### prolif

#### ADVANTAGE ONE: PROLIF

#### Unfettered nuclear tech development risks global war

Sokolski 9 [Henry Sokolski, Executive Director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, 6/1/2009, Avoiding a Nuclear Crowd, http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/5534]

Finally, several new nuclear weapons contenders are also likely to emerge in the next two to three decades. Among these might be Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan, Iran, Algeria, Brazil (which is developing a nuclear submarine and the uranium to fuel it), Argentina, and possibly Saudi Arabia (courtesy of weapons leased to it by Pakistan or China), Egypt, Syria, and Turkey. All of these states have either voiced a desire to acquire nuclear weapons or tried to do so previously and have one or more of the following: A nuclear power program, a large research reactor, or plans to build a large power reactor by 2030. With a large reactor program inevitably comes a large number of foreign nuclear experts (who are exceedingly difficult to track and identify) and extensive training, which is certain to include nuclear fuel making.19 Thus, it will be much more difficult to know when and if a state is acquiring nuclear weapons (covertly or overtly) and far more dangerous nuclear technology and materials will be available to terrorists than would otherwise. Bottom line: As more states bring large reactors on line more will become nuclear-weapons-ready — i.e., they could come within months of acquiring nuclear weapons if they chose to do so.20 As for nuclear safeguards keeping apace, neither the iaea’s nuclear inspection system (even under the most optimal conditions) nor technical trends in nuclear fuel making (e.g., silex laser enrichment, centrifuges, new South African aps enrichment techniques, filtering technology, and crude radiochemistry plants, which are making successful, small, affordable, covert fuel manufacturing even more likely)21 afford much cause for optimism. This brave new nuclear world will stir existing security alliance relations more than it will settle them: In the case of states such as Japan, South Korea, and Turkey, it could prompt key allies to go ballistic or nuclear on their own. Nuclear 1914 At a minimum, such developments will be a departure from whatever stability existed during the Cold War. After World War II, there was a clear subordination of nations to one or another of the two superpowers’ strong alliance systems — the U.S.-led free world and the Russian-Chinese led Communist Bloc. The net effect was relative peace with only small, nonindustrial wars. This alliance tension and system, however, no longer exist. Instead, we now have one superpower, the United States, that is capable of overthrowing small nations unilaterally with conventional arms alone, associated with a relatively weak alliance system ( nato) that includes two European nuclear powers (France and the uk). nato is increasingly integrating its nuclear targeting policies. The U.S. also has retained its security allies in Asia (Japan, Australia, and South Korea) but has seen the emergence of an increasing number of nuclear or nuclear-weapon-armed or -ready states. So far, the U.S. has tried to cope with independent nuclear powers by making them “strategic partners” (e.g., India and Russia), nato nuclear allies (France and the uk), “non-nato allies” (e.g., Israel and Pakistan), and strategic stakeholders (China); or by fudging if a nation actually has attained full nuclear status (e.g., Iran or North Korea, which, we insist, will either not get nuclear weapons or will give them up). In this world, every nuclear power center (our European nuclear nato allies), the U.S., Russia, China, Israel, India, and Pakistan could have significant diplomatic security relations or ties with one another but none of these ties is viewed by Washington (and, one hopes, by no one else) as being as important as the ties between Washington and each of these nuclear-armed entities (see Figure 3). There are limits, however, to what this approach can accomplish. Such a weak alliance system, with its expanding set of loose affiliations, risks becoming analogous to the international system that failed to contain offensive actions prior to World War I. Unlike 1914, there is no power today that can rival the projection of U.S. conventional forces anywhere on the globe. But in a world with an increasing number of nuclear-armed or nuclear-ready states, this may not matter as much as we think. In such a world, the actions of just one or two states or groups that might threaten to disrupt or overthrow a nuclear weapons state could check U.S. influence or ignite a war Washington could have difficulty containing. No amount of military science or tactics could assure that the U.S. could disarm or neutralize such threatening or unstable nuclear states.22 Nor could diplomats or our intelligence services be relied upon to keep up to date on what each of these governments would be likely to do in such a crisis (see graphic below): Combine these proliferation trends with the others noted above and one could easily create the perfect nuclear storm: Small differences between nuclear competitors that would put all actors on edge; an overhang of nuclear materials that could be called upon to break out or significantly ramp up existing nuclear deployments; and a variety of potential new nuclear actors developing weapons options in the wings. In such a setting, the military and nuclear rivalries between states could easily be much more intense than before. Certainly each nuclear state’s military would place an even higher premium than before on being able to weaponize its military and civilian surpluses quickly, to deploy forces that are survivable, and to have forces that can get to their targets and destroy them with high levels of probability. The advanced military states will also be even more inclined to develop and deploy enhanced air and missile defenses and long-range, precision guidance munitions, and to develop a variety of preventative and preemptive war options. Certainly, in such a world, relations between states could become far less stable. Relatively small developments — e.g., Russian support for sympathetic near-abroad provinces; Pakistani-inspired terrorist strikes in India, such as those experienced recently in Mumbai; new Indian flanking activities in Iran near Pakistan; Chinese weapons developments or moves regarding Taiwan; state-sponsored assassination attempts of key figures in the Middle East or South West Asia, etc. — could easily prompt nuclear weapons deployments with “strategic” consequences (arms races, strategic miscues, and even nuclear war). As Herman Kahn once noted, in such a world “every quarrel or difference of opinion may lead to violence of a kind quite different from what is possible today.”23 In short, we may soon see a future that neither the proponents of nuclear abolition, nor their critics, would ever want. None of this, however, is inevitable.

#### The impact is extinction

Kroenig, 12 [May 26th, Matthew Kroenig: Assistant Professor of Government, Georgetown University and Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, The History of Proliferation Optimism: Does It Have A Future? Prepared for the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, <http://www.npolicy.org/article.php?aid=1182&tid=30>]

