomic bomb.” Jamal Ahmad al-Fadl, a dissenter of Al Qaeda, in his trial testimony had “revealed his extensive but unsuccessful efforts to acquire enriched uranium for al-Qaeda” (Allison, 2010, January: 11). On November 9, 2001, Osama bin Laden claimed that “we have chemical and nuclear weapons as a deterrent and if America used them against us we reserve the right to use them (Mir, 2001, November 10).” On May 28, 2010, Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood, a Pakistani nuclear scientist confessed that he met Osama bin Laden. He claimed that “I met Osama bin Laden before 9/11 not to give him nuclear know-how, but to seek funds for establishing a technical college in Kabul (Syed, 2010, May 29).” He was arrested in 2003 and after extensive interrogation by American and Pakistani intelligence agencies he was released (Syed, 2010, May 29). Agreed, Mr. Mahmood did not share nuclear know-how with Al Qaeda, but his meeting with Osama establishes the fact that the terrorist organization was in contact with nuclear scientists. Second, the terrorist group **has sympathizers in the nuclear scientific bureaucracies**. It also authenticates bin Laden’s Deputy Ayman Zawahiri’s claim which he made in December 2001: “If you have $30 million, go to the black market in the central Asia, contact any disgruntled Soviet scientist and a lot of dozens of smart briefcase bombs are available (Allison, 2010, January: 2).” The covert meetings between nuclear scientists and al Qaeda members **could not be interpreted as idle threats** and thereby the threat of nuclear/radiological terrorism is real. The 33Defense Secretary Robert Gates admitted in 2008 that “what keeps every senior government leader awake at night is the thought of a terrorist ending up with a weapon of mass destruction, especially nuclear (Mueller, 2011, August 2).” Indeed, **the nuclear deterrence strategy** cannot deter **the transnational terrorist syndicate** from nuclear/radiological terrorist attacks. Daniel Whiteneck pointed out: “**Evidence suggests**, for example, that al Qaeda might not only use WMD simply to demonstrate the magnitude of its capability but that it might actually welcome **the escalation of a strong U.S. response**, **especially if it included** catalytic effects **on governments** and societies in the Muslim world. An adversary that prefers escalation regardless of the consequences cannot be deterred” (Whiteneck, 2005, Summer: 187) Since taking office, President Obama has been reiterating that “nuclear weapons represent the ‘gravest threat’ to United States and international security.” While realizing that the US could not prevent nuclear/radiological terrorist attacks singlehandedly, he launched 47an international campaign to convince the international community about the increasing threat of nuclear/ radiological terrorism. He stated on April 5, 2009: “Black market trade in nuclear secrets and nuclear materials abound. The technology to build a bomb has spread. Terrorists are determined to buy, build or steal one. Our efforts to contain these dangers are centered on **a global non-proliferation regime**, but as more people and nations break the rules, we could reach the point where **the center cannot hold** (Remarks by President Barack Obama, 2009, April 5).” He added: “One terrorist with one nuclear weapon could unleash massive destruction. Al Qaeda has said it seeks a bomb and that it would have no problem with using it. And we know that there is unsecured nuclear material across the globe” (Remarks by President Barack Obama, 2009, April 5). In July 2009, at the G-8 Summit, President Obama announced the convening of a Nuclear Security Summit in 2010 to deliberate on the mechanism to “secure nuclear materials, combat nuclear smuggling, and prevent nuclear terrorism” (Luongo, 2009, November 10). President Obama’s nuclear/radiological threat perceptions were also accentuated by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1887 (2009). The UNSC expressed its grave concern regarding ‘the threat of nuclear terrorism.” It also recognized the need for all States “to take effective measures to prevent nuclear material or technical assistance becoming available to terrorists.” The UNSC Resolution called “for universal adherence to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and its 2005 Amendment, and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.” (UNSC Resolution, 2009) The United States Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) document revealed on April 6, 2010 declared that “terrorism and proliferation are far greater threats **to the United States and international stability**.” (Security of Defence, 2010, April 6: i). The United States declared that it reserved the right to“hold fully accountable” any state or group “that supports or enables terrorist efforts to obtain or use weapons of mass destruction, whether by facilitating, financing, or providing expertise or safe haven for such efforts (Nuclear Posture Review Report, 2010, April: 12)”. This declaration underscores the possibility that terrorist groups could acquire fissile material from the rogue states.

#### And, wet pool storage facilities are uniquely vulnerable now

Werner, 12 [U.S. Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage James D. Werner Section Research Manager May 24, 2012, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42513.pdf]

The locations of SNF wet pool storage in relation to the associated nuclear reactor may present potential risks associated with those designs. For example, most boiling water reactors (BWRs) in the United States, including the GE Mark I, are designed with the SNF storage pool located inside the same secondary containment structure as the reactor and many critical control systems, and located well above ground level. Many have expressed concern that this design may pose safety risks because any problems with the reactor can affect the SNF storage pools, and vice versa.135 For example, in a loss of off-site power situation, such as occurred at the GE Mark I reactors in Fukushima, Japan, the SNF pool may also lose power, affecting the cooling water and monitoring systems. In the case of the incident in Japan, elevated radiation near the reactor hindered personnel from mitigating problems or monitoring the SNF storage pools. In addition, the height of the SNF pools in many BWRs (more than 100 feet above ground level) could also pose safety risks because of the elevated access challenge and potential for a loss of coolant in a structural failure, compared to reactors with the SNF storage pools at or below ground level. Prior to the Fukushima Dai-ichi incident, the biggest change in the risk profile for SNF storage occurred in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, after which a congressionally mandated National Academy of Sciences report concluded that “attacks with civilian aircraft remain a credible threat.”136 NAS indicated that terrorists might choose to attack spent nuclear fuel pools because they are “less well protected structurally than reactor cores**”** and “typically contain inventories of medium- and long-lived radionuclides that are several times greater than those contained in reactor cores.”137 In response, NRC issued a series of orders and letters to licensees, the contents of which are confidential. NRC also conducted site-specific evaluations to review individual site risks and readiness, resulting in site modifications, the details of which are also confidential. Although the reviews, orders, and letters resulted in numerous incremental improvements to SNF storage facilities and operations, such as improved backup power supply reliability, there was no large-scale shift of SNF out of wet pools and into dry casks, nor was there a mandate to move SNF into hardened storage facilities.

#### And, the only impediment to escalating terror is access to spent fuel

NTI, 12 [Nuclear Threat Initiative, August 1st,“Why Is Highly Enriched Uranium a Threat?”, <http://www.nti.org/analysis/reports/civilian-heu-reduction-and-elimination/>]

Why Is Highly Enriched Uranium a Threat? The most difficult challenge for a terrorist organization seeking to build a nuclear weapon or [improvised nuclear device](http://www.nti.org/glossary/improvised-nuclear-device-ind/) is obtaining [fissile material](http://www.nti.org/glossary/fissile-material/), either [plutonium](http://www.nti.org/glossary/plutonium-pu/) or [highly enriched uranium (HEU)](http://www.nti.org/glossary/highly-enriched-uranium-heu/). HEU, [uranium](http://www.nti.org/glossary/uranium/) that has been processed to increase the proportion of the U-235 [isotope](http://www.nti.org/glossary/isotope/) to over 20%, is required for the construction of a [gun-type nuclear device](http://www.nti.org/glossary/gun-type-nuclear-weapon/), the simplest type of nuclear weapon. The greater the proportion of U-235 (i.e. the higher the [enrichment](http://www.nti.org/glossary/enriched-uranium/) level), the less material is needed for a nuclear explosive device. [Weapons-grade uranium](http://www.nti.org/glossary/weapons-grade-material/) generally refers to uranium enriched to at least 90%, but material of far lower enrichment levels, found in both fresh and [spent nuclear fuel](http://www.nti.org/glossary/spent-nuclear-fuel/), can be used to create a nuclear explosive device. In 2002, the U.S. National Research Council warned that "crude HEU weapons could be fabricated without state assistance," noting that "the primary impediment that prevents countries or technically competent terrorist groups from developing nuclear weapons is the availability of [nuclear material], especially HEU."[1] Creating a nuclear weapon from HEU is technically easier than building a [plutonium](http://www.nti.org/glossary/plutonium-pu/) weapon. Moreover, current technology is unlikely to detect a shielded nuclear device on a truck or boat. Therefore, securing and eliminating stocks of HEU is the surest way to decrease the risk that terrorist groups could use this material to create a nuclear explosion. Where Is Civilian HEU Located? Experts estimate that approximately 70 tons of HEU are used in civilian applications worldwide. [2] As little as 25 kilograms (kg) of U-235 (which amounts to about 28kg of HEU enriched to 90%) is needed to produce a nuclear weapon; about 40-60kg is needed for a cruder nuclear device. [3] Bomb-grade material can be obtained from HEU that is fresh (unirradiated), and [irradiated](http://www.nti.org/glossary/irradiate/) (also referred to as spent). Fresh and lightly irradiated fuel (such as fuel used in critical assemblies and pulse reactors) is not significantly [radioactive](http://www.nti.org/glossary/radioactivity/), and is therefore relatively safe to handle. Although using nuclear fuel in high-powered reactors initially makes it highly radioactive and thus very difficult to handle safely (often this fuel is referred to as "self-protecting"), [spent fuel](http://www.nti.org/glossary/spent-nuclear-fuel/) loses its radioactivity over time, making it easier to handle and potentially more attractive to terrorists. HEU is currently used in the civilian sphere to fuel [research reactors](http://www.nti.org/glossary/research-reactor/), critical assemblies, pulsed reactors, and a few fast reactors. According to the [International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)](http://www.nti.org/glossary/international-atomic-energy-agency/), 244 research reactors are in operation or temporarily shut down across 56 countries. A further 441 reactors have been shut down or decommissioned, while eight are planned or under construction. [4] Many of the research reactors that have been shut down, but not decommissioned, have spent HEU fuel on-site. The IAEA database notes that over 20,000 spent fuel assemblies from research reactors are enriched to levels above 20 percent. Nearly half of these stored fuel assemblies are enriched to levels at or above 90 percent.[5] That said, there is no current comprehensive, authoritative inventory of civil HEU globally, which is a major obstacle to progress in this area. According to the Government Accountability Office, even the [United States](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/united-states/) has failed to maintain an accurate inventory of the HEU that it has exported over the years as attempts to balance the books could only account for 10 percent of the material. [6] The United States and the [Soviet Union](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/russia/) supplied much of the HEU fuel used in research reactors world-wide. Other producers include [China](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/china/) (which sent HEU fuel for research reactors to Nigeria, Ghana, [Iran](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/iran/), [Pakistan](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/pakistan/), and [Syria](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/syria/), as well as enriched uranium to [South Africa](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/south-africa/), and [Argentina](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/argentina/)); [France](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/france/) (to Chile and [India](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/india/)); the [United Kingdom](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/united-kingdom/) (to [Australia](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/australia/), India, and [Japan](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/japan/)); and South Africa (which did not export this fuel).[7] Before 1978, when Washington and Moscow became concerned about the implications of their exports of highly enriched fuels, most of the fuel supplied by the United States (the bulk of which went to North American and the Asia-Pacific), was of very high enrichment levels (90% and above). The Soviet-supplied fuel, chiefly sent to Eastern Europe, was typically 80% enriched. Under several U.S.-led initiatives, many countries have returned HEU fuel, both fresh and spent, to its country of origin in order to reduce the risk of theft. HEU is also used in targets in reactors that produce [medical isotopes](http://www.nti.org/glossary/medical-isotopes/). HEU is used for this purpose annually in reactors in Belgium, Canada, France, the Netherlands, and Russia.[8] Other countries, including Australia and [Indonesia](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/indonesia/), have begun producing these isotopes with [LEU](http://www.nti.org/glossary/low-enriched-uranium-leu/) targets, and still other countries, such as [Egypt](http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/egypt/), are currently developing and implementing their LEU target-based production process. [9] In particular, South Africa—a major exporter—converted its Safari-1 reactor to rely on both LEU targets and fuel for the production of [medical isotopes](http://www.nti.org/glossary/radioisotope/). Most of the other major producers of medical isotopes, including Canada, the Netherlands, and France, utilize LEU fuels in their reactors, but continue to rely on HEU targets. However, a number of these countries, particularly in Western Europe, have pledged to convert to LEU targets. Progress towards fuller use of LEU is not universal, however. A Russian project, for example, aims to produce enough molybdenum-99 using HEU fuel and targets to satisfy 20 percent of global demand by 2015. [10] In addition to use in research and test reactors and for medical isotope production, HEU is used in naval propulsion and space propulsion research. The material is also used for testing fast reactor core designs using [mixed oxide (MOX) fuel](http://www.nti.org/glossary/mixed-oxide-mox-fuel/). For further information on HEU in civilian applications, see [Civilian Uses of HEU](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/civilian-uses-heu/). Security of Civilian HEU Many civilian facilities with HEU on-site do not have adequate security. The IAEA reported that during one of its missions, it discovered a research reactor with HEU that "was observed to have essentially no physical protection." [11] The IAEA assisted the facility with enhancing its security, but reported that overall, "deficiencies remain in the legal, administrative, and technical arrangements for controlling and protecting nuclear materials ... in many countries." [12] The U.S. Department of Energy has been assisting with physical protection upgrades for 22 foreign research reactors through the Global Research Reactor Program. A September 2009 GAO report found that while most sites that have received upgrades generally met IAEA security guidelines, in some cases, critical security weaknesses remained. [23] It is not a simple matter to upgrade security measures; the majority of the world's research reactors are located in universities or other publicly accessible research centers. While security concerns have dramatically increased since 9/11, it is difficult to reconfigure a site that was not built with physical protection in mind. Storage of spent fuel stocks is generally even less secure than fresh fuel stocks, as until a few years ago spent nuclear fuel was considered "self-protecting" and few facilities wanted to spend money securing a material that was no longer of economic value. It is far more effective to remove this material from vulnerable locations than to attempt to increase security on-site. Programs to Reduce and Eliminate HEU There have been efforts to reduce the amount of HEU at civilian facilities since 1978, when Washington initiated the [Reduced Enrichment for Research and Test Reactors (RERTR) Program](http://www.nti.org/glossary/rertr-program/). Moscow also began its own program to reduce enrichment at Soviet-built research reactors outside of the Soviet Union, and changed its HEU export policies, supplying these reactors with 36% HEU in lieu of 80% HEU. In the past 25 years, many countries have cooperated with the RERTR program or initiated their own, similar programs. In May 2004, the U.S. Department of Energy launched the [Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI](http://www.nti.org/glossary/global-threat-reduction-initiative/)), which the IAEA, Russia, and others have since joined. Among its goals, the GTRI seeks to "minimize and eventually eliminate any reliance on HEU in the civilian fuel cycle, including conversion of research and test reactors worldwide from the use of HEU to the use of LEU fuel and targets." As of early 2012, U.S.-led efforts have converted to LEU or verified the shut down of 88 HEU-fueled facilities.[14] The RERTR program is also working on the conversion of a handful of medical isotope producers that use HEU targets in their reactors. The program includes some of the largest producers of medical isotopes, located in Europe. To date, the RERTR program has helped to successfully convert isotope-producing reactors in Argentina and South Africa. At present, there are no longer any technical barriers to conversion to LEU and only political and financial issues remain. [15] Besides converting facilities to use LEU fuel and targets, there have also been efforts to consolidate fresh and spent HEU fuel at a smaller number of relatively secure locations. This has involved removing the fuel, mostly to the United States and Russia, from other countries, as well as consolidating the fuel within countries. U.S. programs in this area (the Russian Research Reactor Fuel Return program to repatriate fuel to Russia, and the Foreign Research Reactor Spent Nuclear Fuel Acceptance Program to repatriate U.S.-origin fuel), have all been subsumed under the 2004 GTRI initiative. Together, the two programs have returned over 2,735kg of spent and fresh HEU fuel to the United States and Russia as of 2012. [16] According to the IAEA's definition of the quantity of HEU necessary to construct a nuclear explosive device, the amount of repatriated HEU is equivalent to up to 80 weapons. [17] Despite the progress of these efforts, many HEU sites remain worldwide, with a significant portion of them located in Russia. [26] A related program, the Material Consolidation and Conversion (MCC) project, established in 1999, reduces this excess Russian civilian HEU by blending it down into LEU. As of the end of 2011, approximately 13.5 of an estimated 17 tons of U-235 in excess Russian civilian HEU had been blended down. [18] Both the United States and Russia also have large quantities of excess HEU from their defense programs. In Russia, excess HEU from weapons is blended down to LEU within the framework of the Megatons to Megawatts program (also known as the [HEU-LEU program](http://www.nti.org/glossary/heu-deal/)). The resulting LEU is then released for civilian use. The program will end in 2013, at which point 500 tons of HEU will have been downblended. [19] The United States initially declared some 174 metric tons of HEU as excess to military needs, designating this material as civilian. [20] An additional 200 metric tons were officially removed from the U.S. weapons stockpile in November 2005. [21]