Proliferation Optimism: Proliferation optimism was revived in the academy in Kenneth Waltz’s 1979 book, Theory of International Politics.[[1]](#footnote-1)[29] In this, and subsequent works, Waltz argued that the spread of nuclear weapons has beneficial effects on international politics. He maintained that states, fearing a catastrophic nuclear war, will be deterred from going to war with other nuclear-armed states. As more and more states acquire nuclear weapons, therefore, there are fewer states against which other states will be willing to wage war. The spread of nuclear weapons, according to Waltz, leads to greater levels of international stability. Looking to the empirical record, he argued that the introduction of nuclear weapons in 1945 coincided with an unprecedented period of peace among the great powers. While the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in many proxy wars in peripheral geographic regions during the Cold War, they never engaged in direct combat. And, despite regional scuffles involving nuclear-armed states in the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia, none of these conflicts resulted in a major theater war. This lid on the intensity of conflict, according to Waltz, was the direct result of the stabilizing effect of nuclear weapons. Following in the path blazed by the strategic thinkers reviewed above, Waltz argued that the requirements for deterrence are not high. He argued that, contrary to the behavior of the Cold War superpowers, a state need not build a large arsenal with multiple survivable delivery vehicles in order to deter its adversaries. Rather, he claimed that a few nuclear weapons are sufficient for deterrence. Indeed, he even went further, asserting that any state will be deterred even if it merely suspects its opponent might have a few nuclear weapons because the costs of getting it wrong are simply too high. Not even nuclear accident is a concern according to Waltz because leaders in nuclear-armed states understand that if they ever lost control of nuclear weapons, resulting in an accidental nuclear exchange, the nuclear retaliation they would suffer in response would be catastrophic. Nuclear-armed states, therefore, have strong incentives to maintain control of their nuclear weapons. Not even new nuclear states, without experience in managing nuclear arsenals, would ever allow nuclear weapons to be used or let them fall in the wrong hands. Following Waltz, many other scholars have advanced arguments in the proliferation optimist school. For example, Bruce Bueno de Mesquite and William Riker explore the “merits of selective nuclear proliferation.”[[2]](#footnote-2)[30] John Mearsheimer made the case for a “Ukrainian nuclear deterrent,” following the collapse of the Soviet Union.[[3]](#footnote-3)[31] In the run up to the 2003 Gulf War, John Mearsheimer and Steven Walt argued that we should not worry about a nuclear-armed Iraq because a nuclear-armed Iraq can be deterred.[[4]](#footnote-4)[32] And, in recent years, Barry Posen and many other realists have argued that nuclear proliferation in Iran does not pose a threat, again arguing that a nuclear-armed Iran can be deterred.[[5]](#footnote-5)[33] What’s Wrong with Proliferation Optimism? The proliferation optimist position, while having a distinguished pedigree, has several major problems. Many of these weaknesses have been chronicled in brilliant detail by Scott Sagan and other contemporary proliferation pessimists.[[6]](#footnote-6)[34] Rather than repeat these substantial efforts, I will use this section to offer some original critiques of the recent incarnations of proliferation optimism. First and foremost, proliferation optimists do not appear to understand contemporary deterrence theory. I do not say this lightly in an effort to marginalize or discredit my intellectual opponents. Rather, I make this claim with all due caution and with complete sincerity. A careful review of the contemporary proliferation optimism literature does not reflect an understanding of, or engagement with, the developments in academic deterrence theory in top scholarly journals such as the American Political Science Review and International Organization over the past few decades.[[7]](#footnote-7)[35] While early optimists like Viner and Brodie can be excused for not knowing better, the writings of contemporary proliferation optimists ignore the past fifty years of academic research on nuclear deterrence theory. In the 1940s, Viner, Brodie, and others argued that the advent of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) rendered war among major powers obsolete, but nuclear deterrence theory soon advanced beyond that simple understanding.[[8]](#footnote-8)[36] After all, great power political competition does not end with nuclear weapons. And nuclear-armed states still seek to threaten nuclear-armed adversaries. States cannot credibly threaten to launch a suicidal nuclear war, but they still want to coerce their adversaries. This leads to a credibility problem: how can states credibly threaten a nuclear-armed opponent? Since the 1960s academic nuclear deterrence theory has been devoted almost exclusively to answering this question.[[9]](#footnote-9)[37] And, unfortunately for proliferation optimists, the answers do not give us reasons to be optimistic. Thomas Schelling was the first to devise a rational means by which states can threaten nuclear-armed opponents.[[10]](#footnote-10)[38] He argued that leaders cannot credibly threaten to intentionally launch a suicidal nuclear war, but they can make a “threat that leaves something to chance.”[[11]](#footnote-11)[39] They can engage in a process, the nuclear crisis, which increases the risk of nuclear war in an attempt to force a less resolved adversary to back down. As states escalate a nuclear crisis there is an increasingprobability that the conflict will spiral out of control and result in an inadvertent or accidental nuclear exchange. As long as the benefit of winning the crisis is greater than the incremental increase in the risk of nuclear war, threats to escalate nuclear crises are inherently credible. In these games of nuclear brinkmanship, the state that is willing to run the greatest risk of nuclear war before back down will win the crisis as long as it does not end in catastrophe. It is for this reason that Thomas Schelling called great power politics in the nuclear era a “competition in risk taking.”[[12]](#footnote-12)[40] This does not mean that states eagerly bid up the risk of nuclear war. Rather, they face gut-wrenching decisions at each stage of the crisis. They can quit the crisis to avoid nuclear war, but only by ceding an important geopolitical issue to an opponent. Or they can the escalate the crisis in an attempt to prevail, but only at the risk of suffering a possible nuclear exchange. Since 1945 there were have been many high stakes nuclear crises (by my count, there have been twenty) in which “rational” states like the United States run a risk of nuclear war and inch very close to the brink of nuclear war.[[13]](#footnote-13)[41] By asking whether states can be deterred or not, therefore, proliferation optimists are asking the wrong question. The right question to ask is: what risk of nuclear war is a specific state willing to run against a particular opponent in a given crisis? Optimists are likely correct when they assert that Iran will not intentionally commit national suicide by launching a bolt-from-the-blue nuclear attack on the United States or Israel. This does not mean that Iran will never use nuclear weapons, however. Indeed, it is almost inconceivable to think that a nuclear-armed Iran would not, at some point, find itself in a crisis with another nuclear-armed power and that it would not be willing to run any risk of nuclear war in order to achieve its objectives. If a nuclear-armed Iran and the United States or Israel have a geopolitical conflict in the future, over say the internal politics of Syria, an Israeli conflict with Iran’s client Hezbollah, the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf, passage through the Strait of Hormuz, or some other issue, do we believe that Iran would immediately capitulate? Or is it possible that Iran would push back, possibly even brandishing nuclear weapons in an attempt to deter its adversaries? If the latter, there is a real risk that proliferation to Iran could result in nuclear war. An optimist might counter that nuclear weapons will never be used, even in a crisis situation, because states have such a strong incentive, namely national survival, to ensure that nuclear weapons are not used. But, this objection ignores the fact that leaders operate under competing pressures. Leaders in nuclear-armed states also have very strong incentives to convince their adversaries that nuclear weapons could very well be used. Historically we have seen that in crises, leaders purposely do things like put nuclear weapons on high alert and delegate nuclear launch authority to low level commanders, purposely increasing the risk of accidental nuclear war in an attempt to force less-resolved opponents to back down. Moreover, not even the optimists’ first principles about the irrelevance of nuclear posture stand up to scrutiny. Not all nuclear wars would be equally devastating.[[14]](#footnote-14)[42] Any nuclear exchange would have devastating consequences no doubt, but, if a crisis were to spiral out of control and result in nuclear war, any sane leader would rather be facing a country with five nuclear weapons than one with thirty-five thousand. Similarly, any sane leader would be willing to run a greater risk of nuclear war against the former state than against the latter. Indeed, systematic research has demonstrated that states are willing to run greater risks and, therefore, more likely to win nuclear crises when they enjoy nuclear superiority over their opponent.[[15]](#footnote-15)[43] Proliferation optimists miss this point, however, because they are still mired in 1940s deterrence theory. It is true that no rational leader would choose to launch a nuclear war, but, depending on the context, she would almost certainly be willing to risk one. Nuclear deterrence theorists have proposed a second scenario under which rational leaders could instigate a nuclear exchange: a limited nuclear war.[[16]](#footnote-16)[44] By launching a single nuclear weapon against a small city, for example, it was thought that a nuclear-armed state could signal its willingness to escalate the crisis, while leaving its adversary with enough left to lose to deter the adversary from launching a full-scale nuclear response. In a future crisis between a nuclear-armed China and the United States over Taiwan, for example, China could choose to launch a nuclear attack on Honolulu to demonstrate its seriousness. In that situation, with the continental United States intact, would Washington choose to launch a full-scale nuclear war on China that could result in the destruction of many more American cities? Or would it back down? China might decide to strike hoping that Washington will choose a humiliating retreat over a full-scale nuclear war. If launching a limited nuclear war could be rational, it follows that the spread of nuclear weapons increases the risk of nuclear use. Again, by ignoring contemporary developments in scholarly discourse and relying exclusively on understandings of nuclear deterrence theory that became obsolete decades ago, optimists reveal the shortcomings of their analysis and fail to make a compelling case. The optimists also error by confusing stability for the national interest. Even if the spread of nuclear weapons contributes to greater levels of international stability (which discussions above and below suggest it might not) it does not necessarily follow that the spread of nuclear weapons is in the U.S. interest. There might be other national goals that trump stability, such as reducing to zero the risk of nuclear war in an important geopolitical region. Optimists might argue that South Asia is more stable when India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, but certainly the risk of nuclear war is higher than if there were no nuclear weapons on the subcontinent. In addition, it is wrong to assume that stability is always in the national interest. Sometimes it is, but sometimes it is not. If stability is obtained because Washington is deterred from using force against a nuclear-armed adversary in a situation where using force could have advanced national goals, stability harms, rather than advances, U.S. national interests. The final gaping weakness in the proliferation optimist argument, however, is that it rests on a logical contradiction. This is particularly ironic, given that many optimists like to portray themselves as hard-headed thinkers, following their premises to their logical conclusions. But, the contradiction at the heart of the optimist argument is glaring and simple to understand: either the probability of nuclear war is zero, or it is nonzero, but it cannot be both. If the probability of nuclear war is zero, then nuclear weapons should have no deterrent effect. States will not be deterred by a nuclear war that could never occur and states should be willing to intentionally launch large-scale wars against nuclear-armed states. In this case, proliferation optimists cannot conclude that the spread of nuclear weapons is stabilizing. If, on the other hand, the probability of nuclear war is nonzero, then there is a real danger that the spread of nuclear weapons increases the probability of a catastrophic nuclear war. If this is true, then proliferation optimists cannot be certain that nuclear weapons will never be used. In sum, the spread of nuclear weapons can either raise the risk of nuclear war and in so doing, deter large-scale conventional conflict. Or there is no danger that nuclear weapons will be used and the spread of nuclear weapons does not increase international instability. But, despite the claims of the proliferation optimists, it is nonsensical to argue that nuclear weapons will never be used and to simultaneously claim that their spread contributes to international stability. Proliferation Anti-obsessionists: Other scholars, who I label “anti-obsessionists” argue that the spread of nuclear weapons has neither been good nor bad for international politics, but rather irrelevant. They argue that academics and policymakers concerned about nuclear proliferation spend too much time and energy obsessing over something, nuclear weapons, that, at the end of the day, are not all that important. In Atomic Obsession, John Mueller argues that widespread fears about the threat of nuclear weapons are overblown.[[17]](#footnote-17)[45] He acknowledges that policymakers and experts have often worried that the spread of nuclear weapons could lead to nuclear war, nuclear terrorism and cascades of nuclear proliferation, but he then sets about systematically dismantling each of these fears. Rather, he contends that nuclear weapons have had little effect on the conduct of international diplomacy and that world history would have been roughly the same had nuclear weapons never been invented. Finally, Mueller concludes by arguing that the real problem is not nuclear proliferation, but nuclear nonproliferation policy because states do harmful things in the name of nonproliferation, like take military action and deny countries access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Similarly, Ward Wilson argues that, despite the belief held by optimists and pessimists alike, nuclear weapons are not useful tools of deterrence.[[18]](#footnote-18)[46] In his study of the end of World War II, for example, Wilson argues that it was not the U.S. use of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki that forced Japanese surrender, but a variety of other factors, including the Soviet Union’s decision to enter the war. If the actual use of nuclear weapons was not enough to convince a country to capitulate to its opponent he argues, then there is little reason to think that the mere threat of nuclear use has been important to keeping the peace over the past half century. Leaders of nuclear-armed states justify nuclear possession by touting their deterrent benefits, but if nuclear weapons have no deterrent value, there is no reason, Ward claims, not to simply get rid of them. Finally, Anne Harrington de Santana argues that nuclear experts “fetishize” nuclear weapons.