#### That’s key to the nuclear taboo – solves nuclear war

Bin ‘9(5-22-09 About the Authors Prof. Li Bin is a leading Chinese expert on arms control and is currently the director of Arms Control Program at the Institute of International Studies, Tsinghua University. He received his Bachelor and Master Degrees in Physics from Peking University before joining China Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP) to pursue a doctorate in the technical aspects of arms control. He served as a part-time assistant on arms control for the Committee of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (COSTIND).Upon graduation Dr. Li entered the Institute of Applied Physics and Computational Mathematics (IAPCM) as a research fellow and joined the COSTIND technical group supporting Chinese negotiation team on Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). He attended the final round of CTBT negotiations as a technical advisor to the Chinese negotiating team. Nie Hongyi is an officer in the People’s Liberation Army with an MA from China’s National Defense University and a Ph.D. in International Studies from Tsinghua University, which he completed in 2009 under Prof. Li Bin. )

The nuclear taboo is a kind of international norm and this type of norm is supported by the promotion of the norm through international social exchange. But at present the increased **threat of nuclear terrorism has lowered people’s confidence that nuclear weapons will not be used**. China and the United States have a broad common interest in combating nuclear terrorism. **Using technical and institutional measures to break the foundation of nuclear terrorism and lessen the possibility of a nuclear terrorist attack can** not only weaken the danger of nuclear terrorism itself but also **strengthen people’s confidence in the nuclear taboo**, and in this way preserve an international environment beneficial to both China and the United States. In this way **even if there is crisis** in China-U.S. relations caused by conflict, **the nuclear taboo can** also help both countries **reduce suspicions** about the nuclear weapons problem, **avoid miscalculation and thereby reduce the danger of a nuclear war.**

#### Causes extinction – retal

**Ayson 10** (Robert, Professor of Strategic Studies, Director of Strategic Studies: New Zealand, Senior Research Associate with Oxford’s Centre for International Studies. “After a Terrorist Nuclear Attack: Envisaging Catalytic Effects. Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Volume 33, Issue 7, July 2010, pages 571-593)

Washington's early response to a terrorist nuclear attack on its own soil might also raise the possibility of an unwanted (and nuclear aided) confrontation with Russia and/or China. For example, in the noise and confusion during the immediate aftermath of the terrorist nuclear attack, the U.S. president might be expected to place the country's armed forces, including its nuclear arsenal, on a higher stage of alert. In such a tense environment, when careful planning runs up against the friction of reality, it is just possible that Moscow and/or China might mistakenly read this as a sign of U.S. intentions to use force (and possibly nuclear force) against them. In that situation, the temptations to preempt such actions might grow, although it must be admitted that any preemption would probably still meet with a devastating response. As part of its initial response to the act of nuclear terrorism (as discussed earlier) Washington might decide to order a significant conventional (or nuclear) retaliatory or disarming attack against the leadership of the terrorist group and/or states seen to support that group. Depending on the identity and especially the location of these targets, Russia and/or China might interpret such action as being far too close for their comfort, and potentially as an infringement on their spheres of influence and even on their sovereignty. One far-fetched but perhaps not impossible scenario might stem from a judgment in Washington that some of the main aiders and abetters of the terrorist action resided somewhere such as Chechnya, perhaps in connection with what Allison claims is the “Chechen insurgents' … long-standing interest in all things nuclear.”42 American pressure on that part of the world would almost certainly raise alarms in Moscow that …might require a degree of advanced consultation from Washington that the latter found itself unable or unwilling to provide.

#### And, the plan solves unauthorized diversion

**Archambeau et al 11** – Science Council for Global Initiatives

(Charles, with Randolph Ware, Tom Blees, Barry Brook, Yoon Chang, Jerry Peterson, Robert Serafin, Joseph Shuster, Evgeny Velikhov, and Tom Wigley, “The Integral Fast Reactor (IFR): An Optimized Source for Global Energy Needs”, google it, dml)

Pyroprocessing was originally developed for integration with a fast reactor, but it can also be used in a stand-alone mode to **treat spent fuel** from today's commercial reactors with the addition of a front-end step to convert the used oxide fuel to metallic form. **Pyroprocessing** eliminates **the ability to use the reactor's nuclear materials directly in weapons** because it cannot separate out any Plutonium (Pu). Instead, it keeps the major nuclear fuels, Uranium and Plutonium mixed, at all times, with other actinides and fission products. This mixture is protected **against theft or unauthorized diversion** because the mixture is extremely radioactive and must be handled remotely with sophisticated and specialized equipment.

#### IFR key

**Archambeau et al 11** – Science Council for Global Initiatives

(Charles, with Randolph Ware, Tom Blees, Barry Brook, Yoon Chang, Jerry Peterson, Robert Serafin, Joseph Shuster, Evgeny Velikhov, and Tom Wigley, “The Integral Fast Reactor (IFR): An Optimized Source for Global Energy Needs”, google it, dml)

The pyroprocessor unit can be used as a stand-alone system to process LWR waste from any open cycle reactor into fuel for IFR closed cycle reactors. The depleted Uranium produced by the enrichment of Uranium ore can also be processed to generate additional IFR fuel. The current amount of LWR waste, plus the amount of depleted Uranium in stock piles world-wide, is sufficient to supply fuel to all the IFR plants needed and in fact to supply the world's required energy for about 1000 years.3 The problem of storage of current LWR waste and depleted Uranium waste from refining of mined Uranium is therefore solved by pyroprocessor generation of IFR fuel, along with a relatively small mass of short-lived fission products which can be easily and safely stored. Uranium can also be extracted from sea water using IFR power sources (see, for example, Cohen, 1983). Because Uranium is constantly added to seawater by erosion processes, then the IFR fuel source is effectively unlimited. Therefore, IFR power plants do not require fuel from regular mining operations, as does a LWR powered plant, but can use pyroprocessor generated fuel essentially indefinitely. In this sense the IFR is a "renewable" energy source which can be expanded, essentially indefinitely, to meet demand.

#### 3rd competitiveness – US is ceding nuclear competitiveness now

**Barton 11** [Charles Barton, Nuclear Green, “Have the Chinese Been Reading Energy from Thorium or Nuclear Green?” 1/31/11]

Last week the Chinese Academy of Science announced that it planned to finance the development of a Chinese Thorium Breeding Molten Salt Reactor (TMSR) or as it is called in the United States, the Liquid Fluoride Thorium Reactor (LFTR). The announcement came in a news report from Weihui.news365.com.cn. The announcement was relayed to Westerners who were interested in Thorium breeding molten salt reactors in a discussion thread comment posted by Chinese Scientist Hua Bai, last Friday. Kirk Sorensen, Brian Wang, and I all posted about Bai's announcement on Sunday, January 30.¶ In addition to these posts, the thread which Hua Bai started contains the revelation that the engineer who heads the Chinese Molten Salt Reactor Project is none other than Jiang Mianheng, a son of Retired Chinese President, Jiang Zemin. In addition to being President of People's China, Jiang was the chairmanship of the powerful Central Military Commission, suggesting the likelihood that Jiang Mianheng has military ties. He is the cofounder of Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation, and a former lead researcher in the Chinese Space Program, as well as Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The presence of such a well connected Chinese science leader suggests that the Chinese TMSR project is regarded as important by the Chinese leadership. Thus the Chinese leadership, unlike the American Political andscientific leadership has grasped the potential of molten salt nuclear technology.¶ Yesterday, "horos11" commented on my blog, Nuclear Green,¶ I read this, and I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.¶ After all, this site and others have been sounding the clarion call to action on this, and I should be glad that someone finally heeded it and its getting traction in a place that really matters, but I have a sinking feeling that:¶ a. its going to take far less than their planned 20 years¶ b. they are going to succeed beyond their wildest expectations.¶ Which means that the next, giant sucking sound we may hear is the sound of the 5 trillion dollar energy market heading east, further depressing our economy, weakening the dollar (and the euro) and ultimately making the US economy dependent on rescue from the chinese in the future (when they are done rescuing themselves).¶ Yet, in the large scheme of things, this is a definite good, and may be our savior from anthropomorphic climate change.¶ so again, laugh? or cry. I guess its up to how you view things - I guess I'm tentatively laughing at the moment, but mostly from the overwhelming irony of all this.¶ Jason Ribeiro added,¶ I can't help but have a feeling of sour grapes about this. While I congratulate China for doing the obvious, America has its head buried so far in the sand it can't see straight. With all the internet clamor about LFTR that's been going on the internet in the past 3-4 years, it was the non-English speaking Chinese that finally got the message that this was a great idea worth investing in. Our leadership ought to be ashamed of themselves.¶ The Chinese News story on the Thorium Molten Salt Reactor reflects the clear Chinese thinking about the potential role of LFTRs in the future Chinese energy economy. I will paraphrase,¶ "the future of advanced nuclear fission energy - nuclear energy, thorium-based molten salt reactor system" project was officially launched. . . The scientific goal is to developed a new generation of nuclear energy systems [and to achieve commercial] use [in] 20 years or so. We intend to complete the technological research needed for this system and to assert intellectual property rights to this technology. Fossil fuel energy is being depleted, and solar and wind energy are not stable enough, while hydropower development has reached the limit of its potential.. . .¶ Nuclear power seems to offer us a very attractive future energy choice, high energy density, low carbon emissions, and the potential for sustainable development. . . . China has chosen {to make an energy] breakthrough in the direction of molten salt reactors. . . . this liquid fuel reactors has a simple structure and can run at atmospheric pressure, [it can use any fissionable material as fuel} and has other advantages. "This new stove" can be made very small, will operate with stabile nuclear fuel, and will run for several decades before replacement. After the thorium is completely used in the nuclear process the TMSR will produce nuclear waste will be only be one-thousandth of that produced by existing nuclear technologies.¶ As the world is still in the development of a new generation of nuclear reactors, the thorium-based independent research and development of molten salt reactors, will be possible to obtain all intellectual property rights. This will enable China to firmly grasp the lifeline of energy in their own hands.¶ Let the word "nuclear" no longer mean war.¶ In the past, people always talk about "core" colors. The Hiroshima atomic bomb, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion, these are like a lingering nightmare that is marked in human history. But a new generation of nuclear power will take the color green, the mark of peace taking human beings into a new era.¶ Oh Wow! It sounds as if someone in China has been reading Nuclear Green or Energy from Thorium. And there is more!¶ In addition, the "new stove" operating at atmospheric pressure operation, rather than the traditional reactor operating at high pressure, will be simple and safe. "When the furnace temperature exceeds a predetermined value, in the bottom of the MSR core, a frozen plug of salt will automatically melt, releasing the liquid salt in the reactor core into an emergency storage tanks, and terminating the nuclear reaction," scientist Xu Hongjie told reporters, as the cooling agent is fluoride salts (the same salts that also carrying the nuclear fuel), after the liquid salt cools it turns solid, which prevents the nuclear fuel from leaking out of its containment, and thus will not pollute ground water causing an ecological disasters. The added safety opens up new possibilities for reactors, they can be built underground, completely isolating radioactive materials from the reactor, also the underground location will protect the reactor from an enemy's weapon attack. Reactors can be built in large cities, in the wilderness, or in remote villages.¶ Well Kirk Sorensen and I wanted our ideas to become national priorities. We just did not know in what country it would happen first. Unfortunately the leadership of the United States, continues to be determined to lead this nation into the wilderness of powerlessness, while the leadership of communist China is alert to the possibilities of a new energy age. Possibilities that can be realized by molten salt nuclear technology. Lets hope that someone in the White House or Congress wakes up. The Chinese understand the implications of their venture into Molten Salt nuclear technology. The American leadership does not.

#### That’s crucial to overall competitiveness

**Barton 10** (Charles Barton, Nuclear Green "Keeping up with China: The Economic Advantage of Molten Salt Nuclear Technology," 12/1/10)

American and European nuclear development can either proceed by following the cost lowering paths being pioneered in Asia, or begin to develop low cost innovative nuclear plans. Since low labor costs, represent the most significant Chinese and Indian cost advantage, it is unlikely that European and American reactor manufacturers will be able to compete with the Asians on labor costs. Labor costs for conventional reactors can be lowered by factory construction of reactor componant moduels, but the Chinese are clearly ahead of the West in that game. Yet the weakness of the Chinese system is the relatively large amount of field labor that the manufacture of large reactors requires.¶ The Chines system is to introduce labor saving devices where ever and when ever possible, but clearly shifting labor from the field to a factory still offers cost advantages. The more labor which can be performed in the factory, the more labor cost savings are possible. Other savings advantages are possible by simplifying reactor design, and lowering materials input. Building a reactor with less materials and fewer parts lowers nuclear costs directly and indirectly. Decreasing core size per unit of power output also can contribute a cost advantage. Direct saving relate to the cost of parts and matetials, but fewer parts and less material also means less labor is required to put things together, since there is less to put together. In addition a small reactor core structure, would, all other things being equal, require a smaller housing. Larger cores mean more structural housing expenses.¶ While the Pebel Bed Modular Reactor has a relatively simple core design, the actual core is quite large, because of the cooling inefficiency of helium. Thus, the simplisity of the PBMR core is ballanced by its size, its total materials input, and the size of its housing. The large core and housing requirements of the PBMR also adds to its labor costs, especially its field labor cost. Thus while the simplisity of the PBMR core design would seem to suggest a low cost, this expectation is unlikely to br born out in practice.¶ Transportation limits ability to shift production from the field to the factory. An analysis preformed by the University of Tennessee's, and the Massachusettes Institute of Technology's Departments of Nuclear Engineering looked at the 335 MW Westinghouse IRIS reactor. The analysis found,¶ A rough estimate of the weight for a 1000 MWt modular reactor and its secondary system, similar to the Westinghouse IRIS plant, is taken as the summation of all of the major components in the analysis. Many of the smaller subcomponents have been neglected. The containment structure contributes ~2.81E6 kg (3100 tons). The primary reactor vessel and the turbo-generator contribute ~1.45E6 kg (1600 tons) each. The heat exchange equipment and piping contribute ~6.78E5 kg (747 tons). Therefore, the total weight of the major plant components is~ 6.39E6 kg (7047 tons).¶ The weight and width of the IRIS would place constraints of barge transportation of the IRIS on the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers. The report stated,¶ The Westinghouse barge mounted IRIS reactor modules were limited in size based on input from the University of Tennessee. The barge dimension limitations were established to be 30 meters (98’-5”) wide, 100 meters (328’-1”) long, with a 2.74 meter (9’) draft. These dimensions establish the barge maximum displacement at 8,220 metric tons. In addition, the barge(s) are limited to ~20 meters (65’-7”) in height above the water surface, so that they fit under crossing bridges and can be floated up the Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee Rivers as far as the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Further movement above Chattanooga is currently limited by the locks at the Chickamauga Reservoir dam.¶ The above barge displacement limitation will impose severe limits on how much structural support and shield concrete can be placed in the barge modules at the shipyard. For example, the estimated weight of concrete in the IRIS containment and the surrounding cylindrical shield structure alone greatly exceeds the total allowable barge displacement. This however does not mean that barge- mounted pressurized water reactors (PWRs) are not feasible. It does mean that barge-mounted PWRs need to employ steel structures that are then used as the forms for the addition of needed concrete after the barge has been floated into its final location and founded.¶ Thus for the IRIS, barge transportation presented problems, and rail transportation was unthinkable. The core of the 125 MW B&W mPower reactor is rail transportable, but final onsite mPower assembly/construction became a significant undertaking, with a consequent increase in overall cost. The core unit does include a pressure vessel and heat exchange mounted above the actual reactor, but many other mPower component modules must be transported seperately and assembled on site.¶ The IIRIS project demonstrates the unlikelihood of whole small reactors being transported to the field ready for energy production without some field construction. This might be possible, however, for mini reactors that are two small to be viewed as a plausible substitute for the fossil fuel powered electrical plants currently supplying electricity for the grid. This then leaves us with¶ with a gap between the cost savings potential of factory manufacture, and the costly process of onsite assembly. B&W the manufacturers of the small 125 MW MPower reactor still has not clarified what percentage of the manufacturing process would be factory based. It is clear, however that B&W knows where it is comming from and what its problems are, as Rod Adams tells us:¶ I spoke in more detail to Chris Mowry and listened as he explained how his company's research on the history of the nuclear enterprise in the US had revealed that 30% of the material and labor cost of the existing units came from the supplied components while 70% was related to the site construction effort. He described how the preponderance of site work had influenced the cost uncertainty that has helped to discourage new nuclear plant construction for so many years.¶ What Mowey did not tell Adams is what percentage of the materials and labor costs will be shifted to the factory as mPower reactors are produced. There have been hints that a significant percentage of the mPower manufacturing process, perhaps as much as 50% will still take place on site. B&W still is working on the design of their manufacturing process, and thus do not yet know all of the details. Clearly then more work needs to be done on controlling onsite costs.¶ Finally, a shift to advanced technology will can lower manufacturing costs. Compared to Light Water reactors, Liquid metal cooled reactors use less material and perhaps less labor, but pool type liqiod metal reactors are not compact. Compared to Liquid Metal cooled reactors, Molten Salt cooled reactor will have more compact cores. Shifting to closed cycle gas turbines will decrease construction costs. The added safety of Molten Salt cooled reactors will increase reactor simplification, and thus further lower labor and materials related construction costs.¶ The recycling of old power plant locations will also offer some savings. Decreasing manufacturing time will lower interest costs. ¶ All in all there are a lot of reasons to expect lower nuclear manufacturing costs with Generation IV nuclear power plants, and at present no one has come up with a good reason for expecting Molten Salt cooled reactors to cost more than traditional NPPs. The argument, however, is not iron clad. Even if no one has pointed out plasuible errors in it, we need to introduce the caviot that expectations frenquently are not meet. It is possible, for example that the NRC might impose unreasonable expectations on molten salt cooled reactors. Demanding, for example, that they include the same safety features as LWRs, even though they do not have many LWR safety problems. But the potential savings on the cost of energy by adopting molten salt nuclear technology is substantial, and should not be ignored. ¶ To return to the problem posed by Brian Wang, the problem of lower Asian nuclear construction costs. If Europe and the United States cannot meet the Asican energy cost challenge, their economies will encounter a significant decline. Because of Labor cost advantages, it is unlikely that Generation III nuclear plants will ever cost less to build in the United States or Europe than in Asia. in order to keep the American and European economies competitive, the United States and Europe must adopt a low cost, factory manufactured nuclear technology. Molten Salt nuclear technology represents the lowest cost approach, and is highly consistent with factory manufacture and other cost lowering approaches. Couple to that the outstanding safety of molten salt nuclear technology, the potential for dramatically lowering the creation of nuclear waste, and the obsticles to nuclear proliferation posed by molten salt nuclear rechnology, and we see a real potential for keeping the American and European economies competitive, at least as far as energy costs are concerned.