[[19]](#footnote-19)[47] Just like capitalists, according to Karl Marx, bestow magical qualities on money, thus fetishizing it, she argues that leaders and national security experts do the same thing to nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence as a critical component of national security strategy, according to Harrington de Santana, is not inherent in the technology of nuclear weapons themselves, but is rather the result of how leaders in countries around the world think about them. In short, she argues, “Nuclear weapons are powerful because we treat them as powerful.”[[20]](#footnote-20)[48] But, she maintains, we could just as easily “defetish” them, treating them as unimportant and, therefore, rendering them obsolete. She concludes that “Perhaps some day, the deactivated nuclear weapons on display in museums across the United States will be nothing more than a reminder of how powerful nuclear weapons used to be.”[[21]](#footnote-21)[49] The anti-obsessionists make some thought-provoking points and may help to reign in some of the most hyperbolic accounts of the effect of nuclear proliferation. They remind us, for example, that our worst fears have not been realized, at least not yet. Yet, by taking the next step and arguing that nuclear weapons have been, and will continue to be, irrelevant, they go too far. Their arguments call to mind the story about the man who jumps to his death from the top of a New York City skyscraper and, when asked how things are going as he passes the 15th story window, replies, “so far so good.” The idea that world history would have been largely unchanged had nuclear weapons not been invented is a provocative one, but it is also unfalsifiable. There is good reason to believe that world history would have been different, and in many ways better, had certain countries not acquired nuclear weapons. Let’s take Pakistan as an example. Pakistan officially joined the ranks of the nuclear powers in May 1998 when it followed India in conducting a series of nuclear tests. Since then, Pakistan has been a poster child for the possible negative consequences of nuclear proliferation. Pakistan’s nuclear weapons have led to further nuclear proliferation as Pakistan, with the help of rogue scientist A.Q. Khan, transferred uranium enrichment technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea.[[22]](#footnote-22)[50] Indeed, part of the reason that North Korea and Iran are so far along with their uranium enrichment programs is because they got help from Pakistan. Pakistan has also become more aggressive since acquiring nuclear weapons, displaying an increased willingness to sponsor cross-border incursions into India with terrorists and irregular forces.[[23]](#footnote-23)[51] In a number of high-stakes nuclear crises between India and Pakistan, U.S. officials worried that the conflicts could escalate to a nuclear exchange and intervened diplomatically to prevent Armageddon on the subcontinent. The U.S. government also worries about the safety and security of Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal, fearing that Pakistan’s nukes could fall into the hands of terrorists in the event of a state collapse or a break down in nuclear security. And we still have not witnessed the full range of consequences arising from Pakistani nuclear proliferation. Islamabad has only possessed the bomb for a little over a decade, but they are likely to keep it for decades to come, meaning that we could still have a nuclear war involving Pakistan. In short, Pakistan’s nuclear capability has already had deleterious effects on U.S. national security and these threats are only likely to grow over time. In addition, the anti-obsessionists are incorrect to argue that the cure of U.S. nuclear nonproliferation policy is worse than the disease of proliferation. Many observers would agree with Mueller that the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 was a disaster, costing much in the way of blood and treasure and offering little strategic benefit. But the Iraq War is hardly representative of U.S. nonproliferation policy. For the most part, nonproliferation policy operates in the mundane realm of legal frameworks, negotiations, inspections, sanctions, and a variety of other tools. Even occasional preventive military strikes on nuclear facilities have been far less calamitous than the Iraq War. Indeed, the Israeli strikes on nuclear reactors in Iraq and Syria in 1981 and 2007, respectively, produced no meaningful military retaliation and a muted international response. Moreover, the idea that the Iraq War was primarily about nuclear nonproliferation is a contestable one, with Saddam Hussein’s history of aggression, the unsustainability of maintaining the pre-war containment regime indefinitely, Saddam’s ties to terrorist groups, his past possession and use of chemical and biological weapons, and the window of opportunity created by September 11th, all serving as possible prompts for U.S. military action in the Spring of 2003. The claim that nonproliferation policy is dangerous because it denies developing countries access to nuclear energy also rests on shaky ground. If anything, the global nonproliferation regime has, on balance, increased access to nuclear technology. Does anyone really believe that countries like Algeria, Congo, and Vietnam would have nuclear reactors today were it not for Atoms for Peace, Article IV of the NPT, and other appendages of the nonproliferation regime that have provided developing states with nuclear technology in exchange for promises to forgo nuclear weapons development? Moreover, the sensitive fuel-cycle technology denied by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and other supply control regimes is not even necessary to the development of a vibrant nuclear energy program as the many countries that have fuel-cycle services provided by foreign nuclear suppliers clearly demonstrate. Finally, the notion that nuclear energy is somehow the key to lifting developing countries from third to first world status does not pass the laugh test. Given the large upfront investments, the cost of back-end fuel management and storage, and the ever-present danger of environmental catastrophe exemplified most recently by the Fukushima disaster in Japan, many argue that nuclear energy is not a cost-effective source of energy (if all the externalities are taken into account) for any country, not to mention those developing states least able to manage these myriad challenges. Taken together, therefore, the argument that nuclear nonproliferation policy is more dangerous than the consequences of nuclear proliferation, including possible nuclear war, is untenable. Indeed, it would certainly come as a surprise to the mild mannered diplomats and scientists who staff the International Atomic Energy Agency, the global focal point of the nuclear nonproliferation regime, located in Vienna, Austria. The anti-obsessionsists, like the optimists, also walk themselves into logical contradictions. In this case, their policy recommendations do not necessarily follow from their analyses. Ward argues that nuclear weapons are irrelevant and, therefore, we should eliminate them.[[24]](#footnote-24)[52] But, if nuclear weapons are really so irrelevant, why not just keep them lying around? They will not cause any problems if they are as meaningless as anti-obsessionists claim and it is certainly more cost effective to do nothing than to negotiate complicated international treaties and dismantle thousands of warheads, delivery vehicles, and their associated facilities. Finally, the idea that nuclear weapons are only important because we think they are powerful is arresting, but false. There are properties inherent in nuclear weapons that can be used to create military effects that simply cannot, at least not yet, be replicated with conventional munitions. If a military planner wants to quickly destroy a city on the other side of the planet, his only option today is a nuclear weapon mounted on an ICBM. Therefore, if the collective “we” suddenly decided to “defetishize” nuclear weapons by treating them as unimportant, it is implausible that some leader somewhere would not independently come to the idea that nuclear weapons could advance his or her country’s national security and thereby re-fetishize them. In short, the optimists and anti-obsessionists have brought an important perspective to the nonproliferation debate. Their arguments are provocative and they raise the bar for those who wish to argue that the spread of nuclear weapons is indeed a problem. Nevertheless, their counterintuitive arguments are not enough to wish away the enormous security challenges posed by the spread of the world’s most dangerous weapons. These myriad threats will be considered in the next section. Why Nuclear Proliferation Is a Problem The spread of nuclear weapons poses a number of severe threats to international peace and U.S. national security including: nuclear war, nuclear terrorism, emboldened nuclear powers, constrained freedom of action, weakened alliances, and further nuclear proliferation. This section explores each of these threats in turn. Nuclear War. The greatest threat posed by the spread of nuclear weapons is nuclear war. The more states in possession of nuclear weapons, the greater the probability that somewhere, someday, there is a catastrophic nuclear war. A nuclear exchange between the two superpowers during the Cold War could have arguably resulted in human extinction and a nuclear exchange between states with smaller nuclear arsenals, such as India and Pakistan, could still result in millions of deaths and casualties, billions of dollars of economic devastation, environmental degradation, and a parade of other horrors. To date, nuclear weapons have only been used in warfare once. In 1945, the United States used one nuclear weapon each on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bringing World War II to a close. Many analysts point to sixty-five-plus-year tradition of nuclear non-use as evidence that nuclear weapons are unusable, but it would be naïve to think that nuclear weapons will never be used again. After all, analysts in the 1990s argued that worldwide economic downturns like the great depression were a thing of the past, only to be surprised by the dot-com bubble bursting in the later 1990s and the Great Recession of the late Naughts.[[25]](#footnote-25)[53] This author, for one, would be surprised if nuclear weapons are not used in my lifetime. Before reaching a state of MAD, new nuclear states go through a transition period in which they lack a secure-second strike capability. In this context, one or both states might believe that it has an incentive to use nuclear weapons first. For example, if Iran acquires nuclear weapons neither Iran, nor its nuclear-armed rival, Israel, will have a secure, second-strike capability. Even though it is believed to have a large arsenal, given its small size and lack of strategic depth, Israel might not be confident that it could absorb a nuclear strike and respond with a devastating counterstrike. Similarly, Iran might eventually be able to build a large and survivable nuclear arsenal, but, when it first crosses the nuclear threshold, Tehran will have a small and vulnerable nuclear force. In these pre-MAD situations, there are at least three ways that nuclear war could occur. First, the state with the nuclear advantage might believe it has a splendid first strike capability. In a crisis, Israel might, therefore, decide to launch a preemptive nuclear strike to disarm Iran’s nuclear capabilities and eliminate the threat of nuclear war against Israel. Indeed, this incentive might be further increased by Israel’s aggressive strategic culture that emphasizes preemptive action. Second, the state with a small and vulnerable nuclear arsenal, in this case Iran, might feel use ‘em or loose ‘em pressures. That is, if Tehran believes that Israel might launch a preemptive strike, Iran might decide to strike first rather than risk having its entire nuclear arsenal destroyed. Third, as Thomas Schelling has argued, nuclear war could result due to the reciprocal fear of surprise attack.[[26]](#footnote-26)[54] If there are advantages to striking first, one state might start a nuclear war in the belief that war is inevitable and that it would be better to go first than to go second. In a future Israeli-Iranian crisis, for example, Israel and Iran might both prefer to avoid a nuclear war, but decide to strike first rather than suffer a devastating first attack from an opponent. Even in a world of MAD, there is a risk of nuclear war. Rational deterrence theory assumes nuclear-armed states are governed by rational leaders that would not intentionally launch a suicidal nuclear war. This assumption appears to have applied to past and current nuclear powers, but there is no guarantee that it will continue to hold in the future. For example, Iran’s theocratic government, despite its inflammatory rhetoric, has followed a fairly pragmatic foreign policy since 1979, but it contains leaders who genuinely hold millenarian religious worldviews who could one day ascend to power and have their finger on the nuclear trigger. We cannot rule out the possibility that, as nuclear weapons continue to spread, one leader will choose to launch a nuclear war, knowing full well that it could result in self-destruction. One does not need to resort to irrationality, however, to imagine a nuclear war under MAD. Nuclear weapons may deter leaders from intentionally launching full-scale wars, but they do not mean the end of international politics. As was discussed above, nuclear-armed states still have conflicts of interest and leaders still seek to coerce nuclear-armed adversaries. This leads to the credibility problem that is at the heart of modern deterrence theory: how can you threaten to launch a suicidal nuclear war? Deterrence theorists have devised at least two answers to this question. First, as stated above, leaders can choose to launch a limited nuclear war.[[27]](#footnote-27)[55] This strategy might be especially attractive to states in a position of conventional military inferiority that might have an incentive to escalate a crisis quickly. During the Cold War, the United States was willing to use nuclear weapons first to stop a Soviet invasion of Western Europe given NATO’s conventional inferiority in continental Europe. As Russia’s conventional military power has deteriorated since the end of the Cold War, Moscow has come to rely more heavily on nuclear use in its strategic doctrine. Indeed, Russian strategy calls for the use of nuclear weapons early in a conflict (something that most Western strategists would consider to be escalatory) as a way to de-escalate a crisis. Similarly, Pakistan’s military plans for nuclear use in the event of an invasion from conventionally stronger India. And finally, Chinese generals openly talk about the possibility of nuclear use against a U.S. superpower in a possible East Asia contingency. Second, as was also discussed above leaders can make a “threat that leaves something to chance.”[[28]](#footnote-28)[56] They can initiate a nuclear crisis. By playing these risky games of nuclear brinkmanship, states can increases the risk of nuclear war in an attempt to force a less resolved adversary to back down. Historical crises have not resulted in nuclear war, but many of them, including the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, have come close. And scholars have documented historical incidents when accidents could have led to war.[[29]](#footnote-29)[57] When we think about future nuclear crisis dyads, such as India and Pakistan and Iran and Israel, there are fewer sources of stability that existed during the Cold War, meaning that there is a very real risk that a future Middle East crisis could result in a devastating nuclear exchange.

#### Global interest makes industry expansion dangerous now

Banks and Ebinger, 11 [John P, Charles K, John is a fellow with the Energy Security Initiative at the Brookings Institution, Charles is senior fellow and director of the Energy Security Initiative at the Brookings Institution, “Introduction: Planning a Responsible Nuclear Future” in “Business and Nonproliferation”, p. googlebooks]

Nuclear energy is a twentieth-century innovation but until recently has not spread beyond a relatively small number 0F industrialized nations (see maps on pages 4 5). All this is about to change. With global electricity demand increasing dramatically, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy security becoming national priorities, developed and developing countries alike are reexamining nuclear energy as a means of providing a reliable E scalable source of low-carbon power. The International Energy Agency (IEA) projects that global electricity demand will increase 2.2 percent a year to 2035, with about 80 percent of that growth occurring in emerging economies outside the Organization for Economic Cooperation £ Development (OECD).' Even if new policy initiatives are introduced to lower carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions Q combat global climate change, global energy-related CO2 emissions are expected to increase 21 percent between 2008 2035.1 Emerging market economies account For all of this projected increase in emissions. In the face of rising prices and increasing volatility in the oil market, many of these economies have shifted their attention to nuclear energy as a means of reducing dependence on oil (often a major source of their power generation), improving their balance of payments, and bolstering national energy security.’ Currently, 440 reactors with a total capacity of 375 gigawatts (G\Wc) arc in operation worlclwicle.\* As of March 2011, 65 nuclear reactor units, with a total capacity of 63 G\Ve, are under construction.5 As of April 2011, 158 projects are also on order or planned and 326 proposed." These preparations For replacing or expanding reactor ﬂeets Q For new entries to the marketplace follow a decades-long lull in construction suggest a “nuclear renaissance” has begun. \Y/hile “renaissance” implies a revival or return to a better time. the global expansion of nuclear energy in the coming decades will differ in several resects from the way civilian nuclear power developed between the late 1950s mid-19805. First, the scope and pace of this new deployment could be signiﬁcantly larger than in previous periods of expansion: some recent analyses put installed nuclear capacity up at 550—850 G\Ve by 2035. depending on assumptions about the implementation of low-carbon energy policiesf In IEA projections, a 50 per- cent cut in energy-related CO, emissions by 2050 would require global capacity to reach 1,200 G\Ve, a net addition of 30 G\Ve each year over the next forty years.“ To put this ﬁgure into perspective, during the period of nuclear p0wer’s most rapid expansion (1981-90). capacity increased by only 20 G\Ve a year, slowing to an annual average of 4 G\X/e from 1991 to 2006." To achieve large- scale reductions in energy—related CO: emissions, nuclear capacity must there- lore grow not only faster but also For several decades longer than during nuclear energy's previous “golden age." (As the preface indicates, safety concerns arising in the aftermath ofthe Fukushima accident will slow or scale back nuclear power expansion globally in the short term. At the same time, the longer-term impact of Fukushima on global nuclear power expansion will be less adverse, especially in emerging market countries.) Also different today is the number of countries seeking to build their ﬁrst nuclear power reactor. Some sixty-ﬁve countries have expressed interest in or are actively planning for nuclear power."' As the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) points out, however, most of these countries are merely “con- sidering” the range of issues involved in nuclear power development. Many of them cannot realistically afford the large costs associated with civilian nuclear power programs. According to some analyses, countries with a GDP ofless than $50 billion could not spend several billion dollars building a reactor." ln addi- tion, many aspirant countries still lack the electricity grids required For nuclear power: electricity systems with a capacity below l0 G\Ve are unlikely to be able to accommodate a nuclear reactor.“ Some countries could address this issue by expanding electricity interconnections with neighboring states or developing ower export arrangements; however, these alternatives are not widely available in any case would take time to implement. At the same time, a number of countries have credible plans to become new nuclear energy states (NNES). The IAEA has indicated that ten to twenty-ﬁve countries might begin operating their ﬁrst plants by 2030, whereas since Cher- nobyl only thrce—China, Mexico, Romania—havc brought nuclear plants online for the ﬁrst time.” The following list shows the stages of progress of eleven emerging market countries in their ellorts to develop a civilian nuclear energy programz“ —Power reactors under construction: Iran.“ —Contracts signed, legal regulatory infrastructure well developed: United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey. —Committed plans, legal Q regulatory infrastructure developing: Vietnam, jordan. —\Well-developed plans but commitment pending: Thailand. Indonesia. Egypt, Kazakhstan. —Developing plans: Saudi Arabia, Malaysia. Emerging market nations entertaining the construction of new nuclear power capacity lace several critical issues. Domestically, each must establish strong institutions and viable regulatory frameworks addressing health, safety, prolif- eration, environmental concerns while ensuring that adequate human ﬁnancial resources are available for these tasks. Even if a state is willing to buy a nuclear reactor on a “turnkey” basis (paying For an outside operator to build Q run the system), it must still train its own nationals in these various respects Q establish a strong academic industrial culture in all aspects of commercial nuclear operations in order to achieve a sound, sustainable program. The NNES will need to build these capabilities in a sufficient timely manner. New States One of the biggest challenges in any expansion of the civilian nuclear sector is that of maintaining and strengthening the global regime for nuclear proliferation. The changing geopolitical J security environment, combined with the political instability of many regions countries that aspire to develop civilian nuclear reactor technology, has already raised proliferation concerns. Nuclear power reactors could become attractive targets for terrorists, who might also seek access to ﬁssile material for radiological dispersal devices (“dirty bombs”) or for nuclear weapons. With such materials more widely available, the proliferation risks could mount. As commercial enrichment and recycling programs multiply, countries may be tempted also to develop latent nuclear weapons capabilities, especially if they aspire to attain regional predominance, international standing, or the capabilities of regional rivals. An expansion of nuclear energy could further tax an already stressed proliferation regime. In light ofArticle IV of the Nuclear Treaty (NPT), wl1icl1 states that the treat shall not aﬁect the “inalienable right . . . to develop research, production duse of nuclear energy For peaceful purposes without discrimination . . . the right to partici ate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials H scientiﬁc ii technological information For the peaceful uses olinuclear energy, ” some nations are considering acquisition of fuel cycle capabilities as a way to avoid further dependence on foreign suppliers when they develop nuclear power.“ The NPT contains no provisions to restrict acquisition of such capabilities, although members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (a voluntary group of nations that restricts nuclear exports) have long practiced restraint on technology transfers of sensitive components of the Fuel cycle. A sharp increase in the demand for nuclear fuel could enhance the commercial attractiveness of uranium enrichment reprocessing, enticing new entrants into the market." Nations with large uranium resources might seek to add value to their uranium exports by moving further up the chain of produc- tion or by expanding current capabilities (Australia, Canada, Kazakhstan, South Africa have all discussed this option recently). Even if the high cost of Fuel cycle activities proves to be a disincentive to their development, the NNES— especially in emerging markets—may consider Fuel supply security exercis- ing sovereign rights under Article IV of the NPT more relevant than economic drivers in their decisions about enrichment or reprocessing.“ With governments playing an increasing role in securing and meeting nuclear contracts, political motivations might also enter into assessments of the nuclear capabilities neces- sary for recipient countries. The great danger in the race to build out new capacity is that some new players may not take proliferation concerns as seriously as existing service providers. To address these issues, there has been a reinvigorated discussion of multilat- eral nuclear approaches (MN/\s). M NAs establish a framework to safeguard Arti- cle IV rights, speciﬁcally by limiting the diffusion ofsensitive nuclear materials E technologies while concurrently guaranteeing long-term supply of nuclear fuel to civilian nuclear power programs. Some steps in this direction include two recently approved fuel banks: the Russian-backed lnternational Uranium Enrich- ment Center in Angarsk the ME/\ Nuclear Threat Initiative Fuel Bank.” The institutional challenges to the regime are compounded both by the actions of rogue states such as Iran’s clandestine nuclear program and North Korea’s nuclear weapons testing Q new uranium enrichment pro- gram, Q by non-state activities such as the operations ofblack market nuclear networks arranged by Pakistani scientist A. Khan. Conﬁdence in the regime’s ability to respond to resolve proliferation threats has thus fallen. New technologies may put further stress on the system. Particularly worrying are the expansion of centrifuge technology, commercialization of the laser enrichment process, development and deployment of next-generation reprocessing techniques that require advanced safeguards, and the potential spread of fast reactors. Although the impact of these dynamics is tlifﬁcult to foresee, the proliferation regime needs to keep pace with the rapidly changing, complex nuclear market, especially those developments activities that facilitate the expansion of uranium enrichment and spent fuel reprocessing. This is a major challenge for a regime already under stress.