#### That prevents great power wars – perception is key

**Baru 9** - Visiting Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore (Sanjaya, “Year of the power shift?,”

http://www.india-seminar.com/2009/593/593\_sanjaya\_baru.htm

**T**here is no doubt that economics alone will not determine the balance of global power, but there is no doubt either that economics has come to matter for more.¶ The management of the economy, and of the treasury, has been a vital aspect of statecraft from time immemorial. Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* says, ‘From the strength of the treasury the army is born. …men without wealth do not attain their objectives even after hundreds of trials… Only through wealth can material gains be acquired, as elephants (wild) can be captured only by elephants (tamed)… A state with depleted resources, even if acquired, becomes only a liability.’4 Hence, economic policies and performance do have strategic consequences.5¶ In the modern era, the idea that strong economic performance is the foundation of power was argued most persuasively by historian Paul Kennedy. ‘Victory (in war),’ Kennedy claimed, ‘has repeatedly gone to the side with more flourishing productive base.’6 Drawing attention to the interrelationships between economic wealth, technological innovation, and the ability of states to efficiently mobilize economic and technological resources for power projection and national defence, Kennedy argued that nations that were able to better combine military and economic strength scored over others.¶ ‘The fact remains,’ Kennedy argued, ‘that all of the major shifts in the world’s *military-power* balance have followed alterations in the *productive* balances; and further, that the rising and falling of the various empires and states in the international system has been confirmed by the outcomes of the major Great Power wars, where victory has always gone to the side with the greatest material resources.’7¶ **I**n Kennedy’s view the geopolitical consequences of an economic crisis or even decline would be transmitted through a nation’s inability to find adequate financial resources to simultaneously sustain economic growth and military power – the classic ‘guns vs butter’ dilemma.¶ Apart from such fiscal disempowerment of the state, economic under-performance would also reduce a nation’s attraction as a market, a source of capital and technology, and as a ‘knowledge power’. As power shifted from Europe to America, so did the knowledge base of the global economy. As China’s power rises, so does its profile as a ‘knowledge economy’.¶ Impressed by such arguments the China Academy of Social Sciences developed the concept of Comprehensive National Power (CNP) to get China’s political and military leadership to focus more clearly on economic and technological performance than on military power alone in its quest for Great Power status.8¶ While China’s impressive economic performance and the consequent rise in China’s global profile has forced strategic analysts to acknowledge this link, the recovery of the US economy in the 1990s had reduced the appeal of the Kennedy thesis in Washington DC. We must expect a revival of interest in Kennedy’s arguments in the current context.¶ **A** historian of power who took Kennedy seriously, Niall Ferguson, has helped keep the focus on the geopolitical implications of economic performance. In his masterly survey of the role of finance in the projection of state power, Ferguson defines the ‘square of power’ as the tax bureaucracy, the parliament, the national debt and the central bank. These four institutions of ‘fiscal empowerment’ of the state enable nations to project power by mobilizing and deploying financial resources to that end.9 ¶ Ferguson shows how vital sound economic management is to strategic policy and national power. More recently, Ferguson has been drawing a parallel between the role of debt and financial crises in the decline of the Ottoman and Soviet empires and that of the United States of America. In an early comment on the present financial crisis, Ferguson wrote:¶ ‘We are indeed living through a global shift in the balance of power very similar to that which occurred in the 1870s. This is the story of how an over-extended empire sought to cope with an external debt crisis by selling off revenue streams to foreign investors. The empire that suffered these setbacks in the 1870s was the Ottoman empire. Today it is the US… It remains to be seen how quickly today’s financial shift will be followed by a comparable geopolitical shift in favour of the new export and energy empires of the east. Suffice to say that the historical analogy does not bode well for America’s quasi-imperial network of bases and allies across the Middle East and Asia. Debtor empires sooner or later have to do more than just sell shares to satisfy their creditors*. …*as in the 1870s the balance of financial power is shifting. Then, the move was from the ancient Oriental empires (not only the Ottoman but also the Persian and Chinese) to Western Europe. Today the shift is from the US – and other western financial centres – to the autocracies of the Middle East and East Asia.’10 ¶ An economic or financial crisis may not trigger the decline of an empire. It can certainly speed up a process already underway. In the case of the Soviet Union the financial crunch caused by the Afghan war came on top of years of economic under-performance and the loss of political legitimacy of the Soviet state. In a democratic society like the United States the political legitimacy of the state is constantly renewed through periodic elections. Thus, the election of Barack Obama may serve to renew the legitimacy of the state and by doing so enable the state to undertake measures that restore health to the economy. This the Soviet state was unable to do under Gorbachev even though he repudiated the Brezhnev legacy and distanced himself from it.¶ Hence, one must not become an economic determinist and historic parallels need not always be relevant. Politics can intervene and offer solutions. Political economy and politics, in the form of Keynesian economics and the ‘New Deal’, did intervene to influence the geopolitical implications of the Great Depression. Whether they will do so once again in today’s America remains to be seen.

#### Independently key to heg

**Gelb, 10** - currently president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, (Leslie, Fashioning a Realistic Strategy for the Twenty-First Century,” Fletcher Forum of World Affairs vol.34:2 summer 2010 http://fletcher.tufts.edu/forum/archives/pdfs/34-2pdfs/Gelb.pdf)

**LESLIE H. GELB:** Power is what it always has been. It is the ability to get someone to do something they do not want to do by means of your resources and your position. It was always that. There is no such thing in my mind as “soft” power or “hard” power or “smart” power or “dumb” power. It is people who are hard or soft or smart or dumb. Power is power. And people use it wisely or poorly. Now, what has changed is the composition of power in international affairs. For almost all of history, international power was achieved in the form of military power and military force. Now, particularly in the last fifty years or so, it has become more and more economic. So power consists of economic power, military power, and diplomatic power, but the emphasis has shifted from military power (for almost all of history) to now, more economic power. And, as President Obama said in his West Point speech several months ago, our economy is the basis of our international power in general and our military power in particular. That is where it all comes from. Whether other states listen to us and act on what we say depends a good deal on their perception of the strength of the American economy. A big problem for us in the last few years has been the perception that our economy is in decline.

#### Heg solves extinction

**Barnett 2011** – Former Senior Strategic Researcher and Professor in the Warfare Analysis & Research Department, Center for Naval Warfare Studies, U.S. Naval War College, worked as the Assistant for Strategic Futures in the Office of Force Transformation in the DOD (3/7, Thomas, World Politics Review, “The New Rules: Leadership Fatigue Puts U.S., and Globalization, at Crossroads”, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/8099/the-new-rules-leadership-fatigue-puts-u-s-and-globalization-at-crossroads>, credit to LDK)

Events in Libya are a further reminder for Americans that we stand at a crossroads in our continuing evolution as the world's sole full-service superpower. Unfortunately, we are increasingly seeking change without cost, and shirking from risk because we are tired of the responsibility. We don't know who we are anymore, and our president is a big part of that problem. Instead of leading us, he explains to us. Barack Obama would have us believe that he is practicing strategic patience. But many experts and ordinary citizens alike have concluded that he is actually beset by strategic incoherence -- in effect, a man overmatched by the job.  It is worth first examining the larger picture: We live in a time of arguably the greatest structural change in the global order yet endured, with this historical moment's most amazing feature being its relative and absolute lack of mass violence. That is something to consider when Americans contemplate military intervention in Libya, because if we do take the step to prevent larger-scale killing by engaging in some killing of our own, we will not be adding to some fantastically imagined global death count stemming from the ongoing "megalomania" and "evil" of American "empire." We'll be engaging in the same sort of system-administering activity that has marked our stunningly successful stewardship of global order since World War II.  Let me be more blunt: As the guardian of globalization, the U.S. military has been the greatest force for peace the world has ever known. Had America been removed from the global dynamics that governed the 20th century, the mass murder never would have ended. Indeed, it's entirely conceivable there would now be no identifiable human civilization left, once nuclear weapons entered the killing equation.  But the world did not keep sliding down that path of perpetual war. Instead, America stepped up and changed everything by ushering in our now-perpetual great-power peace. We introduced the international liberal trade order known as globalization and played loyal Leviathan over its spread. What resulted was the collapse of empires, an explosion of democracy, the persistent spread of human rights, the liberation of women, the doubling of life expectancy, a roughly 10-fold increase in adjusted global GDP and a profound and persistent reduction in battle deaths from state-based conflicts.

### Warming adv

#### Warming is real and anthropogenic – carbon dioxide increase, polar ice records, melting glaciers, sea level rise

**Prothero 12** [Donald R. Prothero, Professor of Geology at Occidental College and Lecturer in Geobiology at the California Institute of Technology, 3-1-2012, "How We Know Global Warming is Real and Human Caused," Skeptic, vol 17 no 2, EBSCO]

Converging Lines of Evidence¶ How do we know that global warming is real and primarily human caused? There are numerous lines of evidence that converge toward this conclusion.¶ 1. Carbon Dioxide Increase.¶ Carbon dioxide in our atmosphere has increased at an unprecedented rate in the past 200 years. Not one data set collected over a long enough span of time shows otherwise. Mann et al. (1999) compiled the past 900 years' worth of temperature data from tree rings, ice cores, corals, and direct measurements in the past few centuries, and the sudden increase of temperature of the past century stands out like a sore thumb. This famous graph is now known as the "hockey stick" because it is long and straight through most of its length, then bends sharply upward at the end like the blade of a hockey stick. Other graphs show that climate was very stable within a narrow range of variation through the past 1000, 2000, or even 10,000 years since the end of the last Ice Age. There were minor warming events during the Climatic Optimum about 7000 years ago, the Medieval Warm Period, and the slight cooling of the Little Ice Age in die 1700s and 1800s. But the magnitude and rapidity of the warming represented by the last 200 years is simply unmatched in all of human history. More revealing, die timing of this warming coincides with the Industrial Revolution, when humans first began massive deforestation and released carbon dioxide into the atmosphere by burning an unprecedented amount of coal, gas, and oil.¶ 2. Melting Polar Ice Caps.¶ The polar icecaps are thinning and breaking up at an alarming rate. In 2000, my former graduate advisor Malcolm McKenna was one of the first humans to fly over the North Pole in summer time and see no ice, just open water. The Arctic ice cap has been frozen solid for at least the past 3 million years (and maybe longer),4 but now the entire ice sheet is breaking up so fast that by 2030 (and possibly sooner) less than half of the Arctic will be ice covered in the summer.5 As one can see from watching the news, this is an ecological disaster for everything that lives up there, from the polar bears to the seals and walruses to the animals they feed upon, to the 4 million people whose world is melting beneath their feet. The Antarctic is thawing even faster. In February-March 2002, the Larsen B ice shelf - over 3000 square km (the size of Rhode Island) and 220 m (700 feet) thick- broke up in just a few months, a story typical of nearly all the ice shelves in Antarctica. The Larsen B shelf had survived all the previous ice ages and interglacial warming episodes over the past 3 million years, and even the warmest periods of the last 10,000 years- yet it and nearly all the other thick ice sheets on the Arctic, Greenland, and Antarctic are vanishing at a rate never before seen in geologic history.¶ 3. Melting Glaciers.¶ Glaciers are all retreating at the highest rates ever documented. Many of those glaciers, along with snow melt, especially in the Himalayas, Andes, Alps, and Sierras, provide most of the freshwater that the populations below the mountains depend upon - yet this fresh water supply is vanishing. Just think about the percentage of world's population in southern Asia (especially India) that depend on Himalayan snowmelt for their fresh water. The implications are staggering. The permafrost that once remained solidly frozen even in the summer has now Üiawed, damaging the Inuit villages on the Arctic coast and threatening all our pipelines to die North Slope of Alaska. This is catastrophic not only for life on the permafrost, but as it thaws, the permafrost releases huge amounts of greenhouse gases which are one of the major contributors to global warming. Not only is the ice vanishing, but we have seen record heat waves over and over again, killing thousands of people, as each year joins the list of the hottest years on record. (2010 just topped that list as the hottest year, surpassing the previous record in 2009, and we shall know about 2011 soon enough). Natural animal and plant populations are being devastated all over the globe as their environments change.6 Many animals respond by moving their ranges to formerly cold climates, so now places that once did not have to worry about disease-bearing mosquitoes are infested as the climate warms and allows them to breed further north.¶ 4. Sea Level Rise.¶ All that melted ice eventually ends up in the ocean, causing sea levels to rise, as it has many times in the geologic past. At present, the sea level is rising about 3-4 mm per year, more than ten times the rate of 0.10.2 mm/year that has occurred over the past 3000 years. Geological data show Üiat ttie sea level was virtually unchanged over the past 10,000 years since the present interglacial began. A few mm here or there doesn't impress people, until you consider that the rate is accelerating and that most scientists predict sea levels will rise 80-130 cm in just the next century. A sea level rise of 1.3 m (almost 4 feet) would drown many of the world's low-elevation cities, such as Venice and New Orleans, and low-lying countries such as the Netherlands or Bangladesh. A number of tiny island nations such as Vanuatu and the Maldives, which barely poke out above the ocean now, are already vanishing beneath the waves. Eventually their entire population will have to move someplace else.7 Even a small sea level rise might not drown all these areas, but they are much more vulnerable to the large waves of a storm surge (as happened with Hurricane Katrina), which could do much more damage than sea level rise alone. If sea level rose by 6 m (20 feet), most of die world's coastal plains and low-lying areas (such as the Louisiana bayous, Florida, and most of the world's river deltas) would be drowned.¶ Most of the world's population lives in lowelevation coastal cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Miami, and Shanghai. All of those cities would be partially or completely under water with such a sea level rise. If all the glacial ice caps melted completely (as they have several times before during past greenhouse episodes in the geologic past), sea level would rise by 65 m (215 feet)! The entire Mississippi Valley would flood, so you could dock an ocean liner in Cairo, Illinois. Such a sea level rise would drown nearly every coastal region under hundreds of feet of water, and inundate New York City, London and Paris. All that would remain would be the tall landmarks such as the Empire State Building, Big Ben, and the Eiffel Tower. You could tie your boats to these pinnacles, but the rest of these drowned cities would lie deep underwater.