#### IFR restores leadership – 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)

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.

#### Plan creates a prolif-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.”

### warming

#### It’s happening—this card is long

**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, 17.2, EBSCO]

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 Litde Ice Age in the 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, the 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 thawed, damaging the Inuit villages on the Arctic coast and threatening all our pipelines to the 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 0.1-0.2 mm/year that has occurred over the past 3000 years. Geological data show that the 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 the 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 low-elevation 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. Climate Change Critic's Arguments and Scientists' Rebuttals Despite the overwhelming evidence there are many people who remain skeptical. One reason is that they have been fed distortions and misstatements by the global warming denialists who cloud or confuse the issue. Let's examine some of these claims in detail: \* "It's just natural climatic variability." No, it is not. As I detailed in my 2009 book, Greenhouse of the Dinosaurs, geologists and paleoclimatologists know a lot about past greenhouse worlds, and the icehouse planet that has existed for the past 33 million years. We have a good understanding of how and why the Antarctic ice sheet first appeared at that time, and how the Arctic froze over about 3.5 million years ago, beginning the 24 glacial and interglacial episodes of the "Ice Ages" that have occurred since then. We know how variations in the earth's orbit (the Milankovitch cycles) controls the amount of solar radiation the earth receives, triggering the shifts between glacial and interglacial periods. Our current warm interglacial has already lasted 10,000 years, the duration of most previous interglacials, so if it were not for global warming, we would be headed into the next glacial in the next 1000 years or so. Instead, our pumping greenhouse gases into our atmosphere after they were long trapped in the earth's crust has pushed the planet into a "super-interglacial," already warmer than any previous warming period. We can see the "big picture" of climate variability most clearly in ice cores from the EPICA (European Project for Ice Coring in Antarctica), which show the details of the last 650,000 years of glacial-inters glacial cycles (Fig. 2). At no time during any previous interglacial did the carbon dioxide levels exceed 300 ppm, even at their very warmest. Our atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are already close to 400 ppm today. The atmosphere is headed to 600 ppm within a few decades, even if we stopped releasing greenhouse gases immediately. This is decidedly not within the normal range of "climatic variability," but clearly unprecedented in human history. Anyone who says this is "normal variability" has never seen the huge amount of paleoclimatic data that show otherwise. \* "It's just another warming episode, like the Medieval Warm Period, or the Holocene Climatic Optimum or the end of the Little Ice Age." Untrue. There were numerous small fluctuations of warming and cooling over the last 10,000 years of the Holocene. But in the case of the Medieval Warm Period (about 950-1250 A.D.), the temperatures increased only 1°C, much less than we have seen in the current episode of global warming (Fig. 1). This episode was also only a local warming in the North Atlantic and northern Europe. Global temperatures over this interval did not warm at all, and actually cooled by more than 1°C. Likewise, the warmest period of the last 10,000 years was the Holocene Climatic Optimum ( 5,000-9,000 B.C.E.) when warmer and wetter conditions in Eurasia contributed to the rise of the first great civilizations in Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, and China. This was largely a Northern Hemisphere-Eurasian phenomenon, with 2-3°C warming in the Arctic and northern Europe. But there was almost no warming in the tropics, and cooling or no change in the Southern Hemisphere.[ 8] From a Eurocentric viewpoint, these warming events seemed important, but on a global scale the effect was negligible. In addition, neither of these warming episodes is related to increasing greenhouse gases. The Holocene Climatic Optimum, in fact, is predicted by the Milankovitch cycles, since at that time the axial tilt of the earth was 24°, its steepest value, meaning the Northern Hemisphere got more solar radiation than normal -- but the Southern Hemisphere less, so the two balanced. By contrast, not only is the warming observed in the last 200 years much greater than during these previous episodes, but it is also global and bipolar, so it is not a purely local effect. The warming that ended the Little Ice Age (from the mid-1700s to the late 1800s) was due to increased solar radiation prior to 1940. Since 1940, however, the amount of solar radiation has been dropping, so the only candidate remaining for the post-1940 warming is carbon dioxide.[ 9] "It's just the sun, or cosmic rays, or volcanic activity or methane." Nope, sorry. The amount of heat that the sun provides has been decreasing since 1940,[ 10] just the opposite of the critics' claims (Fig. 3). There is no evidence of an increase in cosmic ray particles during the past century.[ 11] Nor is there any clear evidence that large-scale volcanic events (such as the 1815 eruption of Tambora in Indonesia, which changed global climate for about a year) have any long-term effects that would explain 200 years of warming and carbon dioxide increase. Volcanoes erupt only 0.3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide each year, but humans emit over 29 billion tonnes a year,[ 12] roughly 100 times as much. Clearly, we have a bigger effect. Methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas, but there is 200 times more carbon dioxide than methane, so carbon dioxide is still the most important agent.[ 13] Every other alternative has been looked at and can be ruled out. The only clear-cut relationship is between human-caused carbon dioxide increase and global warming. \* "The climate records since 1995 (or 1998) show cooling." That's simply untrue. The only way to support this argument is to cherry-pick the data.[ 14] Over the short term, there was a slight cooling trend from 1998-2000, but only because 1998 was a record-breaking El Nino year, so the next few years look cooler by comparison (Fig. 4). But since 2002, the overall long-term trend of warming is unequivocal. All of the 16 hottest years ever recorded on a global scale have occurred in the last 20 years. They are (in order of hottest first): 2010, 2009, 1998, 2005, 2003, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2001, 1997, 2008, 1995, 1999, 1990, and 2000.[ 15] In other words, every year since 2000 has been on the Top Ten hottest years list. The rest of the top 16 include 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000. Only 1996 failed to make the list (because of the short-term cooling mentioned already). \* "We had record snows in the winter of 2009-2010, and also in 2010-2011." So what? This is nothing more than the difference between weather (short-term seasonal changes) and climate (the long-term average of weather over decades and centuries and longer). Our local weather tells us nothing about another continent, or the global average; it is only a local effect, determined by short-term atmospheric and oceano-graphic conditions.[ 16] In fact, warmer global temperatures mean more moisture in the atmosphere, which increases the intensity of normal winter snowstorms. In this particular case, the climate change critics forget that the early winter of November-December 2009 was actually very mild and warm, and then only later in January and February did it get cold and snow heavily. That warm spell in early winter helped bring more moisture into the system, so that when cold weather occurred, the snows were worse. In addition, the snows were unusually heavy only in North America; the rest of the world had different weather, and the global climate was warmer than average. Also, the summer of 2010 was the hottest on record, breaking the previous record set in 2009. \* "Carbon dioxide is good for plants, so the world will be better off." Who do they think they're kidding? The Competitive Enterprise Institute (funded by oil and coal companies and conservative foundations[ 17]) has run a series of shockingly stupid ads concluding with the tag line "Carbon dioxide: they call it pollution, we call it life." Anyone who knows the basic science of earth's atmosphere can spot the gross inaccuracies in this ad.[ 18] True, plants take in carbon dioxide that animals exhale, as they have for millions of years. But the whole point of the global warming evidence (as shown from ice cores) is that the delicate natural balance of carbon dioxide has been thrown off balance by our production of too much of it, way in excess of what plants or the oceans can handle. As a consequence, the oceans are warming[ 19, 20] and absorbing excess carbon dioxide making them more acidic. Already we are seeing a shocking decline in coral reefs ("bleaching") and extinctions in many marine ecosystems that can't handle too much of a good thing. Meanwhile, humans are busy cutting down huge areas of temperate and tropical forests, which not only means there are fewer plants to absorb the gas, but the slash and burn practices are releasing more carbon dioxide than plants can keep up with. There is much debate as to whether increased carbon dioxide might help agriculture in some parts of the world, but that has to be measured against the fact that other traditional "breadbasket" regions (such as the American Great Plains) are expected to get too hot to be as productive as they are today. The latest research[ 21] actually shows that increased carbon dioxide inhibits the absorption of nitrogen into plants, so plants (at least those that we depend upon today) are not going to flourish in a greenhouse world. It is difficult to know if those who tell the public otherwise are ignorant of basic atmospheric science and global geochemistry, or if they are being cynically disingenuous. \* "I agree that climate is changing, but I'm skeptical that humans are the main cause, so we shouldn't do anything." This is just fence sitting. A lot of reasonable skeptics deplore the right wing's rejection of the reality of climate change, but still want to be skeptical about the cause. If they want proof, they can examine the huge array of data that points directly to human caused global warming.[ 22] We can directly measure the amount of carbon dioxide humans are producing, and it tracks exactly with the amount of increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide. Through carbon isotope analysis, we can show that this carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is coming directly from our burning of fossil fuels, not from natural sources. We can also measure the drop in oxygen as it combines with the increased carbon levels to produce carbon dioxide. We have satellites in space that are measuring the heat released from the planet and can actually see the atmosphere getting warmer. The most crucial evidence emerged only within the past few years: climate models of the greenhouse effect predict that there should be cooling in the stratosphere (the upper layer of the atmosphere above 10 km or 6 miles in elevation), but warming in the troposphere (the bottom layer below 10 km or 6 miles), and that's exactly what our space probes have measured. Finally, we can rule out any other suspects (see above): solar heat is decreasing since 1940, not increasing, and there are no measurable increases in cosmic rays, methane, volcanic gases, or any other potential cause. Face it -- it's our problem. Why Do People Continue to Question the Reality of Climate Change? Thanks to all the noise and confusion over climate change, the general public has only a vague idea of what the debate is really about, and only about half of Americans think global warming is real or that we are to blame.[ 23] As in the evolution/creationism debate, the scientific community is virtually unanimous on what the data demonstrate about anthropogenic global warming. This has been true for over a decade. When science historian Naomi Oreskes[ 24] surveyed all peer-reviewed papers on climate change published between 1993 and 2003 in the world's leading scientific journal, Science, she found that there were 980 supporting the idea of human-induced global warming and none opposing it. In 2009, Doran and Kendall Zimmerman[ 25] surveyed all the climate scientists who were familiar with the data. They found that 95-99% agreed that global warming is real and human caused. In 2010, the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences published a study that showed that 98% of the scientists who actually do research in climate change are in agreement over anthropogenic global warming.[ 26] Every major scientific organization in the world has endorsed the conclusion of anthropogenic climate change as well. This is a rare degree of agreement within such an independent and cantankerous group as the world's top scientists. This is the same degree of scientific consensus that scientists have achieved over most major ideas, including gravity, evolution, and relativity. These and only a few other topics in science can claim this degree of agreement among nearly all the world's leading scientists, especially among everyone who is close to the scientific data and knows the problem intimately. If it were not such a controversial topic politically, there would be almost no interest in debating it since the evidence is so clear-cut. If the climate science community speaks with one voice (as in the 2007 IPCC report, and every report since then), why is there still any debate at all? The answer has been revealed by a number of investigations by diligent reporters who got past the PR machinery denying global warming, and uncovered the money trail. Originally, there were no real "dissenters" to the idea of global warming by scientists who are actually involved with climate research. Instead, the forces with vested interests in denying global climate change (the energy companies, and the "free-market" advocates) followed the strategy of tobacco companies: create a smokescreen of confusion and prevent the American public from recognizing scientific consensus. As the famous memo[ 27] from the tobacco lobbyists said "Doubt is our product." The denialists generated an anti-science movement entirely out of thin air and PR. The evidence for this PR conspiracy has been well documented in numerous sources. For example, Oreskes and Conway revealed from memos leaked to the press that in April 1998 the right-wing Marshall Institute, SEPP (Fred Seitz's lobby that aids tobacco companies and polluters), and ExxonMobil, met in secret at the American Petroleum Institute's headquarters in Washington, D.C. There they planned a $20 million campaign to get "respected scientists" to cast doubt on climate change, get major PR efforts going, and lobby Congress that global warming isn't real and is not a threat. The right-wing institutes and the energy lobby beat the bushes to find scientists -- any scientists -- who might disagree with the scientific consensus. As investigative journalists and scientists have documented over and over again,[ 28] the denialist conspiracy essentially paid for the testimony of anyone who could be useful to them. The day that the 2007 IPCC report was released (Feb. 2, 2007), the British newspaper The Guardian reported that the conservative American Enterprise Institute (funded largely by oil companies and conservative think tanks) had offered $10,000 plus travel expenses to scientists who would write negatively about the IPCC report.[ 29] In February 2012, leaks of documents from the denialist Heartland Institute revealed that they were trying to influence science education, suppress the work of scientists, and had paid off many prominent climate deniers, such as Anthony Watts, all in an effort to circumvent the scientific consensus by doing an "end run" of PR and political pressure. Other leaks have shown 9 out of 10 major climate deniers are paid by ExxonMobil.[ 30] We are accustomed to hired-gun "experts" paid by lawyers to muddy up the evidence in the case they are fighting, but this is extraordinary -- buying scientists outright to act as shills for organizations trying to deny scientific reality. With this kind of money, however, you can always find a fringe scientist or crank or someone with no relevant credentials who will do what they're paid to do. Fishing around to find anyone with some science background who will agree with you and dispute a scientific consensus is a tactic employed by the creationists to sound "scientific". The NCSE created a satirical "Project Steve,"[ 31] which demonstrated that there were more scientists who accept evolution named "Steve" than the total number of "scientists who dispute evolution". It may generate lots of PR and a smokescreen to confuse the public, but it doesn't change the fact that scientists who actually do research in climate change are unanimous in their insistence that anthropogenic global warming is a real threat. Most scientists I know and respect work very hard for little pay, yet they still cannot be paid to endorse some scientific idea they know to be false. The climate deniers have a lot of other things in common with creationists and other anti-science movements. They too like to quote someone out of context ("quote mining"), finding a short phrase in the work of legitimate scientists that seems to support their position. But when you read the full quote in context, it is obvious that they have used the quote inappropriately. The original author meant something that does not support their goals. The "Climategate scandal" is a classic case of this. It started with a few stolen emails from the Climate Research Unit of the University of East Anglia. If you read the complete text of the actual emails[ 32] and comprehend the scientific shorthand of climate scientists who are talking casually to each other, it is clear that there was no great "conspiracy" or that they were faking data. All six subsequent investigations have cleared Philip Jones and the other scientists of the University of East Anglia of any wrongdoing or conspiracy.[ 33] Even if there had been some conspiracy on the part of these few scientists, there is no reason to believe that the entire climate science community is secretly working together to generate false information and mislead the public. If there's one thing that is clear about science, it's about competition and criticism, not conspiracy and collusion. Most labs are competing with each other, not conspiring together. If one lab publishes a result that is not clearly defensible, other labs will quickly correct it. As James Lawrence Powell wrote: Scientists…show no evidence of being more interested in politics or ideology than the average American. Does it make sense to believe that tens of thousands of scientists would be so deeply and secretly committed to bringing down capitalism and the American way of life that they would spend years beyond their undergraduate degrees working to receive master's and Ph.D. degrees, then go to work in a government laboratory or university, plying the deep oceans, forbidding deserts, icy poles, and torrid jungles, all for far less money than they could have made in industry, all the while biding their time like a Russian sleeper agent in an old spy novel? Scientists tend to be independent and resist authority. That is why you are apt to find them in the laboratory or in the field, as far as possible from the prying eyes of a supervisor. Anyone who believes he could organize thousands of scientists into a conspiracy has never attended a single faculty meeting.[ 34] There are many more traits that the climate deniers share with the creationists and Holocaust deniers and others who distort the truth. They pick on small disagreements between different labs as if scientists can't get their story straight, when in reality there is always a fair amount of give and take between competing labs as they try to get the answer right before the other lab can do so. The key point here is that when all these competing labs around the world have reached a consensus and get the same answer, there is no longer any reason to doubt their common conclusion. The anti-scientists of climate denialism will also point to small errors by individuals in an effort to argue that the entire enterprise cannot be trusted. It is true that scientists are human, and do make mistakes, but the great power of the scientific method is that peer review weeds these out, so that when scientists speak with consensus, there is no doubt that their data are checked carefully Finally, a powerful line of evidence that this is a purely political controversy, rather than a scientific debate, is that the membership lists of the creationists and the climate deniers are highly overlapping. Both anti-scientific dogmas are fed to their overlapping audiences through right-wing media such as Fox News, Glenn Beck, and Rush Limbaugh. Just take a look at the "intelligent-design" cre-ationism website for the Discovery Institute. Most of the daily news items lately have nothing to do with creationism at all, but are focused on climate denial and other right-wing causes.[ 35] If the data about global climate change are indeed valid and robust, any qualified scientist should be able to look at them and see if the prevailing scientific interpretation holds up. Indeed, such a test took place. Starting in 2010, a group led by U.C. Berkeley physicist Richard Muller re-examined all the temperature data from the NOAA, East Anglia Hadley Climate Research Unit, and the Goddard Institute of Space Science sources. Even though Muller started out as a skeptic of the temperature data, and was funded by the Koch brothers and other oil company sources, he carefully checked and re-checked the research himself. When the GOP leaders called him to testify before the House Science and Technology Committee in spring 2011, they were expecting him to discredit the temperature data. Instead, Muller shocked his GOP sponsors by demonstrating his scientific integrity and telling the truth: the temperature increase is real, and the scientists who have demonstrated that the climate is changing are right (Fig. 5). In the fall of 2011, his study was published, and the conclusions were clear: global warming is real, even to a right-wing skeptical scientist. Unlike the hired-gun scientists who play political games, Muller did what a true scientist should do: if the data go against your biases and preconceptions, then do the right thing and admit it -- even if you've been paid by sponsors who want to discredit global warming. Muller is a shining example of a scientist whose integrity and honesty came first, and did not sell out to the highest bidder.[ 36] \* Science and Anti-Science The conclusion is clear: there's science, and then there's the anti-science of global warming denial. As we have seen, there is a nearly unanimous consensus among climate scientists that anthropogenic global warming is real and that we must do something about it. Yet the smokescreen, bluster and lies of the deniers has created enough doubt so that only half of the American public is convinced the problem requires action. Ironically, the U.S. is almost alone in questioning its scientific reality. International polls taken of 33,000 people in 33 nations in 2006 and 2007 show that 90% of their citizens regard climate change as a serious problem[ 37] and 80% realize that humans are the cause of it.[ 38] Just as in the case of creationism, the U.S. is out of step with much of the rest of the world in accepting scientific reality. It is not just the liberals and environmentalists who are taking climate change seriously. Historically conservative institutions (big corporations such as General Electric and many others such as insurance companies and the military) are already planning on how to deal with global warming. Many of my friends high in the oil companies tell me of the efforts by those companies to get into other forms of energy, because they know that cheap oil will be running out soon and that the effects of burning oil will make their business less popular. BP officially stands for "British Petroleum," but in one of their ad campaigns about 5 years ago, it stood for "Beyond Petroleum."[ 39] Although they still spend relatively little of their total budgets on alternative forms of energy, the oil companies still see the handwriting on the wall about the eventual exhaustion of oil -- and they are acting like any company that wants to survive by getting into a new business when the old one is dying. The Pentagon (normally not a left-wing institution) is also making contingency plans for how to fight wars in an era of global climate change, and analyzing what kinds of strategic threats might occur when climate change alters the kinds of enemies we might be fighting, and water becomes a scarce commodity. The New York Times reported[ 40] that in December 2008, the National Defense University outlined plans for military strategy in a greenhouse world. To the Pentagon, the big issue is global chaos and the potential of even nuclear conflict. The world must "prepare for the inevitable effects of abrupt climate change -- which will likely come [the only question is when] regardless of human activity." Insurance companies have no political axe to grind. If anything, they tend to be on the conservative side. They are simply in the business of assessing risk in a realistic fashion so they can accurately gauge their future insurance policies and what to charge for them. Yet they are all investing heavily in research on the disasters and risks posed by climatic change. In 2005, a study commissioned by the re-insurer Swiss Re said, "Climate change will significantly affect the health of humans and ecosystems and these impacts will have economic consequences."[ 41] Some people may still try to deny scientific reality, but big businesses like oil and insurance and conservative institutions like the military cannot afford to be blinded or deluded by ideology. They must plan for the real world that we will be seeing in the next few decades. They do not want to be caught unprepared and harmed by global climatic change when it threatens their survival. Neither can we as a society.