#### Worst-case warming results in extinction

Ahmed 2010 (Nafeez Ahmed, Executive Director of the Institute for Policy Research and Development, professor of International Relations and globalization at Brunel University and the University of Sussex, Spring/Summer 2010, “Globalizing Insecurity: The Convergence of Interdependent Ecological, Energy, and Economic Crises,” Spotlight on Security, Volume 5, Issue 2, online)

Perhaps the most notorious indicator is anthropogenic global warmings warming. The landmark 2007 Fourth Assessment Report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – which warned that at then-current rates of increase of fossil fuel emissions, the earth’s global average temperature would likely rise by 6°C by the end of the 21st century creating a largely uninhabitable planet – was a wake-up call to the international community.[v] Despite the pretensions of ‘climate sceptics,’ the peer-reviewed scientific literature has continued to produce evidence that the IPCC’s original scenarios were wrong – not because they were too alarmist, but on the contrary, because they were far too conservative. According to a paper in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, current CO2 emissions are worse than all six scenarios contemplated by the IPCC. This implies that the IPCC’s worst-case six-degree scenario severely underestimates the most probable climate trajectory under current rates of emissions.[vi] It is often presumed that a 2°C rise in global average temperatures under an atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gasses at 400 parts per million (ppm) constitutes a safe upper limit – beyond which further global warming could trigger rapid and abrupt climate changes that, in turn, could tip the whole earth climate system into a process of irreversible, runaway warming.[vii] Unfortunately, we are already well past this limit, with the level of greenhouse gasses as of mid-2005 constituting 445 ppm.[viii] Worse still, cutting-edge scientific data suggests that the safe upper limit is in fact far lower. James Hansen, director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, argues that the absolute upper limit for CO2 emissions is 350 ppm: “If the present overshoot of this target CO2 is not brief, there is a possibility of seeding irreversible catastrophic effects.”[ix] A wealth of scientific studies has attempted to explore the role of positive-feedback mechanisms between different climate sub-systems, the operation of which could intensify the warming process. Emissions beyond 350 ppm over decades are likely to lead to the total loss of Arctic sea-ice in the summer triggering magnified absorption of sun radiation, accelerating warming; the melting of Arctic permafrost triggering massive methane injections into the atmosphere, accelerating warming; the loss of half the Amazon rainforest triggering the momentous release of billions of tonnes of stored carbon, accelerating warming; and increased microbial activity in the earth’s soil leading to further huge releases of stored carbon, accelerating warming; to name just a few. Each of these feedback sub-systems alone is sufficient by itself to lead to irreversible, catastrophic effects that could tip the whole earth climate system over the edge.[x] Recent studies now estimate that the continuation of business-as-usual would lead to global warming of three to four degrees Celsius before 2060 with multiple irreversible, catastrophic impacts; and six, even as high as eight, degrees by the end of the century – a situation endangering the survival of all life on earth.[xi]

#### Warming causes extinction

**Sify 2010 –** Sydney newspaper citing Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, professor at University of Queensland and Director of the Global Change Institute, and John Bruno, associate professor of Marine Science at UNC (Sify News, “Could unbridled climate changes lead to human extinction?”, <http://www.sify.com/news/could-unbridled-climate-changes-lead-to-human-extinction-news-international-kgtrOhdaahc.html>, WEA)

The findings of the comprehensive report: 'The impact of climate change on the world's marine ecosystems' emerged from a synthesis of recent research on the world's oceans, carried out by two of the world's leading marine scientists. One of the authors of the report is Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, professor at The University of Queensland and the director of its Global Change Institute (GCI). 'We may see sudden, unexpected changes that have serious ramifications for the overall well-being of humans, including the capacity of the planet to support people. This is further evidence that we are well on the way to the next great extinction event,' says Hoegh-Guldberg. 'The findings have enormous implications for mankind, particularly if the trend continues. The earth's ocean, which produces half of the oxygen we breathe and absorbs 30 per cent of human-generated carbon dioxide, is equivalent to its heart and lungs. This study shows worrying signs of ill-health. It's as if the earth has been smoking two packs of cigarettes a day!,' he added. 'We are entering a period in which the ocean services upon which humanity depends are undergoing massive change and in some cases beginning to fail', he added. The 'fundamental and comprehensive' changes to marine life identified in the report include rapidly warming and acidifying oceans, changes in water circulation and expansion of dead zones within the ocean depths. These are driving major changes in marine ecosystems: less abundant coral reefs, sea grasses and mangroves (important fish nurseries); fewer, smaller fish; a breakdown in food chains; changes in the distribution of marine life; and more frequent diseases and pests among marine organisms. Study co-author John F Bruno, associate professor in marine science at The University of North Carolina, says greenhouse gas emissions are modifying many physical and geochemical aspects of the planet's oceans, in ways 'unprecedented in nearly a million years'. 'This is causing fundamental and comprehensive changes to the way marine ecosystems function,' Bruno warned, according to a GCI release. These findings were published in Science

#### The IFR is the only way to reduce coal emissions sufficiently to avert the worst climate disasters

**Kirsch 9** (Steve Kirsch, Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, American serial entrepreneur who has started six companies: Mouse Systems, Frame Technology, Infoseek, Propel, Abaca, and OneID, "Why We Should Build an Integral Fast Reactor Now," 11/25/9) http://skirsch.wordpress.com/2009/11/25/ifr/

To prevent a climate disaster, we must eliminate virtually all coal plant emissions worldwide in 25 years. The best way and, for all practical purposes, the only way to get all countries off of coal is not with coercion; it is to make them want to replace their coal burners by giving them a plug-compatible technology that is less expensive. The IFR can do this. It is plug-compatible with the burners in a coal plant (see Nuclear Power: Going Fast). No other technology can upgrade a coal plant so it is greenhouse gas free while reducing operating costs at the same time. In fact, no other technology can achieve either of these goals. The IFR can achieve both.¶ The bottom line is that without the IFR (or a yet-to-be-invented technology with similar ability to replace the coal burner with a cheaper alternative), it is unlikely that we’ll be able to keep CO2 under 450 ppm.¶ Today, the IFR is the only technology with the potential to displace the coal burner. That is why restarting the IFR is so critical and why Jim Hansen has listed it as one of the top five things we must do to avert a climate disaster.[4]¶ Without eliminating virtually all coal emissions by 2030, the sum total of all of our other climate mitigation efforts will be inconsequential. Hansen often refers to the near complete phase-out of carbon emissions from coal plants worldwide by 2030 as the sine qua non for climate stabilization (see for example, the top of page 6 in his August 4, 2008 trip report).¶ To stay under 450ppm, we would have to install about 13,000 GWe of new carbon-free power over the next 25 years. That number was calculated by Nathan Lewis of Caltech for the Atlantic, but others such as Saul Griffith have independently derived a very similar number and White House Science Advisor John Holdren used 5,600 GWe to 7,200 GWe in his presentation to the Energy Bar Association Annual Meeting on April 23, 2009. That means that if we want to save the planet, we must install more than 1 GWe per day of clean power every single day for the next 25 years. That is a very, very tough goal. It is equivalent to building one large nuclear reactor per day, or 1,500 huge wind turbines per day, or 80,000 37 foot diameter solar dishes covering 100 square miles every day, or some linear combination of these or other carbon free power generation technologies. Note that the required rate is actually higher than this because Hansen and Rajendra Pachauri, the chair of the IPCC, now both agree that 350ppm is a more realistic “not to exceed” number (and we’ve already exceeded it).¶ Today, we are nowhere close to that installation rate with renewables alone. For example, in 2008, the average power delivered by solar worldwide was only 2 GWe (which is to be distinguished from the peak solar capacity of 13.4GWe). That is why every renewable expert at the 2009 Aspen Institute Environment Forum agreed that nuclear must be part of the solution. Al Gore also acknowledges that nuclear must play an important role.¶ Nuclear has always been the world’s largest source of carbon free power. In the US, for example, even though we haven’t built a new nuclear plant in the US for 30 years, nuclear still supplies 70% of our clean power!¶ Nuclear can be installed very rapidly; much more rapidly than renewables. For example, about two thirds of the currently operating 440 reactors around the world came online during a 10 year period between 1980 and 1990. So our best chance of meeting the required installation of new power goal and saving the planet is with an aggressive nuclear program.¶ Unlike renewables, nuclear generates base load power, reliably, regardless of weather. Nuclear also uses very little land area. It does not require the installation of new power lines since it can be installed where the power is needed. However, even with a very aggressive plan involving nuclear, it will still be extremely difficult to install clean power fast enough.¶ Unfortunately, even in the US, we have no plan to install the clean power we need fast enough to save the planet. Even if every country were to agree tomorrow to completely eliminate their coal plant emissions by 2030, how do we think they are actually going to achieve that? There is no White House plan that explains this. There is no DOE plan. There is no plan or strategy. The deadlines will come and go and most countries will profusely apologize for not meeting their goals, just like we have with most of the signers of the Kyoto Protocol today. Apologies are nice, but they will not restore the environment.¶ We need a strategy that is believable, practical, and affordable for countries to adopt. The IFR offers our best hope of being a centerpiece in such a strategy because it the only technology we know of that can provide an economically compelling reason to change.¶ At a speech at MIT on October 23, 2009, President Obama said “And that’s why the world is now engaged in a peaceful competition to determine the technologies that will power the 21st century. … The nation that wins this competition will be the nation that leads the global economy. I am convinced of that. And I want America to be that nation, it’s that simple.”¶ Nuclear is our best clean power technology and the IFR is our best nuclear technology. The Gen IV International Forum (GIF) did a study in 2001-2002 of 19 different reactor designs on 15 different criteria and 24 metrics. The IFR ranked #1 overall. Over 242 experts from around the world participated in the study. It was the most comprehensive evaluation of competitive nuclear designs ever done. Top DOE nuclear management ignored the study because it didn’t endorse the design the Bush administration wanted.¶ The IFR has been sitting on the shelf for 15 years and the DOE currently has no plans to change that.¶ How does the US expect to be a leader in clean energy by ignoring our best nuclear technology? Nobody I’ve talked to has been able to answer that question.¶ We have the technology (it was running for 30 years before we were ordered to tear it down). And we have the money: The Recovery Act has $80 billion dollars. Why aren’t we building a demo plant?¶ IFRs are better than conventional nuclear in every dimension. Here are a few:¶ Efficiency: IFRs are over 100 times more efficient than conventional nuclear. It extracts nearly 100% of the energy from nuclear material. Today’s nuclear reactors extract less than 1%. So you need only 1 ton of actinides each year to feed an IFR (we can use existing nuclear waste for this), whereas you need 100 tons of freshly mined uranium each year to extract enough material to feed a conventional nuclear plant.¶ Unlimited power forever: IFRs can use virtually any actinide for fuel. Fast reactors with reprocessing are so efficient that even if we restrict ourselves to just our existing uranium resources, we can power the entire planet forever (the Sun will consume the Earth before we run out of material to fuel fast reactors). If we limited ourselves to using just our DU “waste” currently in storage, then using the IFR we can power the US for over 1,500 years without doing any new mining of uranium.[5]¶ Exploits our largest energy resource: In the US, there is 10 times as much energy in the depleted uranium (DU) that is just sitting there as there is coal in the ground. This DU waste is our largest natural energy resource…but only if we have fast reactors. Otherwise, it is just waste. With fast reactors, virtually all our nuclear waste (from nuclear power plants, leftover from enrichment, and from decommissioned nuclear weapons)[6] becomes an energy asset worth about $30 trillion dollars…that’s not a typo…$30 trillion, not billion.[7] An 11 year old child was able to determine this from publicly available information in 2004.

#### Inventing something cheaper is key – alternative methods can’t solve warming

**Kirsch 9** (Steve Kirsch, Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, American serial entrepreneur who has started six companies: Mouse Systems, Frame Technology, Infoseek, Propel, Abaca, and OneID, "How Does Obama Expect to Solve the Climate Crisis Without a Plan?" 7/16/9) <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-kirsch/how-does-obama-expect-to_b_236588.html-http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-kirsch/how-does-obama-expect-to_b_236588.html>

The ship is sinking slowly and we are quickly running out of time to develop and implement any such plan if we are to have any hope of saving the planet. What we need is a plan we can all believe in. A plan where our country's smartest people all nod their heads in agreement and say, "Yes, this is a solid, viable plan for keeping CO2 levels from touching 425ppm and averting a global climate catastrophe."¶ ¶ At his Senate testimony a few days ago, noted climate scientist James Hansen made it crystal clear once again that the only way to avert an irreversible climate meltdown and save the planet is to phase out virtually all coal plants worldwide over a 20 year period from 2010 to 2030. Indeed, if we don't virtually eliminate the use of coal worldwide, everything else we do will be as effective as re-arranging deck chairs on the Titanic.¶ ¶ Plans that won't work¶ ¶ Unfortunately, nobody has proposed a realistic and practical plan to eliminate coal use worldwide or anywhere close to that. There is no White House URL with such a plan. No environmental group has a workable plan either.¶ ¶ Hoping that everyone will abandon their coal plants and replace them with a renewable power mix isn't a viable strategy -- we've proven that in the U.S. Heck, even if the Waxman-Markey bill passes Congress (a big "if"), it is so weak that it won't do much at all to eliminate coal plants. So even though we have Democrats controlling all three branches of government, it is almost impossible to get even a weak climate bill passed.¶ ¶ If we can't pass strong climate legislation in the U.S. with all the stars aligned, how can we expect anyone else to do it? So expecting all countries to pass a 100% renewable portfolio standard (which is far far beyond that contemplated in the current energy bill) just isn't possible. Secondly, even if you could mandate it politically in every country, from a practical standpoint, you'd never be able to implement it in time. And there are lots of experts in this country, including Secretary Chu, who say it's impossible without nuclear (a point which I am strongly in agreement with).¶ ¶ Hoping that everyone will spontaneously adopt carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) is also a non-starter solution. First of all, CCS doesn't exist at commercial scale. Secondly, even if we could make it work at scale, and even it could be magically retrofitted on every coal plant (which we don't know how to do), it would require all countries to agree to add about 30% in extra cost for no perceivable benefit. At the recent G8 conference, India and China have made it clear yet again that they aren't going to agree to emission goals.¶ ¶ Saying that we'll invent some magical new technology that will rescue us at the last minute is a bad solution. That's at best a poor contingency plan.¶ ¶ The point is this: It should be apparent to us that we aren't going to be able to solve the climate crisis by either "force" (economic coercion or legislation) or by international agreement. And relying on technologies like CCS that may never work is a really bad idea.¶ ¶ The only remaining way to solve the crisis is to make it economically irresistible for countries to "do the right thing." The best way to do that is to give the world a way to generate electric power that is economically more attractive than coal with the same benefits as coal (compact power plants, 24x7 generation, can be sited almost anywhere, etc). Even better is if the new technology can simply replace the existing burner in a coal plant. That way, they'll want to switch. No coercion is required.

#### IFRs solve massive energy and overpopulation crunches that spark resource wars and water scarcity – no alternatives can solve

**Blees et al 11** (Tom Blees1, Yoon Chang2, Robert Serafin3, Jerry Peterson4, Joe Shuster1, Charles Archambeau5, Randolph Ware3, 6, Tom Wigley3,7, Barry W. Brook7, 1Science Council for Global Initiatives, 2Argonne National Laboratory, 3National Center for Atmospheric Research, 4University of Colorado, 5Technology Research Associates, 6Cooperative Institute for Research in the Environmental Sciences, 7(climate professor) University of Adelaide, "Advanced nuclear power systems to mitigate climate change (Part III)," 2/24/11) http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/02/24/advanced-nuclear-power-systems-to-mitigate-climate-change/-http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/02/24/advanced-nuclear-power-systems-to-mitigate-climate-change/