#### It also exacerbates global inequality

**Pachauri 2007**

(Rajendra, Chairman of the IPCC, Sydney Morning Herald, “Climate Change Threatens the Fight to End Poverty”, 10-15, http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/10/15/4551/)

The former United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, brought about a remarkable consensus among world leaders to establish the Millennium Development Goals and for the world to meet these by 2015. But, as Annan’s successor, Ban Ki-moon, told about 80 heads of state and government in September, it is now clear that climate change threatens the achievement of these goals, so vital to the wellbeing of human society and the elimination of widespread poverty. Why is global action urgent and necessary to meet the challenge of climate change? The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has determined that warming of the climate is unequivocal; further, that average northern hemisphere temperatures during the second half of the 20th century were very likely higher than for any other 50-year period in the past 500 years and likely the highest in at least the past 1300 years. The panel has also determined that most of the observed increase in temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations. But climate change is not taking place in a smooth, linear fashion. For instance, the frequency of heavy precipitation events has increased over most land areas and so also the duration and intensity of droughts, particularly in the tropics and subtropics. Climate change is likely to add to several stresses that already exist in the poorest regions of the world and affect the ability of societies in these regions to pursue sustainable livelihoods. By 2020 between 75 million and 250 million people are projected to be exposed to an increase in water stress due to climate change in Africa. Coupled with increased demand, this will adversely affect livelihoods and exacerbate water-related problems. Another sector likely to be affected adversely in some of the poorest regions of the world is agriculture. It has been assessed that agricultural production in many African countries and regions would be severely compromised by climate variability and change. The area suitable for agriculture, the length of growing seasons and yield potential - particularly along the margins of semi-arid and arid areas - are expected to decrease. In some countries yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50 per cent by 2020. Another serious impact of climate change is the melting of glaciers all over the world, and this has serious implications for South Asia and parts of China. Glacial melt in the Himalayas is projected to increase flooding and rock avalanches from destabilised slopes and affect water resources downstream within the next two to three decades, due to decreased river flow as the glaciers recede. Water availability is projected to be affected in Central, South, East and South-East Asia. Given the fact that population growth and increasing demand resulting from higher standards of living would require larger quantities of water, the impact of climate change could adversely affect more than a billion people in respect of water availability in Asia by the 2050s. Climate change and its impacts in the most vulnerable regions require a careful evaluation of humanitarian assistance across the globe. Increased resources will be required for adaptation to climate change. This undoubtedly would be a far better approach for the global community to pursue than to provide emergency assistance in the event of catastrophes and extreme events. There are equity dimensions to climate change that also deserve attention. While adaptation is inevitable and urgent, the increase in emissions of greenhouse gases, if not mitigated by the developed nations, will lead to much higher temperatures and much more serious impacts. It is, therefore, essential to ensure that strategies involving both adaptation and mitigation are pursued. The cost of mitigation, as assessed by the climate change panel, is very modest in relation to the cost of impacts across the world. If mitigation is not implemented, then income and wealth disparities between nations will increase, and the existence of poverty on a large scale, which should be ethically unacceptable, could pose a threat to global security and stability. The possibility of large numbers of people becoming environmental refugees is not only a humanitarian problem of serious proportions but also has the potential for social disruption that needs to be avoided. Stringent mitigation needs to be undertaken immediately, and existing technologies and methods are available for this. Adaptation to climate change, particularly involving the poorest communities in the world, assumes urgency.

#### The environment would become uninhabitable

Costello 11 –, Anthony, Institute for Global Health, University College London, Mark Maslin, Department of Geography, University College London, Hugh Montgomery, Institute for Human Health and Performance, University College London, Anne M. Johnson, Institute for Global Health, University College London, Paul Ekins, Energy Institute, University College London [“Global health and climate change: moving from denial and catastrophic fatalism to positive action” May 2011 vol. 369 no. 1942 1866-1882 Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society]

Advocacy about the health consequences will ensure that climate change is a high priority. The United Nations Convention on Climate Change was set up in 1992 to ensure that nations worked together to minimize the adverse effects, but McMichael and Neira noted that, in preparation for the Copenhagen conference in December 2009, only four of 47 nations mentioned human health as a consideration [1]. With business as usual, global warming caused by rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will threaten mass populations through increased transmission of some infections, heat stress, food and water insecurity, increased deaths from more frequent and extreme climate events, threats to shelter and security, and through population migration [2]. On the one hand it is necessary in the media to counter climate change sceptics and denialists, but on the other it is also important not to allow climate catastrophists, who tell us it is all too late, to deflect us from pragmatic and positive action. Catastrophic scenarios are possible in the longer term, and effective action will be formidably difficult, but evidence suggests that we do have the tools, the time and the resources to bring about the changes needed for climate stability. 2. Climate change evidence and denial Given the current body of evidence, it is surprising that global warming and its causal relationship with atmospheric GHG pollution is disputed any more than the relationship between acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, or lung cancer and cigarette smoking. The basic principles that determine the Earth’s temperature are, of course, relatively simple. Some of the short-wave solar radiation that strikes the Earth is reflected back into space and some is absorbed by the land and emitted as long-wave radiation (heat). Some of the long-wave radiation is trapped in the atmosphere by ‘greenhouse gases’, which include water vapour, carbon dioxide and methane. Without GHGs the Earth would be on average 33◦C colder. Over the last 150 years, since the Industrial Revolution, humans have been adding more carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. The result is that the Earth’s atmosphere, ocean and land are indeed warming—due to increased atmospheric ‘greenhouse gas’ concentrations [3]. Gleick et al. [4], from the US National Academy of Sciences, wrote a letter to Science stating ‘There is compelling, comprehensive, and consistent objective evidence that humans are changing the climate in ways that threaten our societies and the ecosystems on which we depend’. The most recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [5], amounting to nearly 3000 pages of detailed review and analysis of published research, also declares that the scientific uncertainties of global warming are essentially resolved. This report states that there is clear evidence for a 0.75◦C rise in global temperatures and 22 cm rise in sea level during the twentieth century. The IPCC synthesis also predicts that global temperatures could rise further by between 1.1◦C and 6.4◦C by 2100, and sea level could rise by between 28 and 79 cm, or more if the melting of Greenland and Antarctica accelerates. In addition, weather patterns will become less predictable and the occurrence of extreme climate events, such as storms, floods, heat waves and droughts, will increase. There is also strong evidence for ocean acidification driven by more carbon dioxide dissolving in the oceans [6]. Given the current failure of international negotiations to address carbon emission reductions, and that atmospheric warming lags behind rises in CO2 concentration, there is concern that global surface temperature will rise above the supposedly ‘safe limit’ of 2◦C within this century. Each doubling of atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration alone is expected to produce 1.9–4.5◦C of warming at equilibrium [7]. Of course, climate modelling is an extremely complex process, and uncertainty with projections relating to future emissions trajectories means that the time scale and magnitude of future climate change cannot be predicted with certainty [8]. These uncertainties are magnified when future climate predictions are used to estimate potential impacts. For example, the environmental impacts of climate change are also uncertain, but could underestimate such impacts because they detrimentally interact with habitat loss, pollution and loss of biodiversity due to other causes. There is also the additional problem that switching from biome to biome may not be directly reversible. For example, rainforest recycles a huge amount of water so it can survive a significant amount of aridification before it burns and is replaced by savannah. But the region then has to get much wetter before rainforest can return, as there is greatly reduced water cycling in savannah [9]. In the policy arena, further uncertainty surrounds the desire for international agreements on emission cuts, and the possible routes to such agreement and implementation. The feasible speed of technological innovation in carbon capture and provision of renewable/low-carbon energy resources is also uncertain. Denying the causes or the current weight of evidence for anthropogenic climate change is irrational, just as the existence of ‘uncertainties’ should not be used to deny the need for proportionate action, when such uncertainties could underestimate the risks and impact of climate change. There is no reason for inaction and there are many ways we can use our current knowledge of climate change to improve health provision for current and future generations. 3. Catastrophism At the other end of the scale are doom-mongers who predict catastrophic population collapse and the end of civilization. In the early nineteenth century, the French palaeontologist Georges Cuvier first addressed catastrophism and explained patterns of extinction observed in the fossil record through catastrophic natural events [10]. We know now of five major extinctions: the Ordovician–Silurian extinction (439 million years ago), the Late Devonian extinction (about 364 million years ago), the Permian–Triassic extinction (about 251 million years ago), the End Triassic extinction (roughly 199 million to 214 million years ago) and the Cretaceous– Tertiary extinction (about 65 million years ago). These mass extinctions were caused by a combination of plate tectonics, supervolcanism and asteroid impacts. The understanding of the mass extinctions led Gould & Eldredge [11] to update Darwin’s theory of evolution with their own theory of punctuated equilibrium. Many scientists have suggested that the current human-induced extinction rates could be as fast as those during these mass extinctions [12,13]. For example, one study predicted that 58 per cent of species may be committed to extinction by 2050 due to climate change alone [14], though this paper has been criticized [15,16]. Some people have even suggested that human extinction may not be a remote risk [17–19]. Sherwood & Huber [7] point to continued heating effects that could make the world largely uninhabitable by humans and mammals within 300 years. Peak heat stress, quantified by the wet-bulb temperature (used because it reflects both the ambient temperature and relative humidity of the site), is surprisingly similar across diverse climates and never exceeds 31◦C. They suggest that if it rose to 35◦C, which never happens now but would at a warming of 7◦C, hyperthermia in humans and other mammals would occur as dissipation of metabolic heat becomes impossible, therefore making many environments uninhabitable.

#### Left unchecked, warming will cause 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

#### There’s no plausible alternative to solve emissions except IFRs

**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.

#### The IFR is the only way to reduce coal emissions enough to avert 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)

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.

#### IFR’s can be commercialized and solve coal

**Archambeau et al 11** [The Integral Fast Reactor (IFR): An Optimized Source for Global Energy Needs, Charles Archambeau, Science Council for Global Initiatives, Randolph Ware, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, Tom Blees, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Barry Brook, University of Adelaide, Jerry Peterson, Argonne National Laboratory,¶ Yoon Chang, University of Colorado, February 2011]

The new features of the IFR systems with pyroprocessing are such that the cost of¶ electrical energy production is estimated to be quite low, in the range below $.01 per¶ kilowatt-hour for an IFR. (For comparison, natural gas fuel cost was at $.05 per kilowatthour,¶ and coal was at about $.03 per kilowatt-hour, while LWR nuclear power was at $.02¶ per kilowatt-hour.) The G.E. estimated building cost of the S-Prism reactor (Fletcher,¶ 2006) is $1300/kw, where this cost assumes some cost savings due to mass production and¶ modular construction. For a commercial level gigawatt reactor (using 3 modular S-Prism¶ reactors with 380 MW of power from each) the cost would total $1.3 billion dollars per¶ one gigawatt plant. These nuclear plants are essentially carbon dioxide emissions free, and¶ in general produce no atmospheric pollution. Further, all the Uranium fuel can be provided¶ from processing the stock piles of spent and depleted Uranium fuel. Therefore, no Uranium¶ mining and associated pollution will occur. Likewise, IFR waste material is minimal and¶ short-lived so that no pollution will occur from this source. Consequently, significant¶ reduction in greenhouse gases, and a variety of other dangerous pollutants, can be¶ immediately achieved if these IFR plants are used to replace the furnaces in coal burning¶ power plants which exist in profusion world-wide. Here the infrastructure at existing coal fueled plants, such as electric power lines, water sources and conduits, steam turbines, etc.,¶ can all be simply converted and used in the nuclear powered plant. Hence, costs of¶ building complete power plants and their electrical connections to the grid can be¶ minimized while the impact on global warming and pollution related diseases can be¶ maximized by replacing the worst of the polluters. Further, it is urgent that we move¶ quickly to strongly and immediately control CO2 gas emissions to drastically slow global¶ warming. Clearly, the costs are not prohibitive since construction of one large stand-alone¶ pyroprocessing plant, at about 6 billion dollars, and only about 10 of the large IFR¶ powered plants, costing under 20 billion dollars, will go a long way toward strongly¶ dampening the massive production of CO2 emissions from existing electricity power plants¶ in the U.S.

#### IFRs are commercially viable—the tech works

**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)

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.