The global threat of anthropogenic climate change has become a political hot potato, especially in the USA. The vast majority of climate scientists, however, are in agreement that the potential consequences of inaction are dire indeed. Yet even those who dismiss concerns about climate change cannot discount an array of global challenges facing humanity that absolutely must be solved if wars, dislocations, and social chaos are to be avoided.¶ Human population growth exacerbates a wide range of problems, and with most demographic projections predicting an increase of about 50% to nine or ten billion by mid-century, we are confronted with a social and logistical dilemma of staggering proportions. The most basic human morality dictates that we attempt to solve these problems without resorting to forcible and draconian methods. At the same time, simple social justice demands that the developed world accept the premise that the billions who live today in poverty deserve a drastic improvement in their standard of living, an improvement that is being increasingly demanded and expected throughout the developing countries. To achieve environmental sustainability whilst supporting human well-being will require a global revolution in energy and materials technology and deployment fully as transformative as the Industrial Revolution, but unlike that gradual process we find ourselves under the gun, especially if one considers climate change, peak oil and other immediate sustainability problems to be bona fide threats.¶ It is beyond the purview of this paper to address the question of materials disposition and recycling [i], or the social transformations that will necessarily be involved in confronting the challenges of the next several decades. But the question of energy supply is inextricably bound up with the global solution to our coming crises. It may be argued that energy is the most crucial aspect of any proposed remedy. Our purpose here is to demonstrate that the provision of all the energy that humankind can possibly require to meet the challenges of the coming decades and centuries is a challenge that already has a realistic solution, using technology that is just waiting to be deployed.¶ Energy Realism¶ The purpose of this paper is not to exhaustively examine the many varieties of energy systems currently in use, in development, or in the dreams of their promoters. Nevertheless, because of the apparent passion of both the public and policymakers toward certain energy systems and the political influence of their advocates, a brief discussion of “renewable” energy systems is in order. Our pressing challenges make the prospect of heading down potential energy cul de sacs – especially to the explicit exclusion of nuclear fission alternatives – to be an unconscionable waste of our limited time and resources.¶ There is a vocal contingent of self-styled environmentalists who maintain that wind and solar power—along with other technologies such as wave and tidal power that have yet to be meaningfully developed—can (and should) provide all the energy that humanity demands. The more prominent names are well-known among those who deal with these issues: Amory Lovins, Lester Brown and Arjun Makhijani are three in particular whose organizations wield considerable clout with policymakers. The most recent egregious example to make a public splash, however, was a claim trumpeted with a cover story in Scientific American that all of our energy needs can be met by renewables (predominantly ‘technosolar’ – wind and solar thermal) by 2030. The authors of this piece—Mark Jacobson (Professor, Stanford) and Mark A. Delucchi (researcher, UC Davis)—were roundly critiqued [ii] online and in print.¶ An excellent treatment of the question of renewables’ alleged capacity to provide sufficient energy is a book by David MacKay [iii] called Sustainable Energy – Without the Hot Air. [iv] MacKay was a professor of physics at Cambridge before being appointed Chief Scientific Advisor to the Department of Energy and Climate Change in the UK. His book is a model of scientific and intellectual rigor.¶ Energy ideologies can be every bit as fervent as those of religion, so after suggesting Dr. MacKay’s book as an excellent starting point for a rational discussion of energy systems we’ll leave this necessary digression with a point to ponder. Whatever one believes about the causes of climate change, there is no denying that glaciers around the world are receding at an alarming rate. Billions of people depend on such glaciers for their water supplies. We have already seen cases of civil strife and even warfare caused or exacerbated by competition over water supplies. Yet these are trifling spats when one considers that the approaching demographic avalanche will require us to supply about three billion more people with all the water they need within just four decades.¶ There is no avoiding the fact that the water for all these people—and even more, if the glaciers continue to recede, as expected—will have to come from the ocean. That means a deployment of desalination facilities on an almost unimaginable scale. Not only will it take staggering amounts of energy just to desalinate such a quantity, but moving the water to where it is needed will be an additional energy burden of prodigious proportions. A graphic example can be seen in the case of California, its state water project being the largest single user of energy in California. It consumes an average of 5 billion kWh/yr, more than 25% of the total electricity consumption of the entire state of New Mexico [v].¶ Disposing of the salt derived from such gargantuan desalination enterprises will likewise take a vast amount of energy. Even the relatively modest desalination projects along the shores of the Persian Gulf have increased its salinity to the point of serious concern. Such circumscribed bodies of water simply won’t be available as dumping grounds for the mountains of salt that will be generated, and disposing of it elsewhere will require even more energy to move and disperse it. Given the formidable energy requirements for these water demands alone, any illusions about wind turbines and solar panels being able to supply all the energy humanity requires should be put to rest.¶ Energy Density and Reliability¶ Two of the most important qualities of fossil fuels that enabled their rise to prominence in an industrializing world is their energy density and ease of storage. High energy density and a stable and convenient long-term fuel store are qualities that makes it practical and economical to collect, distribute, and then use them on demand for the myriad of uses to which we put them. This energy density, and the dispatchability that comes from having a non-intermittent fuel source, are the very things lacking in wind and solar and other renewable energy systems, yet they are crucial factors in considering how we can provide reliable on-demand power for human society.¶ The supply of fossil fuels is limited, although the actual limits of each different type are a matter of debate and sometimes change substantially with new technological developments, as we’ve seen recently with the adoption of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) methods to extract natural gas from previously untapped subterranean reservoirs. The competition for fossil fuel resources, whatever their limitations, has been one of the primary causes of wars in the past few decades and can be expected to engender further conflicts and other symptoms of international competition as countries like India and China lead the developing nations in seeking a rising standard of living for their citizens. Even disregarding the climatological imperative to abandon fossil fuels, the economic, social, and geopolitical upheavals attendant upon a continuing reliance on such energy sources demands an objective look at the only other energy-dense and proven resource available to us: nuclear power.¶ We will refrain from discussing the much hoped-for chimera of nuclear fusion as the magic solution to all our energy needs, since it is but one of many technologies that have yet to be harnessed. Our concern here is with technologies that we know will work, so when it comes to harnessing the power of the atom we are confined to nuclear fission. The splitting of uranium and transuranic elements in fission-powered nuclear reactors is a potent example of energy density being tapped for human uses. Reactor-grade uranium (i.e. uranium enriched to about 3.5% U-235) is over 100,000 times more energy-dense than anthracite coal, the purest form of coal used in power generation, and nearly a quarter-million times as much as lignite, the dirty coal used in many power plants around the world. Ironically, one of the world’s largest producers and users of lignite is Germany, the same country whose anti-nuclear political pressure under the banner of environmentalism is globally infamous.¶ The vast majority of the world’s 440 commercial nuclear power plants are light-water reactors (LWRs) that use so-called enriched uranium (mentioned above). Natural uranium is comprised primarily of two isotopes: U-235 and U-238. The former comprises only 0.7% of natural uranium, with U-238 accounting for the remaining 99.3%. LWR technology requires a concentration of at least 3.5% U-235 in order to maintain the chain reaction used to extract energy, so a process called uranium enrichment extracts as much of the U-235 as possible from several kilos of natural uranium and adds it to a fuel kilo in order to reach a concentration high enough to enable the fission process. Because current enrichment technology is capable of harvesting only some of the U-235, this results in about 8-10 kilos of “depleted uranium” (DU) for every kilo of power plant fuel (some of which is enriched to 4% or more, depending on plant design). The USA currently has (largely unwanted) stockpiles of DU in excess of half a million tons, while other countries around the world that have been employing nuclear power over the last half-century have their own DU inventories.¶ Technological advances in LWR engineering have resulted in new power plants that are designated within the industry as Generation III or III+ designs, to differentiate them from currently-used LWRs normally referred to as Gen II plants. The European Pressurized Reactor (EPR), currently being built by AREVA in Finland, France and China, is an example of a Gen III design. It utilizes multiple-redundant engineered systems to assure safety and dependability. Two examples of Gen III+ designs are the Westinghouse/Toshiba AP-1000, now being built in China, and GE/Hitachi’s Economic Simplified Boiling Water Reactor (ESBWR), expected to be certified for commercial use by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the end of 2011. The distinguishing feature of Gen III+ designs is their reliance on the principle of passive safety, which would allow the reactor to automatically shut down in the event of an emergency without operator action or electronic feedback, due to inherent design properties. Relying as they do on the laws of physics rather than active intervention to intercede, they consequently can avoid the necessity for several layers of redundant systems while still maintaining ‘defense in depth’, making it possible to build them both faster and cheaper than Gen III designs—at least in theory. As of this writing we are seeing this playing out in Finland and China. While it is expected that first-of-a-kind difficulties (and their attendant costs) will be worked out so that future plants will be cheaper and faster to build, the experience to date seems to validate the Gen III+ concept. Within a few years both the EPR and the first AP-1000s should be coming online, as well as Korean, Russian and Indian designs, at which point actual experience will begin to tell the tale as subsequent plants are built.¶ The safety and economics of Gen III+ plants seem to be attractive enough to consider this generation of nuclear power to provide reasons for optimism that humanity can manage to provide the energy needed for the future. But naysayers are warning (with highly questionable veracity) about uranium shortages if too many such plants are built. Even if they’re right, the issue can be considered moot, for there is another player waiting in the wings that is so superior to even Gen III+ technology as to render all concerns about nuclear fuel shortages baseless.¶ The Silver Bullet¶ In the endless debate on energy policy and technology that seems to increase by the day, the phrase heard repeatedly is “There is no silver bullet.” (This is sometimes rendered “There is no magic bullet”, presumably by those too young to remember the Lone Ranger TV series.) Yet a fission technology known as the integral fast reactor (IFR), developed at Argonne National Laboratory in the 80s and 90s, gives the lie to that claim.¶ Below is a graph [vi] representing the number of years that each of several power sources would be able to supply all the world’s expected needs if they were to be relied upon as the sole source of humanity’s energy supply. The categories are described thusly:¶ Conventional oil: ordinary oil drilling and extraction as practiced today¶ Conventional gas: likewise¶ Unconventional oil (excluding low-grade oil shale). More expensive methods of recovering oil from more problematic types of deposits¶ Unconventional gas (excluding clathrates and geopressured gas): As with unconventional oil, this encompasses more costly extraction techniques¶ Coal: extracted with techniques in use today. The worldwide coal estimates, however, are open to question and may, in fact, be considerably less than they are ordinarily presented to be, unless unconventional methods like underground in situ gasification are deployed. [vii]¶ Methane Clathrates & Geopressured Gas: These are methane resources that are both problematic and expensive to recover, with the extraction technology for clathrates only in the experimental stage.¶ Low-grade oil shale and sands: Very expensive to extract and horrendously destructive of the environment. So energy-intensive that there have been proposals to site nuclear power plants in the oil shale and tar sands areas to provide the energy for extraction!¶ Uranium in fast breeder reactors (IFRs being the type under discussion here) Integral fast reactors can clearly be seen as the silver bullet that supposedly doesn’t exist. The fact is that IFRs can provide all the energy that humanity requires, and can deliver it cleanly, safely, and economically. This technology is a true game changer.

#### Resource scarcity causes global wars – highly probable

**Klare 2006** – professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College

(Michael, Mar 6 2006, “The coming resource wars” http://www.energybulletin.net/node/13605)

It's official: the era of resource wars is upon us. In a major London address, British Defense Secretary John Reid warned that global climate change and **dwindling natural resources are combining to increase the likelihood of violent conflict** over land, water and energy. Climate change, he indicated, “will make scarce resources, clean water, viable agricultural land even scarcer”—and this will “make the emergence of violent conflict more rather than less likely.” Although not unprecedented, Reid’s prediction of an upsurge in resource conflict is significant both because of his senior rank and the vehemence of his remarks. “The blunt truth is that the lack of water and agricultural land is a significant contributory factor to the tragic conflict we see unfolding in Darfur,” he declared. “We should see this as a warning sign.” Resource conflicts of this type are most likely to arise in the developing world, Reid indicated, but the more advanced and affluent countries are not likely to be spared the damaging and destabilizing effects of global climate change. With sea levels rising, water and energy becoming increasingly scarce and prime agricultural lands turning into deserts, internecine warfare over access to vital resources will become a global phenomenon. Reid’s speech, delivered at the prestigious Chatham House in London (Britain’s equivalent of the Council on Foreign Relations), is but the most recent expression of a growing trend in strategic circles to view environmental and resource effects—rather than political orientation and ideology—as the most potent source of armed conflict in the decades to come. With the world population rising, global consumption rates soaring, energy supplies rapidly disappearing and climate change eradicating valuable farmland, the stage is being set for persistent and worldwide struggles over vital resources. Religious and political strife will not disappear in this scenario, but rather will be channeled into contests over valuable sources of water, food and energy.

#### Water scarcity causes extinction

**Coddrington 10** (7/1, http://www.tomorrowtoday.co.za/2010/07/01/a-looming-crisis-world-water-wars/

PhD-Business Adminstration & Guest lecturer at top business schools, including the London Business School, Duke Corporate Education and the Gordon Institute of Business Science.)

People go to war when their way of life is threatened. I have written before about the many issues we face in the coming years that threaten our way of life. These include global warming/climate change, pollution, pandemics, nuclear bombs, intelligent machines, genetics, and more. More and more I am becoming convinced that the next major regional/global conflict will be over water. We are much more likely to have water wars in the next decade than nuclear ones. And I were to guess, I’d say that it is most likely to happen in around North East Africa. This is a region with its own internal issues. But it also has the foreign involvement of America, China, the Middle Eastern Arab nations, and (increasingly) Israel. Quite a potent mix… Last week, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia hosted the 18th regular meeting of the Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin countries. In the lead up to the conference, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, the five countries that are all upstream of Egypt and Sudan concluded a water-sharing treaty – to the exclusion of Egypt and Sudan. This has obviously reignited the longstanding dispute over water distribution of the world’s longest river in the world’s driest continent. Egypt is currently the largest consumer of Nile water and is the main beneficiary of a 1929 treaty which allows it to take 55.5 billion cubic metres of water each year, or 87% of the White and Blue Nile’s flow. By contrast, Sudan is only allowed to draw 18.5 billion cubic metres. On attaining independence Sudan refused to acknowledge the validity of the Nile water treaty and negotiated a new bilateral treaty with Egypt in 1959. Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda also expressly refused to be bound by the treaty when they attained independence, but have not negotiated a new treaty since then. Under the 1929 treaty, Egypt has powers over upstream projects: The Nile Waters Agreement of 1929 states that no country in the Nile basin should undertake any works on the Nile, or its tributaries, without Egypt’s express permission. This gives Egypt a veto over anything, including the building of dams on numerous rivers in Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and by implication Egypt has control over agriculture, industry and infrastructure and basic services such as drinking water and electricity in these countries. This is surely untenable. But if the other countries broke the treaty, would Egypt respond with force? Since the late 1990s, Nile Basin states have been trying unsuccessfully to develop a revised framework agreement for water sharing, dubbed the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). In May 2009, talks held in Kinshasa broke down because Egypt and Sudan’s historical water quotas were not mentioned in the text of the proposed agreement. Water ministers met again in July 2009 in Alexandria, where Egypt and Sudan reiterated their rejection of any agreement that did not clearly establish their historical share of water. This is an untenable position. Upstream states accuse Egypt and Sudan of attempting to maintain an unfair, colonial-era monopoly on the river. Egyptian officials and analysts, however, defend their position, pointing out that Egypt is much more dependent on the river for its water needs than its upstream neighbours. Egypt claims that Nile water accounts for more than 95% of Egypt’s total water consumption, although they appear to be working hard to reduce both their water usage (they’re stopping growing rice, for example) and their dependence on the Nile.

### Solvency

#### Contention 4: Solvency

#### Loan guarantees solve – conservative arguments about cronyism and risk underestimation ignore 20 years of loan guarantee data to the contrary

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These programs typically run at very low cost to taxpayers. On average, every $1 allocated to loan and guarantee programs generates more than $99 of economic activity from individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and state and local governments, according to our analysis.¶ But in the wake of certain widely publicized credit blunders, most notably this past summer’s bankruptcy announcement from solar company Solyndra LLC, some have called into question Washington’s ability to manage financial risk. Conservative critics contend that the government is incapable of accurately pricing risk, and that political pressure encourages government agencies to routinely underestimate the risk to taxpayers when extending credit.¶ Government underpricing of risk is a convenient theory for free-market ideologues but it runs contrary to the overwhelming evidence.¶ Our review of federal government credit programs back to 1992 shows that on average the government is quite accurate in its risk pricing. In fact, the majority of government credit programs cost less than originally estimated, not more. Specifically, we found that:¶ Based on initial estimates over the past 20 years, the government expected its credit programs to cost taxpayers 79 cents for every $100 loaned or guaranteed. Based on recently updated data, those cost predictions were reasonably accurate but slightly underestimated. The current budgetary impact of these programs is about 94 cents per $100 loaned or guaranteed.¶ There’s little evidence that credit programs are biased toward underpricing risk. In fact, a little more than half of all nonemergency federal credit programs will cost the government less than what they are expected to over the life of the program.¶ The remainder is accounted for by the losses suffered by the Federal Housing Administration on loans made in 2008 during the peak of the housing crisis. Excluding that book of loans, all nonemergency federal credit programs cost slightly less than expected.¶ Conservative critics often portray a world in which government bureaucrats haphazardly issue loans and loan guarantees without considering taxpayer exposure to risk. That’s simply not the case. This issue brief explains how the government prices credit risk in the federal budget, how well those cost estimates have reflected reality over the years, and why the government is in a particularly good position to assume certain types of risk.¶ Budgeting for credit risk¶ Federal government agencies adhere to strict budget and accounting standards to carefully assess the risks and potential losses associated with credit programs. Here’s how it works.¶ Before an agency can issue any loans or loan guarantees, Congress must first authorize and allocate funding for the program. In most cases Congress starts by determining how much money the program will be authorized to guarantee or loan and then appropriates a certain percentage of that amount to cover the program’s expected cost to the government. That cost estimate—assessed by both the agency administering the program and the president’s Office of Management and Budget—takes into account expected repayments, defaults, recoveries, and any interest or fees collected over the life of the loan, adjusted to current dollars.¶ The net cost to the federal government as a percentage of total dollars loaned or guaranteed is known as the subsidy rate. As an example, say Congress approves a $100 million loan guarantee program within the Department of Agriculture. The department models expected market conditions and loan activity and then estimates a subsidy rate, which the Office of Management and Budget independently estimates as a check on the agency’s methodology. Let’s say the estimated subsidy rate is 0.75 percent. That means the government expects to take a net loss of 75 cents for every $100 it guarantees over the life of those loans. To cover expected losses on the $100 million in loan guarantees, the government sets aside $750,000 in a special account at the Treasury Department. This is similar to a loan loss reserve at a private bank.¶ Each subsequent year, the Office of Management and Budget and the agencies recalculate the subsidy rate to reflect actual loan performance, current economic conditions, and anything else administrators may have learned about a program. These revised numbers are reported in the president’s budget each year, which gives us a pretty good idea of each program’s “actual” costs and the government’s ability to assess financial risk.¶ If conservative claims were accurate in saying that the federal government cannot accurately price for risk, then one would expect the initial cost estimates to be significantly lower than the more recent re-estimates. Using the Department of Agriculture example above, if the critics were right, the re-estimated subsidy rate would presumably be much higher than 0.75 percent, and actual outlays would be higher than estimated. Let’s see how the government’s risk estimates actually stack up.¶ Government risk estimates are quite accurate¶ To test this theory, we analyzed credit data published in the president’s 2013 budget. We compared initial and updated cost estimates, also known as subsidy re-estimates, for each book of nonemergency loans and loan guarantees for each federal credit program since 1992, the first year for which comprehensive data are available.¶ We limit our analysis to nonemergency credit programs, omitting programs created in response to the recent financial crisis. This includes programs created through the Troubled Asset Relief Program—the so-called Wall Street rescue package passed by Congress at the height of the housing and financial crises—and the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s purchase of securities issued by the two troubled housing finance giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Both of these programs are temporary, atypically large, and are accounted for in the federal budget using different standards than all other credit programs.¶ If we had included these “emergency” programs, it would drastically skew the overall results—but skew them in favor of our basic argument. Based on our analysis of data published in the 2013 budget, these programs will cost the government about $130 billion less than initially expected. So their inclusion would make it seem as though the government significantly overestimated the cost of all credit programs over the past 20 years, which is not the case.¶ We also exclude any federal credit program that is not listed in the federal credit supplement of president’s budget, and any program that did not publish a subsidy re-estimate in the 2013 budget. We do this both because complete data are unavailable for these programs and because their costs are not recorded in the federal budget. Notably, this includes insurance programs through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, mortgage guarantees offered by the two housing finance giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (both now under government conservatorship), and guarantees on mortgage-backed securities offered by the government corporation Ginnie Mae.¶ Here’s what we found out about nonemergency federal credit programs. Federal agencies have issued $5.7 trillion worth of these loans or loan guarantees since 1992. Based on our analysis of initial estimates, the government expected these programs to cost taxpayers about 79 cents for every $100 loaned or guaranteed, or a 0.79 percent subsidy rate overall.¶ Of course, no one expects those estimates to be perfect. Many of these loans such as home mortgages or funding for large infrastructure projects take decades to pay back. Government financial analysts are charged with the difficult task of modeling payments, defaults, recoveries, and market conditions for the entire life of the loan, so some error has to be expected.¶ But as it turns out, the initial estimates weren’t very far off. The current budgetary impact of these credit programs is about 94 cents per $100 loaned or guaranteed, or a 0.94 percent subsidy rate, according to our analysis of updated subsidy estimates. To put that in a budgetary context, while issuing nearly $6 trillion in loans and guarantees over the past 20 years, the government initially predicted about $45 billion in total costs to taxpayers, but the actual costs were slightly higher—about $53 billion.¶ That difference—$8 billion over two decades or $400 million per year—might seem high at first. But it amounts to just 0.15 percent of the total dollars loaned or guaranteed by the government and 0.02 percent of all government spending over that period.(see Figure 1)¶ Of course, the federal government’s performance on individual programs varied substantially. Some programs overestimate risks, while others underestimate. But as mentioned above, some conservatives argue that political pressures cause the government to systemically underprice costs to taxpayers when issuing loans or guarantees.¶ The data show this to be untrue. Of the 104 nonemergency credit programs administered since 1992, our analysis shows that most have actually overestimated total subsidy costs. Fifty-six programs overpriced risk over their lifetimes, while 48 programs underpriced risk. (see Figure 2)¶ Our analysis only takes into account lifetime costs for each program, not the federal government’s ability to estimate costs on an individual year’s portfolio of loans. Indeed, critics often point to individual data points such as the Solyndra bankruptcy as evidence of the government’s inability to price financial risk. But what matters most is actually the net budgetary impact over time of these inaccuracies, which is what is measured in Figure 1.¶ Overall these overestimates and underestimates—whether across programs or in individual books of business—tend to roughly balance out in the long run, give or take a reasonable margin of error. As we show in the following section, however, all of these underestimated losses can actually be attributed to a single year of mortgage guarantees made at the height of the housing crisis.

#### Government support is vital-~--it overcomes financial barriers to nuclear that the market cannot

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Over the course of the last decade, it appeared that concerns about carbon emissions, aging coal fleets, and a desire for a diversified generation base were reviving the U.S. utility sector interest in building new nuclear plants. Government and companies worked closely on design certification for Generation III reactors, helping to streamline the licensing process. New loan guarantees from the federal government targeted for nuclear projects were created as part of the 2005 Energy Policy Act. Consequently, dozens of projects entered the planning stages. Following more than 30 years in which no new units were built, it looked as if the U.S. nuclear industry was making significant headway. However, it is yet to be seen how many new nuclear projects will actually make it beyond blueprints due to one of the largest barriers to new nuclear construction: financing risk. Large upfront capital costs, a complex regulatory process, uncertain construction timelines, and technology challenges result in a risk/return profile for nuclear projects that is unattractive for the capital markets without supplementary government or ratepayer support. To many investors, nuclear seems too capital-intensive. Nuclear energy has attractive qualities in comparison to other sources of electricity. A primary motivation to pursue the development of nuclear energy in the U.S. has been its low operating fuel costs compared with coal, oil, and gas-fired plants. Over the lifetime of a generating station, fuel makes up 78% of the total costs of a coal-fired plant. For a combined cycle gas-fired plant, the figure is 89%. According to the Nuclear Energy Institute, the costs for nuclear are approximately 14%, and include processing, enrichment, and fuel management/disposal costs. Today’s low natural gas prices have enhanced the prospects of gas-fired power, but utilities still remain cautious about over-investing in new natural gas generation given the historical volatility of prices. Furthermore, nuclear reactors provide baseload power at scale, which means that these plants produce continuous, reliable power to consistently meet demand. In contrast, renewable energies such as wind or solar are only available when the wind blows or the sun shines, and without storage, these are not suitable for large-scale use. Finally, nuclear energy produces no carbon emissions, which is an attractive attribute for utilities that foresee a carbon tax being imposed in the near future. Given nuclear’s benefits, one may wonder why no new nuclear units have been ordered since the 1970s. This hiatus is in great part due to nuclear’s high cost comparative to other alternatives, and its unique set of risks. As a result, financing nuclear has necessitated government involvement, as the cost of nuclear typically exceeds that of the cost of conventional generation technologies such as coal and natural gas fired generation on a levelized cost of energy (LCOE) basis. LCOE represents the present value of the total cost of building and operating a generating plant over its financial life, converted to equal annual payments and amortized over expected annual generation, and is used to compare across different power generation technologies. For both regulated utilities and independent power producers, nuclear is unattractive if the levelized cost exceeds that of other technologies, since state utility commissions direct regulated utilities to build new capacity using the technology with the lowest LCOE. Furthermore, capital costs are inherently high, ranging in the billions or tens of billions of dollars, and are compounded by financing charges during long construction times. Without government support, financing nuclear is currently notpossible in the capital markets. Recently, Constellation Energy and NRG separately pulled the plug on new multi-billion dollar plants, citing financing problems. Projects, however, will get done on a one-off basis. Southern Company’s Vogtle Plant in Eastern Georgia is likely to be the sponsor of the first new generation to be constructed, taking advantage of local regulatory and federal support. Two new reactors of next-generation technology are in the permitting stage, which will bring online 2,200 megawatts (MW) of new capacity, and will cost $14 billion. The project will take advantage of tax credits and loan guarantees provided in the 2005 Energy Policy Act.

#### And, loan guarantees solve nuclear expansion – shows investors the government has skin in the game, and incentivizes quick agency approval

Adams 10—Publisher of Atomic insights Was in the Navy for 33 years Spent time at the Naval Academy Has experience designing and running small nuclear plants (Rod, Concrete Action to Follow Strongly Supportive Words On Building New Nuclear Power Plants, atomicinsights.com/2010/01/concrete-action-to-follow-strongly-supportive-words-on-building-new-nuclear-power-plants.html)

Loan guarantees are important to the nuclear industry because the currently available models are large, capital intensive projects that need a stable regulatory and financial environment. The projects can be financed because they will produce a regular stream of income that can service the debt and still provide a profit, but that is only true if the banks are assured that the government will not step in at an inopportune time to halt progress and slow down the revenue generation part of the project. Bankers do not forget history or losses very easily; they want to make sure that government decisions like those that halted Shoreham, Barnwell’s recycling facility or the Clinch River Breeder Reactor program are not going to be repeated this time around. For the multi-billion dollar projects being proposed, bankers demand the reassurance that comes when the government is officially supportive and has some “skin in the game” that makes frivolous bureaucratic decisions to erect barriers very expensive for the agency that makes that decision. I have reviewed the conditions established for the guarantee programs pretty carefully – at one time, my company ([Adams Atomic Engines, Inc.](http://www.atomicengines.com)) was considering filing an application. The loan conditions are strict and do a good job of protecting government interests. They were not appropriate for a tiny company, but I can see where a large company would have less trouble complying with the rules and conditions. The conditions do allow low or no cost intervention in the case of negligence or safety issues, but they put the government on the hook for delays that come from bad bureaucratic decision making.

#### Plan is modeled internationally

**Blees et al** 11 (Tom Blees1, Yoon Chang2, Robert Serafin3, Jerry Peterson4, Joe Shuster1, Charles Archambeau5, Randolph Ware3, 6, Tom Wigley3,7, Barry W. Brook7, 1Science Council for Global Initiatives, 2Argonne National Laboratory, 3National Center for Atmospheric Research, 4University of Colorado, 5Technology Research Associates, 6Cooperative Institute for Research in the Environmental Sciences, 7(climate professor) University of Adelaide, "Advanced nuclear power systems to mitigate climate change (Part III)," 2/24/11) <http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/02/24/advanced-nuclear-power-systems-to-mitigate-climate-change/-http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/02/24/advanced-nuclear-power-systems-to-mitigate-climate-change/>

There are many compelling reasons to pursue the rapid demonstration of a full-scale IFR, as a lead-in to a subsequent global deployment of this technology within a relatively short time frame. Certainly the urgency of climate change can be a potent tool in winning over environmentalists to this idea. Yet political expediency—due to widespread skepticism of anthropogenic causes for climate change—suggests that the arguments for rolling out IFRs can be effectively tailored to their audience. Energy security—especially with favorable economics—is a primary interest of every nation.¶ The impressive safety features of new nuclear power plant designs should encourage a rapid uptick in construction without concern for the spent fuel they will produce, for all of it will quickly be used up once IFRs begin to be deployed. It is certainly manageable until that time. Burying spent fuel in non-retrievable geologic depositories should be avoided, since it represents a valuable clean energy resource that can last for centuries even if used on a grand scale.¶ Many countries are now beginning to pursue fast reactor technology without the cooperation of the United States, laboriously (and expensively) re-learning the lessons of what does and doesn’t work. If this continues, we will see a variety of different fast reactor designs, some of which will be less safe than others. Why are we forcing other nations to reinvent the wheel? Since the USA invested years of effort and billions of dollars to develop what is arguably the world’s safest and most efficient fast reactor system in the IFR, and since several nations have asked us to share this technology with them (Russia, China, South Korea, Japan, India), there is a golden opportunity here to develop a common goal—a standardized design, and a framework for international control of fast reactor technology and the fissile material that fuels them. This opportunity should be a top priority in the coming decade, if we are serious about replacing fossil fuels worldwide with sufficient pace to effectively mitigate climate change and other environmental and geopolitical crises of the 21st century.

#### IFR’s S-PRISM design is really safe

**Blees et al 11** (Tom Blees1, Yoon Chang2, Robert Serafin3, Jerry Peterson4, Joe Shuster1, Charles Archambeau5, Randolph Ware3, 6, Tom Wigley3,7, Barry W. Brook7, 1Science Council for Global Initiatives, 2Argonne National Laboratory, 3National Center for Atmospheric Research, 4University of Colorado, 5Technology Research Associates, 6Cooperative Institute for Research in the Environmental Sciences, 7(climate professor) University of Adelaide, "Advanced nuclear power systems to mitigate climate change (Part III)," 2/24/11) http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/02/24/advanced-nuclear-power-systems-to-mitigate-climate-change/-http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/02/24/advanced-nuclear-power-systems-to-mitigate-climate-change/

Metal Fuel: The Ultimate Safety Valve¶ One of the most important of the many superlatives of the IFR is its use of a metal fuel comprised of uranium, plutonium and zirconium, and the ingenious manner in which the Argonne team solved the problems of fuel expansion and fuel fabrication, as well as the potentially dangerous overheating scenario. Unlike the fuel fabrication of oxide-fueled reactors that requires the dimensions of the fuel pellets to be uniform to very exacting tolerances, the metal fuel for the IFR can be simply injected into molds and then cooled and inserted into metal tubes (cladding) with a great deal of dimensional tolerance, with a sodium bond filling any voids. If an accident situation occurs that would cause the core to overheat, such as a loss of coolant flow accident, the metal fuel itself will expand, causing neutron leakage to terminate the chain reaction, relying on nothing but the laws of physics.¶ The passive safety characteristics of the IFR were tested in EBR-II on April 3, 1986, against two of the most severe accident events postulated for nuclear power plants. The first test (the Loss of Flow Test) simulated a complete station blackout, so that power was lost to all cooling systems. The second test (the Loss of Heat Sink Test) simulated the loss of ability to remove heat from the plant by shutting off power to the secondary cooling system. In both of these tests, the normal safety systems were not allowed to function and the operators did not interfere. The tests were run with the reactor initially at full power.¶ In both tests, the passive safety features simply shut down the reactor with no damage. The fuel and coolant remained within safe temperature limits as the reactor quickly shut itself down in both cases. Relying only on passive characteristics, EBR-II smoothly returned to a safe condition without activation of any control rods and without action by the reactor operators. The same features responsible for this remarkable performance in EBR-II will be incorporated into the design of future IFR plants, regardless of how large they may be [xi].¶ While the IFR was under development, a consortium of prominent American companies led by General Electric collaborated with the IFR team to design a commercial-scale reactor based upon the EBR-II research. This design, currently in the hands of GE, is called the PRISM (Power Reactor Innovative Small Module). A somewhat larger version (with a power rating of 380 MWe) is called the S-PRISM. As with all new nuclear reactor designs (and many other potentially hazardous industrial projects), probabilistic risk assessment studies were conducted for the S-PRISM. Among other parameters, the PRA study estimated the frequency with which one could expect a core meltdown. This occurrence was so statistically improbable as to defy imagination. Of course such a number must be divided by the number of reactors in service in order to convey the actual frequency of a hypothetical meltdown. Even so, if one posits that all the energy humanity requires were to be supplies solely by IFRs (an unlikely scenario but one that is entirely possible), the world could expect a core meltdown about once every 435,000 years [xii]. Even if the risk assessment understated the odds by a factor of a thousand, this would still be a reactor design that even the most paranoid could feel good about.