#### Matching funds for development solves Gen IV nuclear

**Martin 12** [May 8th, Richard, A contributing editor for Wired since 2002, he has written about energy, for Time, Fortune, The Atlantic, and the Asian Wall Street Journal, editorial director for Pike Research, the leading cleantech research and analysis firm, former Technology Producer for ABCNews.com, Technology Editor for The Industry Standard (2000-2001), and Editor-at- Large for Information Week (2005-2008), recipient of the “Excellence in Feature Writing" Award from the Society for Professional Journalists and the White Award for Investigative Reporting, Educated at Yale and the University of Hong Kong, , “SuperFuel: Thorium, the Green Energy Source for the Future”, ISBN 978—0»230-116474]

WHILE A NEW MANHATTAN PROIECT is not going to happen, some¶ form of government support is necessary. Transforming the energy¶ sector is too large a project for the private sector alone. That’s the¶ fundamental dilemma that faces the thorium movement. However,¶ there is a middle way, involving higher levels of federal support, a¶ conscious industrial policy to foster advanced nuclear power, and¶ broad incentives to harness the entrepreneurial energy of the private¶ sector.¶ Congress and the White House should establish a matching funds¶ program, aimed exclusively at two or three technologies, including¶ thorium power, to drive the creation of a Generation IV reactor¶ industry that would swiftly within this decade—build prototypes and¶ then small commercial versions, first to supplement and later replace¶ the current collection of outmoded plants, then to replace existing coal¶ plants. The government should overhaul the NRC to streamline the¶ licensing process and favor Generation IV designs over incremental,¶ halfhearted advances. It should explicitly benefit start-ups, like¶ TerraPower and Flibe Energy, not just established vendors and¶ manufacturers like GE, and it should promote homegrown technologies¶ like the LFTR. And it should be conditional on not just submitting new¶ designs for licensing but bringing reactors into commercial production¶ in the shortest time possible. With matching investments coming from¶ the private sector, the program should provide at least $2 billion a year¶ and no more than $5 billion, for a total of $4 billion to $10 billion a¶ year.¶ Many conservatives and liberals alike scoff at the notion of¶ significant funding for new nuclear power—or, indeed, for renewable¶ energy projects such as wind farms and solar arrays. In September¶ 2011 Solyndra, the California-based maker of solar panels, filed for¶ bankruptcy protection after receiving a loan guarantee for more than¶ half a billion dollars from the federal government. Critics of¶ renewables funding, such as Robert Bryce, seized on the Solyndra¶ affair, which threatened to turn into a major political landmine for the¶ Obama administration, as evidence of why the federal government¶ should never “pick winners” in the energy sector.¶ Here it’s important to recall that, as of late 2011, investment by the¶ United States in new energy sources was paltry compared with that of¶ the countries of Western Europe, to say nothing of China. The Solyndra¶ debacle represented less than 3 percent of a loan program that had¶ delivered $19 billion in private capital for reshaping the energy¶ economy, creating thousands of jobs in the worst employment¶ environment since the Great Depression.¶ For further perspective, keep in mind that, according to the Nobel¶ Prize— winning economist ]oseph Stiglitz, in 2007 the Iraq War was¶ costing $720 million per day.“ Big Oil subsidies are also huge in¶ comparison with investment in alternative energy. In 2010 the¶ Government Accountability Office found that the oil industry’s waiver¶ for royalties for deep-water drilling in the Gulf of Mexico—originally¶ passed by Congress in 1995, when oil was selling for $18 a barrel¶ —“could cost the Treasury $55 billion or more in lost revenue over the¶ life of the leases.” The federal government is already picking winners—¶ it’s just backing the wrong horse. Simply requiring big oil companies¶ operating in the Gulf to pay half the usual royalties for extracting oil¶ from U.S. territorial waters would fully fund a nuclear power¶ transformation program through 2020, at no cost to U.S. taxpayers. The¶ tobacco industry has funded billions of dollars in health-care and¶ prevention programs to move toward a smoke-free society. Let the¶ fossil fuel industry take a large role in funding the movement toward a¶ carbon-free society based on thorium power

#### Fiat justified by the value of scenario planning

Marx et al 7 (Sabine M, Center for Research on Environmental Decisions (CRED) @ Columbia University, Elke U. Weber, Graduate School of Business and Department of Psychology @ Columbia University, Benjamin S. Orlovea, Department of Environmental Science and Policy @ University of California Davis, Anthony Leiserowitz, Decision Research, David H. Krantz, Department of Psychology @ Columbia University, Carla Roncolia, South East Climate Consortium (SECC), Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering @ University of Georgia and Jennifer Phillips, Bard Centre for Environmental Policy @ Bard College, “Communication and mental processes: Experiential and analytic processing of uncertain climate information”, 2007, http://climate.columbia.edu/sitefiles/file/Marx\_GEC\_2007.pdf)

Based on the observation that experiential and analytic processing systems compete and that personal experience and vivid descriptions are often favored over statistical information, we suggest the following research and policy implications.¶ Communications designed to create, recall and highlight relevant personal experience and to elicit affective responses can lead to more public attention to, processing of, and engagement with forecasts of climate variability and climate change. Vicarious experiential information in the form of scenarios, narratives, and analogies can help the public and policy makers imagine the potential consequences of climate variability and change, amplify or attenuate risk perceptions, and influence both individual behavioral intentions and public policy preferences. Likewise, as illustrated by the example of retranslation in the Uganda studies, the translation of statistical information into concrete experience with simulated forecasts, decisionmaking and its outcomes can greatly facilitate an intuitive understanding of both probabilities and the consequences of incremental change and extreme events, and motivate contingency planning.¶ Yet, while the engagement of experience-based, affective decision-making can make risk communications more salient and motivate behavior, experiential processing is also subject to its own biases, limitations and distortions, such as the finite pool of worry and single action bias. Experiential processing works best with easily imaginable, emotionally laden material, yet many aspects of climate variability and change are relatively abstract and require a certain level of analytical understanding (e.g., long-term trends in mean temperatures or precipitation). Ideally, communication of climate forecasts should encourage the interactive engagement of both analytic and experiential processing systems in the course of making concrete decisions about climate, ranging from individual choices about what crops to plant in a particular season to broad social choices about how to mitigate or adapt to global climate change.¶ One way to facilitate this interaction is through group and participatory decision-making. As the Uganda example suggests, group processes allow individuals with a range of knowledge, skills and personal experience to share diverse information and perspectives and work together on a problem. Ideally, groups should include at least one member trained to understand statistical forecast information to ensure that all sources of information—both experiential and analytic—are considered as part of the decision-making process. Communications to groups should also try to translate statistical information into formats readily understood in the language, personal and cultural experience of group members. In a somewhat iterative or cyclical process, the shared concrete information can then be re-abstracted to an analytic level that leads to action.¶ Risk and uncertainty are inherent dimensions of all climate forecasts and related decisions. Analytic products like trend analysis, forecast probabilities, and ranges of uncertainty ought to be valuable contributions to stakeholder decision-making. Yet decision makers also listen to the inner and communal voices of personal and collective experience, affect and emotion, and cultural values. Both systems—analytic and experiential—should be considered in the design of climate forecasts and risk communications. If not, many analytic products will fall on deaf ears as decision makers continue to rely heavily on personal experience and affective cues to make plans for an uncertain future. The challenge is to find innovative and creative ways to engage both systems in the process of individual and group decision-making.

#### We don’t know what your alt is, but it doesn’t solve – the AFFdoes

CAG 10—Climate Change Communication Advisory Group. Dr Adam Corner School of Psychology, Cardiff University - Dr Tom Crompton Change Strategist, WWF-UK - Scott Davidson Programme Manager, Global Action Plan - Richard Hawkins Senior Researcher, Public Interest Research Centre - Professor Tim Kasser, Psychology department, Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois, USA. - Dr Renee Lertzman, Center for Sustainable Processes & Practices, Portland State University, US. - Peter Lipman, Policy Director, Sustrans. - Dr Irene Lorenzoni, Centre for Environmental Risk, University of East Anglia. - George Marshall, Founding Director, Climate Outreach , Information Network - Dr Ciaran Mundy, Director, Transition Bristol - Dr Saffron O’Neil, Department of Resource Management and Geography, University of Melbourne, Australia. - Professor Nick Pidgeon, Director, Understanding Risk Research Group, School of Psychology, Cardiff University. - Dr Anna Rabinovich, School of Psychology, University of Exeter - Rosemary Randall, Founder and director of Cambridge Carbon Footprint - Dr Lorraine Whitmarsh, School of Psychology, Cardiff University & Visiting Fellow at the, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. (Communicating climate change to mass public audience, http://pirc.info/downloads/communicating\_climate\_mass\_audiences.pdf)