#### IFRs are ready for commercial application – solves tech leadership and coal plants

**Kirsh 11** (Steven T. Kirsh, Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, “Why Obama should meet Till,” 9/28/11) http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/09/28/why-obama-should-meet-till/¶ I will tell you the story of an amazing clean power technology that can use nuclear waste for fuel and emit no long-lived nuclear waste; that can supply clean power at low cost for our planet, 24×7, for millions of years without running out of fuel. I will tell you why this technology is our best bet to reduce the impact of global warming on our planet. And finally, I will tell you why nobody is doing anything about it and why this needs to be corrected.¶ If you act on this letter, you will save our country billions of dollars and allow us to become leaders in clean energy. If you delegate it downward, nothing will happen.¶ I have no vested interest in this; I am writing because I care about the future of our planet¶ First, since we met only briefly during the Obama campaign, let me provide a little background about myself. I am a high-tech entrepreneur and philanthropist based in Silicon Valley. I have received numerous awards for my philanthropy. For example, in 2003, I was honored to receive a National Caring Award presented by then Senator Clinton. The largest engineering auditorium at MIT is named in my honor. The first community college LEED platinum building in the nation is also named in my honor.¶ I am also active in Democratic politics. In the 2000 election, for example, I was the single largest political donor in the United States, donating over $10 million dollars to help Al Gore get elected. Unfortunately, we lost that one by one vote (on the Supreme Court).¶ I have no vested interest in nuclear power or anything else that is described below. I write only as someone who cares about our nation, the environment, and our planet. I am trying to do everything I can so my kids have a habitable world to live in. Nothing more.¶ Dr. James Hansen first made me aware of fast reactors in his letter to Obama in 2009¶ As an environmentalist, I have been a fan of Jim Hansen’s work for nearly two decades. Many consider Dr. Hansen to be the world’s leading expert on global warming. For example, Hansen was the first person to make Congress aware of global warming in his Senate testimony in 1988. Hansen is also Al Gore’s science advisor.¶ In 2009, Dr. Hansen wrote a letter to President Obama urging him to do just three things that are critical to stop global warming: 1) phase out coal plants, 2) impose a feebate on carbon emissions with a 100% rebate to consumers and 3) re-start fourth generation nuclear plants, which can use nuclear waste as fuel. Hansen’s letter to Obama is documented here: http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jan/02/obama-climate-change-james-hansen¶ Upon reading Hansen’s recommendations, I was fascinated by the last recommendation. The fourth-generation power plants Hansen advocated sounded too good to be true. If what Hansen was saying was true, then why wasn’t our nation jumping on that technology? It made no sense to me.¶ Lack of knowledge, misinformation, and the complexity of nuclear technology have hampered efforts to get a fast reactor built in the US¶ I spent the next two years finding out the answer to that question. The short answer is three-fold: (1) most people know absolutely nothing about the amazing fourth generation nuclear power plant that we safely ran for 30 years in the US and (2) there is a lot of misleading information being spread by seemingly respectable people (some of whom are in the White House) who never worked on a fourth generation reactor that is totally false. It’s not that they are misleading people deliberately; it’s just that they were either listening to the wrong sources or they are jumping to erroneous conclusions. For example, the most popular misconception is that “reprocessing is a proliferation risk.” That statement fails to distinguish between available reprocessing techniques. It is absolutely true for the French method but it is absolutely not true for the technology described in this letter! The third reason is that the technology is complicated. Most people don’t know the difference between oxide fuel and metal fuel. Most people don’t know what a fast reactor is. Most people can’t tell you the difference between PUREX, UREX, and pyroprocessing. So people with an agenda can happily trot out arguments that support their beliefs and it all sounds perfectly credible. They simply leave out the critical details.¶ We don’t need more R&D. We already have a technology in hand to help us solve global warming and safely get rid of our nuclear waste at low cost. But we aren’t doing anything with it. That’s a serious mistake.¶ Today, our nation faces many serious challenges such as:¶ How can we avert global warming?¶ How can we dispose of our existing nuclear waste safely?¶ How can we generate base-load carbon-free power at very low cost?¶ How can we avoid creating any additional long-lived nuclear waste?¶ How can we grow our economy and create jobs?¶ How can we become the world leader in clean energy?¶ How can we do all of the above while at the same time spending billions less than we are now?¶ The good news is that we already have a proven technology that can address all of these problems. It is a technology that has enjoyed over 30 years of bi-partisan Congressional and Presidential support. It is an advanced nuclear technology that was invented in 1951 by the legendary Walter Zinn and then refined and perfected over a 30 year period, from 1964 to 1994 by Dr. Charles Till who led a team of 1,200 people at the Argonne National Laboratory. Till’s reactor was known as the Integral Fast Reactor (IFR) because it both produced power and recycled its own waste back into the reactor. This is the technology that Hansen referenced in his letter to the President.¶ The IFR is a fourth-generation nuclear design that has several unique and valuable characteristics:¶ It can use our existing nuclear waste (from power plants and weapons) as fuel; we have over 1,000 years of power available by just using today’s nuclear waste. Instead of trying to bury that “waste” in Yucca Mountain, we could be using it for fuel in fast reactors.¶ It generates no long-lived nuclear waste.¶ It is safer than today’s light water reactor (LWR) nuclear power plants. Unlike the Fukushima LWR reactors (a second generation nuclear technology invented 50 years ago), the IFR does NOT require electricity to shut down safely. The IFR shuts down passively if a mishap occurs; no operator intervention or active safety systems are required. They ran the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl scenarios on a live reactor and the reactor shut itself down safely, no operator intervention required, just as predicted. In addition, unlike with LWRs, the IFR runs at low pressure which adds to the safety profile.¶ It reduces the risk of nuclear proliferation because: (1) it eliminates the need for enrichment facilities (which can be used for making nuclear bomb material), (2) the nuclear material that is used in the IFR is not suitable for making bombs and (2) because the nuclear material in the reactor and in the reprocessing hot cell is too “hot” to be stolen or used in a weapon.¶ Experts at General Electric (GE) believe that the IFR has the potential to produce power for less than the price of coal. Dr. Loewen can confirm that if you have any doubts.¶ GE already has an IFR design on the table that they would like to build as soon as possible. Dr. Loewen can confirm that as well.¶ The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, in January 1994, issued a pre-application safety evaluation report in which they found no objections or impediments to licensing the IFR. You can see the NRC report in the 8 minute video.¶ The design is proven. It produced electric power without mishap for 30 years before the project was abruptly cancelled.¶ Dr Charles Till¶ The IFR’s ability to solve the nuclear waste problem should not be underestimated. As respected nuclear experts have pointed out, a practical solution to the nuclear waste problem is required if we are to revive nuclear power in the United States. The Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) on America’s Nuclear Future basically concluded this: “continue doing the same thing we are doing today and keep doing R&D.” That was predictable because it was a consensus report; everyone had to agree. So nothing happened. And because there was no consensus from the BRC , there is less money for nuclear because there is no solution to the waste problem. It’s a downward death spiral.¶ Please pardon me for a second and allow me to rant about consensus reports. In my 30 year career as an entrepreneur, I’ve raised tens of millions of millions of dollars in investment capital from venture capitalists all over the world. I always ask them how they make investment decisions. They always tell me, “If we had to get all partners to agree on an investment, we’d never make any investments. If you can get two partners to champion your company, that is sufficient to drive an investment decision.” Therefore, if you want to get nothing done, ask for a consensus report. If you want to actually solve problems, you should listen to what the people most knowledgeable about the problem are saying.¶ Dr Yoon I. Chang¶ Had President Obama asked the Commissioners on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) who have the most knowledge of fast reactors the same question that he tasked the BRC with, he would have gotten a completely different answer. They would have told President Obama that fast reactors and pyroprocessing are the way to go and we better get started immediately with something that we already know works because there is still a ten year time if we were to start the reactor building process today. Their advice leads to a viable solution that we know will work and it will make the US a leader in clean nuclear power. Following the BRC’s consensus advice will lead to decades of inaction. Totally predictable.¶ If we put a national focus on developing and cost reducing the IFR, we’d have a killer product and lead the world in being a clean energy leader¶ It would be great if we had a long-term strategy and vision for how we become energy independent and solve the global warming problem and help our economy at the same time. The IFR can play a key role in that vision. If we put a national focus on developing and commercializing the IFR technology we invented, we can create jobs, help our trade balance, mitigate global warming, become energy independent, show the world a safe way to get rid of nuclear waste, and become the leaders in clean power technology.¶ Nuclear power is the elephant in the room. Even though we haven’t built a new nuclear plant in 30 years, nuclear still supplies 70% of the clean energy in America today. That feat was largely accomplished in a single ten year period. Renewables have had 3 decades to “catch up” and they aren’t anywhere close. Nuclear’s continued dominance shows that nuclear power is indeed the elephant in the room when it comes to being able to install clean energy quickly and affordably.¶ The bad news is that President Clinton decided that this technology, which would have produced unlimited amounts of base-load carbon-free power for a price as low as anything else available today, was not needed and cancelled the project in 1994.¶ Cancelling the IFR was a big mistake. It’s still the world’s best fast nuclear technology according to an independent study by the Gen IV International Forum.¶ Many top scientists all over the world believe that President Clinton’s decision was a huge mistake. The Senate had voted to continue to fund it. The project had been supported by six US Presidents; Republicans and Democrats. In fact, the project’s biggest proponent was Republican President Richard Nixon who said in 1971, “Our best hope today for meeting the Nation’s growing demand for economical clean energy lies with the fast breeder reactor.”¶ Republican Senator Kempthorne said of the IFR cancellation:¶ Unfortunately, this program was canceled just 2 short years before the proof of concept. I assure my colleagues someday our Nation will regret and reverse this shortsighted decision. But complete or not, the concept and the work done to prove it remain genius and a great contribution to the world.¶ While I am not a big fan of Senator Kempthorne, I couldn’t agree more with what he said in this particular case.¶ The IFR remains the single best advanced nuclear power design ever invented. That fact was made clear when in 2002, over 240 leading nuclear scientists from all over the world (in a Gen IV International Forum sponsored study) independently evaluated all fourth-generation nuclear designs and ranked the IFR the #1 best overall advanced nuclear design.¶ The IFR was cancelled in 1994 without so much as a phone call to anyone who worked on the project. They didn’t call then. They haven’t called since. They simply pulled the plug and told people not to talk about the technology.¶ The US government invested over $5 billion dollars in the IFR. Fast reactor R&D is largest single technology investment DOE has ever made. According to a top DOE nuclear official (Ray Hunter, the former NE2 at DOE), the “IFR became the preferred path because of waste management, safety, and economics.” The reactor produced power for 30 years without incident. Despite that track record, before it was cancelled, nobody from the White House ever met with anyone who worked on the project to discuss whether it should be terminated or not. It was simply unilaterally terminated by the White House for political reasons. Technical experts were never consulted. To this day, no one from the White House has met with Dr. Till to understand the benefits of the project. The technical merits simply did not matter.¶ I urge you to recommend to President Obama that he meet personally with Dr. Charles Till so that the President can hear first hand why it is so critical for the health of our nation and our planet that this project, known as the Integral Fast Reactor (IFR), be restarted. Dr. Till headed the project at Argonne National Laboratory until his retirement in 1997. He is, without a doubt, the world’s leading expert on IFR technology.¶ Want to solve global warming? Easy. Just create a 24×7 clean power source that costs the same as coal. Prominent scientists believe that the IFR can achieve this.¶ Dr. Hansen has pointed out many times that it is imperative to eliminate all coal plants worldwide since otherwise, we will never win the battle against global warming. But we know from experience that treaties and agreements do not work. Here’s a quote from an article (“The Most Important Investment that We Aren’t Making to Mitigate the Climate Crisis”) that I wrote in December 2009 published in the Huffington Post:¶ If you want to get emissions reductions, you must make the alternatives for electric power generation cheaper than coal. It’s that simple. If you don’t do that, you lose.¶ The billions we invest in R&D now in building a clean and cheaper alternative to coal power will pay off in spades later. We have a really great option now — the IFR is on the verge of commercial readiness — and potential competitors such as the Liquid Fluoride Thorium Reactor (LFTR) are in the wings. But the US government isn’t investing in developing any of these breakthrough new base-load power generation technologies. Not a single one.¶ I found it really amazing that global leaders were promising billions, even hundreds of billions in Copenhagen for “fighting climate change” when they weren’t investing one cent in the nuclear technologies that can stop coal and replace it with something cheaper.¶ [ Note: 6 days ago, on September 22, 2011, DOE agreed to give $7.5M to MIT to do R&D on a molten-salt reactor. That’s good, but we should be building the technology we already have proven in 30 years of operational experience before we invest in unproven new technologies. ]¶ Dr. Loewen has personally looked at the costs for the building the IFR in detail and believes the IFR can generate power at a cost comparable to a coal plant. So it’s arguably our best shot at displacing coal plants. This is precisely why Dr. Hansen believes that the IFR should be a top priority if we want to save our planet.¶ It isn’t just nuclear experts that support the IFR¶ US Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) is also a major IFR supporter. When he was Lt. Governor of California, Congressman Garamendi convened a panel of over a dozen our nation’s top scientists to discuss the IFR technology. As a result of that meeting, Garamendi became convinced that the IFR is critically important and he is currently trying very hard to get a bill passed in the House to restart it. Unfortunately, virtually everyone in Congress seems to have forgotten about this project even though in the 1970’s it was the President’s top energy priority. Nothing has changed since then. No other clean energy technology has been invented that is superior to the IFR for generating low-cost carbon-free base-load electric power.¶ Bill Gates also found exactly the same thing when he looked at how to solve the global warming problem. As he explained in a recent TED talk, renewables will never solve the climate crisis. The only viable technology is fourth-generation nuclear power and the best advanced nuclear technology is the IFR. That is why this is Gate’s only clean energy investment. Gates’ TerraPower Travelling Wave Reactor (TWR) is a variant of the IFR design. When Gates approached DOE to try to build his reactor in the US, he was told to build it outside of the US.¶ Nobel prize winner Hans Bethe (now deceased) was an enthusiastic supporter. Freeman Dyson called Bethe the “supreme problem solver of the 20th century. Chuck Till told me the following story of Bethe’s support for the IFR:¶ A tale from the past: A year or two before the events I’ll describe, Hans Bethe had been contacted by the Argonne Lab Director for his recommendation on who to seek to replace the existing head of Argonne’s reactor program.¶ Bethe told him the best choice was already there in the Lab, so it was in this way that I was put in charge. I had had quite a few sessions with him in the years leading up to it, as we were able to do a lot of calculations on the effects of reactor types on resources that he didn’t have the capability at his disposal to do himself.¶ So when I wanted to initiate the IFR thrust, the first outside person I went to was Bethe at Cornell. After a full day of briefing from all the specialists I had taken with me, he suggested a brief private meeting with me. He was direct. He said “All the pieces fit. I am prepared to write a letter stating this. Who do you want me to address it to? I think the President’s Science Advisor, don’t you?” I said the obvious – that his opinion would be given great weight, and would give instant respectability.¶ He went on, “I know him quite well. Who else?” I said I was sure that Senator McClure (who was chairman of Senate Energy and Resources at the time) would be relieved to hear from him. That the Senator would be inclined to support us, as we were fairly prominent in the economy of the state of Idaho, and for that reason I had easy access to him. But to know that Hans Bethe, a man renowned for his common sense in nuclear and all energy matters, supported such an effort would give him the Senator solid and quotable reason for his own support, not dismissible as parochial politics, that the Senator would want if he was to lead the congressional efforts. “Yes,” he said in that way he had, “I agree.”¶ I’ve always thought that the President’s Science Advisor’s intervention with DOE, to give us a start, was not the result of our meeting him, but rather it was because of the gravitas Hans Bethe provided with a one page letter.¶ How do we lead the world in clean energy if we put our most powerful clean energy technology on the shelf?!?¶ President Obama has stated that he wants the US to be a leader in clean energy. I do not see how we achieve that if we allow our most advanced clean energy technology to sit on the shelf collecting dust and we tell one of America’s most respected businessmen that he should build his clean energy technology in another country. We have an opportunity here to export energy technology to China instead of importing it. But due to Clinton’s decision, we are allowing the Russians to sell similar fast reactor technology to the Chinese. It should have been us.¶ Re-starting the IFR will allow us to cancel a $10 billion stupid expenditure. The IFR only costs $3B to build. We’d get more, pay less. On pure economics alone, it’s a no brainer.¶ Finally, even if you find none of the arguments above to be compelling, there is one more reason to restart the IFR project: it will save billions of dollars. Today, we are contracting with the French to build a MOX reprocessing plant in Savannah River. The cost of that project is $10 billion dollars. We are doing it to meet our treaty obligations with the Russians. Former top DOE nuclear managers agree this is a huge waste of money because we can build an IFR which can reprocess 10 times at much weapons waste per year for a fraction of that cost.¶ The Russians are laughing at our stupidity. They are going to be disposing of their weapons waste in fast reactors, just like we should be. The Russians are also exporting their fast reactors to the Chinese. Had the US not cancelled our fast reactor program, we would be the world leader in this technology because our technology remains better than any other fourth generation technology in the world.¶ If you delegate this to someone else, nothing will happen. Here’s why.¶ Delegating this letter downward from the White House to someone in DOE to evaluate will result in inaction and no follow up. I know this from past attempts that have been made. It just gets lost and there is no follow up. Every time. The guys at DOE want to do it, but they know that they will get completely stopped by OMB and OSTP. Both Carol Browner and Steven Chu asked former DOE nuclear management what to do about nuclear waste. They were told that using fast reactors and reprocessing was the way to go. But nothing happened. So Chu has given up trying. According to knowledgeable sources, the White House has told DOE in no uncertain terms, “do not build anything nuclear in the US.” It’s not clear who is making these decisions, but many people believe it is being driven by Steven Fetter in OSTP.¶ Dr. Till knows all of this. He knows that unless he personally meets with the President to tell the story of this amazing technology, nothing will happen.¶ I’ve discussed the IFR with Steve Fetter and he has his facts wrong. Fetter is basically a Frank von Hippel disciple: they have written at least 14 papers together! It was von Hippel who was largely responsible for killing the IFR under Clinton.¶ So von Hippel’s misguided thought process is driving White House policy today. That’s a big mistake. Professor von Hippel twists the facts to support his point of view and fails to bring up compelling counter arguments that he knows are true but would not support his position. He’s not being intellectually honest. I’ve experienced this myself, firsthand. For example, von Hippel often writes that fast reactors are unreliable. When I pointed out to him that there are several examples of reliable fast reactors, including the EBR-II which ran for decades without incident, he said, that these were the “exceptions that prove the rule.” I was floored by that. That’s crazy. It only proves that it is complicated to build a fast reactor, but that it can easily be done very reliably if you know what you are doing. There is nothing inherent to the technology that makes it “unreliable.” You just have to figure out the secrets. When von Hippel heard that Congressman Garamendi was supporting the IFR, he demanded a meeting with Garamendi to “set him straight.” But what happened was just the opposite: Garamendi pointed out to von Hippel that von Hippel’s “facts” were wrong. Von Hippel left that meeting with Garamendi with his tail between his legs muttering something about that being the first time he’s ever spoken with anyone in Congress who knew anything about fast nuclear reactors. In short, if you watch a debate between von Hippel and Garamendi (who is not a scientist), Garamendi easily wins on the facts. If you put von Hippel up against someone who knows the technology like Till, Till would crush von Hippel on both the facts and the arguments. But the Clinton White House never invited Till to debate the arguments with von Hippel. They simply trusted what von Hippel told them. Big mistake.¶ There are lots of problems with von Hippel’s arguments. For example, von Hippel ignores reality believing that if the USA doesn’t do something then it will not happen. That’s incredibly naieve and he’s been proven wrong. The USA invented a safe way to reprocess nuclear waste that isn’t a proliferation risk called pyroprocessing. The nuclear material is not suitable for making a bomb at any time in the process. But we never commercialized it because von Hippel convinced Clinton to cancel it. The French commercialized their reprocessing process (PUREX) which separates out pure plutonium and makes it trivial to make bomb material. So because countries need to reprocess, they pick the unsafe technology because they have no alternative. Similarly, because von Hippel had our fast reactor program cancelled, the Russians are the leaders in fast reactor technology. They’ve been using fast reactor technology for over 30 years to generate power commercially. But we know the Russians have a terrible nuclear safety record (e.g., Chernobyl). The fact is that the Chinese are buying fast reactors from the Russians because there is no US alternative. The problem with von Hippel’s arguments are that the genie is out of the bottle. We can either lead the world in showing how we can do this safely, or the world will choose the less safe alternatives. Today, von Hippel’s decisions have made the world less safe. I could go on and on about how bad von Hippel’s advice is, but this letter is already way too long.¶ MIT was wrong in their report about “The Future of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle”¶ The only other seemingly credible argument against building fast reactors now comes from MIT. The report’s recommendation that we have plenty of time to do R&D appears largely to be driven by one person, co-chair Ernie Moniz.¶ Four world-famous experts on nuclear power and/or climate change and one Congressman challenged Moniz to a debate on the MIT campus on his report. Moniz declined.¶ The report has several major problems. Here are a few of them.¶ The MIT report is inconsistent. On the one hand it says, “To enable an expansion of nuclear power, it must overcome critical challenges in cost, waste disposal, and proliferation concerns while maintaining its currently excellent safety and reliability record.” We agree with that! But then it inexplicably says, “… there are many more viable fuel cycle options and that the optimum choice among them faces great uncertainty…. Greater clarity should emerge over the next few decades… A key message from our work is that we can and should preserve our options for fuel cycle choices by …[continuing doing what we are doing today] … and researching technology alternatives appropriate to a range of nuclear energy futures.” So even though we have a solution now that can be deployed so we can enable an expansion of nuclear power as soon as possible, MIT advises that we should spend a few more decades because we might find something better than the IFR. This is just about the dumbest thing I’ve ever heard coming from MIT. If you ask any scientist who knows anything about global warming, they will tell you we are decades late in deploying carbon-free power. Had we aggressively ramped fast nuclear closed-cycle reactors decades ago and promoted them worldwide, we wouldn’t be anywhere close to the disastrous situation we are in today. So we are decades too late in ramping up nuclear power, and Moniz wants us to spend decades doing more R&D to get a solution that might be lower cost than the IFR. That’s insane.¶ The report looks at the market price of uranium, but the market price completely ignores the environmental impacts of uranium mining. Shouldn’t that be taken into account? It’s like the cost of gas is cheap because the market price doesn’t include the hidden costs: the impact on the environment and on our health.¶ Do you really think that people are going to embrace expansion of uranium mining in the US? The MIT report is silent on that. So then we are back to being dependent on other countries for uranium. Wasn’t the whole point to be energy independent? The IFR provides that now. We wouldn’t have to do any uranium mining ever again. After a thousand years, when we’ve used all our existing nuclear waste as fuel, we can extract the additional fuel we need from seawater, making our seas less radioactive. We can do that for millions of years.¶ The MIT report ignores what other countries are doing. Obama wants the US to be a leader in clean energy technology. You do that by building the most advanced nuclear designs and refining them. That’s the way you learn and improve. MIT would have us stuck on old LWR technology for a few decades. Does anyone seriously think that is the way to be the world leader? There is virtually no room for improvement in LWR technology. IFR technology is nearly 100 times more efficient, and it emits no long term nuclear waste. If you are a buyer of nuclear power in China, which nuclear reactor are you going to pick? The one that is 100 times more efficient and generates no waste? Or the one that is 100 times less efficient and generates waste that you better store for a million years? Wow. Now that’s a real tough question, isn’t it. Gotta ponder that one. I’m sure Apple Computer isn’t taking advice from Moniz. If they were, they’d still be building the Apple I. Ernie should get a clue. The reason Apple is a market leader is because they bring the latest technology to market before anyone else, not because they keep producing old stuff and spend decades doing R&D to see if they can come up with something better. Other countries are not hampered by MIT’s report. France and Japan recently entered into an agreement with the US DOE whereby we’re giving them the IFR technology for them to exploit. Even though we are stupid, they aren’t stupid. The Chinese are ordering inferior oxide fueled fast reactors from Russia. If the US were building metal-fueled fast reactors with pyroprocessing, it’s a good bet the Chinese would be buying from us instead of the Russians. But if we take Moniz’s advice to not build the world’s best advanced nuclear technology we already have, then there is no chance of that happening. By the time we get to market with a fast reactor, it will be all over. We’ll arrive to the market decades late. Another great American invention that we blew it on.¶ There will always be new technologies that people will propose. But the IFR is a bird in the hand and we really need a solution now we can depend on. If something comes along later that is better, that’s great. But if it doesn’t, we will have a viable technology. We can’t afford to get this wrong. We have already run out of time. Any new nuclear designs are decades away from deployment.¶ On September 22, 2011, DOE agreed to give MIT $7.5 millions of dollars on starting R&D on a fourth generation molten salt reactor design that have never been proven. While it might work, the very smart scientists at Oak Ridge National Laboratory spent well over a decade on this and were never able to make it work. So DOE is spending millions on an unproven design while spending nothing on the “sure thing” fourth generation reactor that we already know how to build and that ran flawlessly for 30 years. We are all scratching our heads on that one. It makes no sense. But the reason for this is clear: the mandate from the White House that nothing is to built means that DOE can only initiate research, and then cancel the project right before anything would be built. This is an excellent plan for demoralizing scientists and allowing other countries to lead the world in clean energy. Is that really what we want?? If so, then there are much less expensive ways to accomplish that.¶ At a minimum we should be investing in commercializing our “bird in the hand.” That way, if the new molten salt reactor experiments don’t work out, we’ll still have a viable solution to the nuclear waste problem. If we keep cancelling successful projects right before they are done, hoping for the next big thing, we will forever be in R&D mode and get nothing done. That’s where we are today with fourth generation nuclear.¶ I know this is an unusual request, but I also know that if the President is allowed to evaluate the facts first hand, I am absolutely convinced that he will come to the same conclusion as we all have.¶ I urge you to view an 8 minute video narrated by former CBS Morning News anchor Bill Kurtis that explains all of this in a way that anyone can understand. This video can be found at:¶ The video will amaze you.¶ If you would like an independent assessment of what I wrote above from a neutral , trustworthy, and knowledgeable expert, Bill Magwood would be an excellent choice. Magwood was head of nuclear at DOE under Clinton and Bush, and was the longest serving head of nuclear at DOE in US history. He served under both Clinton and Bush administrations. Magwood is familiar with the IFR, but the IFR was cancelled before he was appointed to head civilian nuclear at DOE. So Magwood has no vested interest in the IFR at all. More recently, Magwood was appointed by President Obama to serve on the NRC and is currently serving in that role. Of the current five NRC Commissioners, Magwood is by far, the person most knowledgeable (PMK) about fast reactors.¶ Thank you for your help in bringing this important matter to the President’s attention.¶ Summary¶ Nuclear power is needed. Renewables alone won’t do it.¶ In order to revive nuclear in the US, you must have a viable solution to the nuclear waste problem.¶ The French reprocess their nuclear waste, but their process is expensive, environmentally unfriendly, and has proliferation problems.¶ The USA developed an inexpensive, environmentally friendly, and proliferation resistant method to reprocess our waste (the IFR), but we cancelled it. That decision was a mistake.¶ We should restart the IFR in the US. It will cost $3B to build, but we can cancel the Areva MOX plant and save $10B to pay for it. So we’ll save money, save the planet from an environmental catastrophe, create jobs, get rid of our nuclear waste, and become the world leader in clean energy technology.¶ President Obama should meet personally with Dr. Charles Till, the world’s leading expert on fast reactor technology. Dr. Till will not waste his time meeting with anyone other than the President because he knows that without personal support of the President, nothing will happen. He’s right.¶ Supporters of this technology include Nobel prize winner Hans Bethe (now deceased), Steven Chu, Dr. James Hansen, Dr. Charles Till, Dr. Eric Loewen, Congressman John Garamendi, Bill Gates, and even the President of MIT. Even the board of directors of the historically anti-nuclear Sierra Club has agreed that they will not oppose building an IFR!¶ Opposition is from OSTP and OMB. We don’t know who or why. It’s a mystery to all my sources. Frank von Hippel thinks you cannot make fast reactors cheaply or reliably and maintains that stance even when the facts show that not to be the case. Ernie Moniz at MIT thinks we shouldn’t build anything now, but do more R&D for the next several decades hoping we can find something better.¶ Bill Magwood, an Obama appointee to the NRC, would be a reasonable choice to provide an objective assessment of the IFR. He has no vested interested in the IFR, but having been the longest serving head of DOE civilian nuclear in history, is familiar with the pros and cons of the technology.¶ Should OSTP and OMB be making these key decisions behind closed doors? Is this really reflective of what the President wants? He’s stated publicly he wants the US to be a world leader in clean energy. Is putting our best technology on the shelf, but licensing the French and Japanese to build it (Joint Statement on Trilateral Cooperation in the area of Sodium-cooled Fast Reactors signed on October 4, 2010 by DOE), the best way for the US to achieve the leadership that Obama said he wanted?¶ I am happy to provide you with additional information.

#### IFRs are technologically ready – we just have to decide to build them

**Brook 11** (Barry Brook, Professor of Climate Change University of Adelaide, “Nuclear power and climate change – what now?” 5/28/11) <http://bravenewclimate.com/2011/05/28/np-cc-what-now/>

But detractors will nevertheless complain that reactors like the ESBWR still produce long-lived radioactive waste products that will have to be safely watched over for what is, for all intents and purposes, forever (from a human standpoint). Another objection frequently raised is the risk of nuclear proliferation, the fear that nuclear material will be misdirected from power plants and made into nuclear weapons. Fuel supply is also an issue when the prospect of a burgeoning nuclear renaissance is considered, with demand for uranium expected to skyrocket. And over all this looms the capital cost of building nuclear power plants, which many consider a deal-breaker even if all the other issues could be resolved. Back in the early Eighties a group of talented nuclear physicists and engineers realized that if there was to be any reasonable expectation of widespread public acceptance of nuclear power, all these problems would have to be solved. So they set out to solve them. Under the leadership of Dr. Charles Till at Argonne National Laboratory’s western branch in the state of Idaho, a virtual army of nuclear professionals designed an energy system that many expect will soon power the planet, if only we can muster the political will to deploy it. Their test reactor operated virtually flawlessly for thirty years as they identified and solved one potential obstacle after another, proceeding methodically until they were ready to demonstrate the commercial-scale viability of their revolutionary fuel recycling system that would complete what had been a spectacularly successful project. What they had accomplished during those years was, without exaggeration, probably the most important energy system ever invented, one that promises virtually unlimited safe, clean energy for the entire planet. Unfortunately, an almost unbelievable shortsightedness on the part of politicians in Washington D.C. pulled the plug on the project just as it reached its final stage in 1994, and the promise of the Integral Fast Reactor (IFR) languished virtually unnoticed for the next fifteen years. Figure 1: A simplified version of an IFR reactor. Illustration courtesy of Andrew Arthur The Integral Fast Reactor But the IFR is such a grand invention that it couldn’t stay buried any longer, and people around the world are now clamoring for it to be deployed. The looming threat of climate change has prompted many to take a fresh look at nuclear power. Some have considered the problem of so-called “nuclear waste” (not waste at all, as we shall soon see) an acceptable price to pay in order to curtail greenhouse gas emissions. In the wake of the Japan accident, safety will also be prominent in the debate. The IFR, though, is so impressive in its qualifications that even previously hard-core anti-nuclear activists have touted it as the ultimate answer. And the fact that over 300 reactor-years of experience have been accumulated with fast reactors around the world means that such technology is no pipe dream, but a mature technology ripe for commercial deployment. The term Integral Fast Reactor denotes two distinct parts: A sodium-cooled fast neutron fission reactor and a recycling facility to process the spent fuel. A single recycling facility would be co-located with a cluster of reactors. Figure 1 shows a simplified version of such a reactor. It consists of a stainless steel tub of sodium, a metal that liquifies at about the boiling point of water. Sodium is used both as a completely non-corrosive coolant and, in a separate non-radioactive loop, as the heat transfer agent to transport the heat to a steam generator in a separate structure (thus avoiding any possible sodium-water interaction in the reactor structure). The system is unpressurized, and the pumps are electromagnetic pumps with no moving parts. In the event of a loss of flow, natural convection and the large amount of sodium will be sufficient to dissipate the heat from the fission products in the core, unlike the situation in the Japanese reactors at Fukushima, which required constant cooling even though the reactors had been shut off. The commercial-scale iteration of the IFR’s reactor component is called the PRISM (or its slightly larger successor, the S-PRISM, though for the sake of brevity I’ll hereafter call it simply the PRISM, which stands for Power Reactor Innovative Small Module). It was designed by a consortium of American companies in conjunction with Argonne Lab, and is now being further refined by GE/Hitachi Nuclear. From a safety standpoint it is unparalleled. If the risk assessment studies for the ESBWR mentioned above sound impressive, those of the IFR are even better. In my book Prescription for the Planet, I did a thought experiment based on the risk assessment studies for the PRISM that have already gotten a preliminary nod from the NRC. The likelihood of a core meltdown was so improbable that I figured out how often we could expect one if thousands of PRISMs were providing all the energy (not just electricity) that humanity will require a few decades hence (according to most estimates). Remember, the occurrence of one meltdown would require dividing the total number of reactors into the probability for a single reactor. Even so, the probable core meltdown frequency came to once every 435,000 years! Even if that risk assessment was exaggerated by ten thousand times, it would still mean we could expect a meltdown about once every half-century for all the energy humanity needs. Reactors and Natural Disasters The crisis at Fukushima’s power plant has stoked fears that existing nuclear sites may be incapable of withstanding quakes in excess of their design specifications. Whereas many lightwater reactors are designed to withstand G forces of about 0.3, the PRISM is rated at 1.0. This G rating is different than a Richter scale rating because the Richter scale represents the total energy released in an earthquake, which is dependent on many factors (duration, depth, etc.). When designing a structure or piece of equipment to withstand earthquakes, the degree of ground acceleration is what matters. If one were to stand directly on a geological fault line during the most severe earthquake imaginable, the G forces caused by ground acceleration would almost certainly not exceed 1.0. (The maximum ground motion at the Fukushima complex during the earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale was 0.56 G) So the PRISM reactor, designed for that level of motion, could safely be built in any seismically active area. Of course it goes without saying that no power plant should be built at a low elevation in a zone that is vulnerable to tsunamis, or for that matter on a flood plain. But with the PRISM, seismic shocks are not an issue. As for proliferation risk, it should be pointed out that the risk of proliferation from any sort of power reactor has been substantially mischaracterized and generally overblown. The reason is that the isotopic composition of the uranium and plutonium in power reactors is lousy for making weapons. Any country that wishes to pursue a weapons program covertly is far better served by using a small research reactor operated in a specific manner to produce high-grade weapons material, and even then it requires a quite complex reprocessing system to separate it. That being said, the IFR system uses a unique metal fuel that can not only be easily and cheaply recycled on-site and then fabricated into new fuel elements, but at no stage of the fuel cycle is any sort of weapons-grade material isolated. All the isotopes of uranium and plutonium are not only left mixed with their various cousins, but there is always at least a bit of highly radioactive fission product elements, making the fuel impossible to handle except by remote systems. Figure 2: The fission products will only be radioactive beyond the level of natural ore for a few hundred years. The buildup of such fission products in the fuel, though, is what eventually necessitates pulling fuel elements out of the reactor for recycling. In the pyroprocessing system—a type of electrorefining common in the metallurgical industry but unique to the IFR among reactor systems—the majority of the fission products are isolated. The rest of the fuel is reincorporated into new fuel elements. The fission products, representing only a small percentage of the fuel, are entombed in borosilicate glass that can’t leach any of them into the environment for thousands of years. Yet the fission products will only be radioactive beyond the level of natural ore for a few hundred years (see Figure 2). Thus the so-called “million year waste problem” is neatly solved. As for the question of uranium supply, that issue is moot once we begin to build IFRs. First we’ll use up all the spent fuel that’s been generated over the years by LWRs, plus all the weapons-grade uranium and plutonium from decommissioned nuclear weapons. It’s all perfect for fuel in IFRs. But then when that’s all gone we can fuel them with depleted uranium. There is already so much of it out of the ground from years of nuclear power use that even if we were to supply all the energy humanity is likely to need from just IFRs alone, we’ve got enough fuel already at hand for nearly a thousand years. As efficient as LWRs are in squeezing a huge amount of energy out of a small amount of fuel, fast reactors like the PRISM are about 150 times more efficient. In fact, all the energy a profligate American would be likely to use in a lifetime could be extracted from a piece of depleted uranium the size of half a ping-pong ball. Finally we come to the clincher: the cost. For some reason it supposedly is going to cost anywhere from two to five times as much to build a nuclear power plant in the USA than exactly the same design being built in the Far East. This comparison applies not just to countries with low labor costs but to Japan too, where labor costs are high and nearly all the materials are imported. It’s an American societal and political problem, not an inherent flaw of nuclear power. Utility companies fear that a group of protesters with signs and lawyers might shut down construction midway through a multi-billion-dollar project, or prevent a built reactor from operating. So they prudently try to build that uncertainty into their cost estimates (with maybe a little padding to boot). A golf ball of uranium would provide more than enough energy for your entire lifetime, including electricity for homes, vehicles and mobile devices, synthetic fuels for vehicles (including tractors to produce your food and jet fuel for your flights). Your legacy? A soda can of fission product was, that would be less radioactive than natural uranium ore in 300 years. The new reactor designs, both the Gen III+ designs mentioned earlier and the PRISM, are designed to be mass-produced in modules, then assembled at the power plant site. The PRISM has the added advantage of operating at atmospheric pressure, so no pressure vessel or high-pressure pumps are needed. The passive safety principles mean that multiple redundancy is unnecessary, allowing such reactors to have far fewer pumps, valves, controls, and other components than their older Gen II predecessors. Based on both industry estimates and actual experience of building these reactors since the Nineties, there is every reason to believe that the price can be kept well below $2,000/kW, though the Chinese plan to produce them for half that price once their mass production supply lines are in place. There is virtually no doubt that with these new nuclear technologies available, the shift to predominantly nuclear power is virtually inevitable in the long term. Over sixty new plants are under construction around the world with many more to come, even if some nations are temporarily deterred by political and social pressures. If we’re serious about solving the climate change problem before it’s too late, we’ll have to get serious about the only zero-emission baseload power source that can easily supply all the energy the world needs. We shouldn’t consider this a Faustian bargain. These new designs—particularly the IFR—are clean, safe, economical, and able to convert waste products that we desperately want to get rid of into abundant energy for the entire planet. Anyone serious about protecting the environment can safely embrace them with enthusiasm.