This short advisory paper collates a set of recommendations about how best to shape mass public communications aimed at increasing concern about climate change and motivating commensurate behavioural changes.¶ Its focus is not upon motivating small private-sphere behavioural changes on a piece-meal basis. Rather, it marshals evidence about how best to motivate the ambitious and systemic behavioural change that is necessary – including, crucially, greater public engagement with the policy process (through, for example, lobbying decision-makers and elected representatives, or participating in demonstrations), as well as major lifestyle changes. ¶ Political leaders themselves have drawn attention to the imperative for more vocal public pressure to create the ‘political space’ for them to enact more ambitious policy interventions. 1 While this paper does not dismiss the value of individuals making small private-sphere behavioural changes (for example, adopting simple domestic energy efficiency measures) it is clear that such behaviours do not, in themselves, represent a proportional response to the challenge of climate change. As David MacKay, Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK Department of Energy and Climate change writes: “Don’t be distracted by the myth that ‘every little helps’. If everyone does a little, we’ll achieve only a little” (MacKay, 2008).¶ The task of campaigners and communicators from government, business and non-governmental organisations must therefore be to motivate both (i) widespread adoption of ambitious private-sphere behavioural changes; and (ii) widespread acceptance of – and indeed active demand for – ambitious new policy interventions.¶ Current public communication campaigns, as orchestrated by government, business and non-governmental organisations, are not achieving these changes. This paper asks: how should such communications be designed if they are to have optimal impact in motivating these changes? The response to this question will require fundamental changes in the ways that many climate change communication campaigns are currently devised and implemented. ¶ This advisory paper offers a list of principles that could be used to enhance the quality of communication around climate change communications. The authors are each engaged in continuously sifting the evidence from a range of sub-disciplines within psychology, and reflecting on the implications of this for improving climate change communications. Some of the organisations that we represent have themselves at times adopted approaches which we have both learnt from and critique in this paper – so some of us have first hand experience of the need for on-going improvement in the strategies that we deploy. ¶ The changes we advocate will be challenging to enact – and will require vision and leadership on the part of the organisations adopting them. But without such vision and leadership, we do not believe that public communication campaigns on climate change will create the necessary behavioural changes – indeed, there is a profound risk that many of today’s campaigns will actually prove counter-productive. ¶ Seven Principles¶ 1. Move Beyond Social Marketing¶ We believe that too little attention is paid to the understanding that psychologists bring to strategies for motivating change, whilst undue faith is often placed in the application of marketing strategies to ‘sell’ behavioural changes. Unfortunately, in the context of ambitious pro-environmental behaviour, such strategies seem unlikely to motivate systemic behavioural change.¶ Social marketing is an effective way of achieving a particular behavioural goal – dozens of practical examples in the field of health behaviour attest to this. Social marketing is really more of a framework for designing behaviour change programmes than a behaviour change programme - it offers a method of maximising the success of a specific behavioural goal. Darnton (2008) has described social marketing as ‘explicitly transtheoretical’, while Hastings (2007), in a recent overview of social marketing, claimed that there is no theory of social marketing. Rather, it is a ‘what works’ philosophy, based on previous experience of similar campaigns and programmes. Social marketing is flexible enough to be applied to a range of different social domains, and this is undoubtedly a fundamental part of its appeal.¶ However, social marketing’s 'what works' status also means that it is agnostic about the longer term, theoretical merits of different behaviour change strategies, or the cultural values that specific campaigns serve to strengthen. Social marketing dictates that the most effective strategy should be chosen, where effective means ‘most likely to achieve an immediate behavioural goal’. ¶ This means that elements of a behaviour change strategy designed according to the principles of social marketing may conflict with other, broader goals. What if the most effective way of promoting pro-environmental behaviour ‘A’ was to pursue a strategy that was detrimental to the achievement of long term pro-environmental strategy ‘Z’? The principles of social marketing have no capacity to resolve this conflict – they are limited to maximising the success of the immediate behavioural programme. This is not a flaw of social marketing – it was designed to provide tools to address specific behavioural problems on a piecemeal basis. But it is an important limitation, and one that has significant implications if social marketing techniques are used to promote systemic behavioural change and public engagement on an issue like climate change. ¶ 2. Be honest and forthright about the probable impacts of climate change, and the scale of the challenge we confront in avoiding these. But avoid deliberate attempts to provoke fear or guilt. ¶ There is no merit in ‘dumbing down’ the scientific evidence that the impacts of climate change are likely to be severe, and that some of these impacts are now almost certainly unavoidable. Accepting the impacts of climate change will be an important stage in motivating behavioural responses aimed at mitigating the problem. However, deliberate attempts to instil fear or guilt carry considerable risk. ¶ Studies on fear appeals confirm the potential for fear to change attitudes or verbal expressions of concern, but often not actions or behaviour (Ruiter et al., 2001). The impact of fear appeals is context - and audience - specific; for example, for those who do not yet realise the potentially ‘scary’ aspects of climate change, people need to first experience themselves as vulnerable to the risks in some way in order to feel moved or affected (Das et al, 2003; Hoog et al, 2005). As people move towards contemplating action, fear appeals can help form a behavioural intent, providing an impetus or spark to ‘move’ from; however such appeals must be coupled with constructive information and support to reduce the sense of danger (Moser, 2007). The danger is that fear can also be disempowering – producing feelings of helplessness, remoteness and lack of control (O’Neill and Nicholson-Cole, 2009). Fear is likely to trigger ‘barriers to engagement’, such as denial2 (Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001; Weber, 2006; Moser and Dilling, 2007; Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole & Whitmarsh, 2007). The location of fear in a message is also relevant; it works better when placed first for those who are inclined to follow the advice, but better second for those who aren't (Bier, 2001).¶ Similarly, studies have shown that guilt can play a role in motivating people to take action but can also function to stimulate defensive mechanisms against the perceived threat or challenge to one’s sense of identity (as a good, moral person). In the latter case, behaviours may be left untouched (whether driving a SUV or taking a flight) as one defends against any feelings of guilt or complicity through deployment of a range of justifications for the behaviour (Ferguson & Branscombe, 2010). ¶ Overall, there is a need for emotionally balanced representations of the issues at hand. This will involve acknowledging the ‘affective reality’ of the situation, e.g. “We know this is scary and overwhelming, but many of us feel this way and we are doing something about it”.¶ 3. Be honest and forthright about the impacts of mitigating and adapting to climate change for current lifestyles, and the ‘loss’ - as well as the benefits - that these will entail. Narratives that focus exclusively on the ‘up-side’ of climate solutions are likely to be unconvincing. While narratives about the future impacts of climate change may highlight the loss of much that we currently hold to be dear, narratives about climate solutions frequently ignore the question of loss. If the two are not addressed concurrently, fear of loss may be ‘split off’ and projected into the future, where it is all too easily denied. This can be dangerous, because accepting loss is an important step towards working through the associated emotions, and emerging with the energy and creativity to respond positively to the new situation (Randall, 2009). However, there are plenty of benefits (besides the financial ones) of a low-carbon lifestyle e.g., health, community/social interaction - including the ‘intrinsic' goals mentioned below. It is important to be honest about both the losses and the benefits that may be associated with lifestyle change, and not to seek to separate out one from the other.¶ 3a. Avoid emphasis upon painless, easy steps. ¶ Be honest about the limitations of voluntary private-sphere behavioural change, and the need for ambitious new policy interventions that incentivise such changes, or that regulate for them. People know that the scope they have, as individuals, to help meet the challenge of climate change is extremely limited. For many people, it is perfectly sensible to continue to adopt high-carbon lifestyle choices whilst simultaneously being supportive of government interventions that would make these choices more difficult for everyone. ¶ The adoption of small-scale private sphere behavioural changes is sometimes assumed to lead people to adopt ever more difficult (and potentially significant) behavioural changes. The empirical evidence for this ‘foot-in-thedoor’ effect is highly equivocal. Some studies detect such an effect; others studies have found the reverse effect (whereby people tend to ‘rest on their laurels’ having adopted a few simple behavioural changes - Thogersen and Crompton, 2009). Where attention is drawn to simple and painless privatesphere behavioural changes, these should be urged in pursuit of a set of intrinsic goals (that is, as a response to people’s understanding about the contribution that such behavioural change may make to benefiting their friends and family, their community, the wider world, or in contributing to their growth and development as individuals) rather than as a means to achieve social status or greater financial success. Adopting behaviour in pursuit of intrinsic goals is more likely to lead to ‘spillover’ into other sustainable behaviours (De Young, 2000; Thogersen and Crompton, 2009).¶ People aren’t stupid: they know that if there are wholesale changes in the global climate underway, these will not be reversed merely through checking their tyre pressures or switching their TV off standby. An emphasis upon simple and painless steps suppresses debate about those necessary responses that are less palatable – that will cost people money, or that will infringe on cherished freedoms (such as to fly). Recognising this will be a key step in accepting the reality of loss of aspects of our current lifestyles, and in beginning to work through the powerful emotions that this will engender (Randall, 2009). ¶ 3b. Avoid over-emphasis on the economic opportunities that mitigating, and adapting to, climate change may provide. ¶ There will, undoubtedly, be economic benefits to be accrued through investment in new technologies, but there will also be instances where the economic imperative and the climate change adaptation or mitigation imperative diverge, and periods of economic uncertainty for many people as some sectors contract. It seems inevitable that some interventions will have negative economic impacts (Stern, 2007).¶ Undue emphasis upon economic imperatives serves to reinforce the dominance, in society, of a set of extrinsic goals (focussed, for example, on financial benefit). A large body of empirical research demonstrates that these extrinsic goals are antagonistic to the emergence of pro-social and proenvironmental concern (Crompton and Kasser, 2009).¶ 3c. Avoid emphasis upon the opportunities of ‘green consumerism’ as a response to climate change.¶ As mentioned above (3b), a large body of research points to the antagonism between goals directed towards the acquisition of material objects and the emergence of pro-environmental and pro-social concern (Crompton and Kasser, 2009). Campaigns to ‘buy green’ may be effective in driving up sales of particular products, but in conveying the impression that climate change can be addressed by ‘buying the right things’, they risk undermining more difficult and systemic changes. A recent study found that people in an experiment who purchased ‘green’ products acted less altruistically on subsequent tasks (Mazar & Zhong, 2010) – suggesting that small ethical acts may act as a ‘moral offset’ and licence undesirable behaviours in other domains. This does not mean that private-sphere behaviour changes will always lead to a reduction in subsequent pro-environmental behaviour, but it does suggest that the reasons used to motivate these changes are critically important. Better is to emphasise that ‘every little helps a little’ – but that these changes are only the beginning of a process that must also incorporate more ambitious private-sphere change and significant collective action at a political level.¶ 4. Empathise with the emotional responses that will be engendered by a forthright presentation of the probable impacts of climate change. ¶ Belief in climate change and support for low-carbon policies will remain fragile unless people are emotionally engaged. We should expect people to be sad or angry, to feel guilt or shame, to yearn for that which is lost or to search for more comforting answers (Randall, 2009). Providing support and empathy in working through the painful emotions of 'grief' for a society that must undergo changes is a prerequisite for subsequent adaptation to new circumstances.¶ Without such support and empathy, it is more likely that people will begin to deploy a range of maladaptive ‘coping strategies’, such as denial of personal responsibility, blaming others, or becoming apathetic (Lertzman, 2008). An audience should not be admonished for deploying such strategies – this would in itself be threatening, and could therefore harden resistance to positive behaviour change (Miller and Rolnick, 2002). The key is not to dismiss people who exhibit maladaptive coping strategies, but to understand how they can be made more adaptive. People who feel socially supported will be more likely to adopt adaptive emotional responses - so facilitating social support for proenvironmental behaviour is crucial.¶ 5. Promote pro-environmental social norms and harness the power of social networks¶ One way of bridging the gap between private-sphere behaviour changes and collective action is the promotion of pro-environmental social norms. Pictures and videos of ordinary people (‘like me’) engaging in significant proenvironmental actions are a simple and effective way of generating a sense of social normality around pro-environmental behaviour (Schultz, Nolan, Cialdini, Goldstein and Griskevicius, 2007). There are different reasons that people adopt social norms, and encouraging people to adopt a positive norm simply to ‘conform’, to avoid a feeling of guilt, or for fear of not ‘fitting in’ is likely to produce a relatively shallow level of motivation for behaviour change. Where social norms can be combined with ‘intrinsic’ motivations (e.g. a sense of social belonging), they are likely to be more effective and persistent.¶ Too often, environmental communications are directed to the individual as a single unit in the larger social system of consumption and political engagement. This can make the problems feel too overwhelming, and evoke unmanageable levels of anxiety. Through the enhanced awareness of what other people are doing, a strong sense of collective purpose can be engendered. One factor that is likely to influence whether adaptive or maladaptive coping strategies are selected in response to fear about climate change is whether people feel supported by a social network – that is, whether a sense of ‘sustainable citizenship’ is fostered. The efficacy of groupbased programmes at promoting pro-environmental behaviour change has been demonstrated on numerous occasions – and participants in these projects consistently point to a sense of mutual learning and support as a key reason for making and maintaining changes in behaviour (Nye and Burgess, 2008). There are few influences more powerful than an individual’s social network. Networks are instrumental not just in terms of providing social support, but also by creating specific content of social identity – defining what it means to be “us”. If environmental norms are incorporated at this level (become defining for the group) they can result in significant behavioural change (also reinforced through peer pressure).¶ Of course, for the majority of people, this is unlikely to be a network that has climate change at its core. But social networks – Trade Unions, Rugby Clubs, Mother & Toddler groups – still perform a critical role in spreading change through society. Encouraging and supporting pre-existing social networks to take ownership of climate change (rather than approach it as a problem for ‘green groups’) is a critical task. As well as representing a crucial bridge between individuals and broader society, peer-to-peer learning circumnavigates many of the problems associated with more ‘top down’ models of communication – not least that government representatives are perceived as untrustworthy (Poortinga & Pidgeon, 2003). Peer-to-peer learning is more easily achieved in group-based dialogue than in designing public information films: But public information films can nonetheless help to establish social norms around community-based responses to the challenges of climate change, through clear visual portrayals of people engaging collectively in the pro-environmental behaviour.¶ The discourse should be shifted increasingly from ‘you’ to ‘we’ and from ‘I’ to ‘us’. This is starting to take place in emerging forms of community-based activism, such as the Transition Movement and Cambridge Carbon Footprint’s ‘Carbon Conversations’ model – both of which recognize the power of groups to help support and maintain lifestyle and identity changes. A nationwide climate change engagement project using a group-based behaviour change model with members of Trade Union networks is currently underway, led by the Climate Outreach and Information Network. These projects represent a method of climate change communication and engagement radically different to that typically pursued by the government – and may offer a set of approaches that can go beyond the limited reach of social marketing techniques.¶ One potential risk with appeals based on social norms is that they often contain a hidden message. So, for example, a campaign that focuses on the fact that too many people take internal flights actually contains two messages – that taking internal flights is bad for the environment, and that lots of people are taking internal flights. This second message can give those who do not currently engage in that behaviour a perverse incentive to do so, and campaigns to promote behaviour change should be very careful to avoid this. The key is to ensure that information about what is happening (termed descriptive norms), does not overshadow information about what should be happening (termed injunctive norms). ¶ 6. Think about the language you use, but don’t rely on language alone¶ A number of recent publications have highlighted the results of focus group research and talk-back tests in order to ‘get the language right’ (Topos Partnership, 2009; Western Strategies & Lake Research Partners, 2009), culminating in a series of suggestions for framing climate-change communications. For example, these two studies led to the suggestions that communicators should use the term ‘global warming’ or ‘our deteriorating atmosphere’, respectively, rather than ‘climate change’. Other research has identified systematic differences in the way that people interpret the terms ‘climate change’ and ‘global warming’, with ‘global warming’ perceived as more emotionally engaging than ‘climate change’ (Whitmarsh, 2009).¶ Whilst ‘getting the language right’ is important, it can only play a small part in a communication strategy. More important than the language deployed (i.e. ‘conceptual frames') are what have been referred to by some cognitive linguists as 'deep frames'. Conceptual framing refers to catchy slogans and clever spin (which may or may not be honest). At a deeper level, framing refers to forging the connections between a debate or public policy and a set of deeper values or principles. Conceptual framing (crafting particular messages focussing on particular issues) cannot work unless these messages resonate with a set of long-term deep frames.¶ Policy proposals which may at the surface level seem similar (perhaps they both set out to achieve a reduction in environmental pollution) may differ importantly in terms of their deep framing. For example, putting a financial value on an endangered species, and building an economic case for their conservation ‘commodifies’ them, and makes them equivalent (at the level of deep frames) to other assets of the same value (a hotel chain, perhaps). This is a very different frame to one that attempts to achieve the same conservation goals through the ascription of intrinsic value to such species – as something that should be protected in its own right. Embedding particular deep frames requires concerted effort (Lakoff, 2009), but is the beginning of a process that can build a broad, coherent cross-departmental response to climate change from government.¶ 7. Encourage public demonstrations of frustration at the limited pace of government action¶ Private-sphere behavioural change is not enough, and may even at times become a diversion from the more important process of bringing political pressure to bear on policy-makers. The importance of public demonstrations of frustration at both the lack of political progress on climate change and the barriers presented by vested interests is widely recognised – including by government itself. Climate change communications, including government communication campaigns, should work to normalise public displays of frustration with the slow pace of political change. Ockwell et al (2009) argued that communications can play a role in fostering demand for - as well as acceptance of - policy change. Climate change communication could (and should) be used to encourage people to demonstrate (for example through public demonstrations) about how they would like structural barriers to behavioural/societal change to be removed.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)