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**The Better Energy for America**

In the United States, only 20% of our electricity comes from nuclear sources. On the other hand, in France, the figure rises to almost 80%. Sadly, nuclear-powered electricity in America has stayed at that level for the last 30 years, while nastier sources of energy like coal and natural gas take turns dominating the electricity market. The lack of greater use of nuclear power stems from the public misperception of this zero-emissions energy source, which is evident in its omission in the *Green New Deal*, the left’s blueprint for combating climate change. If we seriously aim to reduce CO2 emission, Congress must explore possibilities for incorporating nuclear power into our electricity infrastructure.

There are three advantages to the use of nuclear energy that outweigh those of other clean energy sources. First, it produces almost zero emission. While one may argue that natural gas is the most realistic energy source to replace coal due to its growing abundance and lower emission, it still produces around 50% of CO2 of burned coal. In other words, natural gas is cleaner than coal but not completely clean like nuclear energy. Second, nuclear-powered production stays consistent throughout the year, whereas solar- and wind-generated electricity relies on the weather and massive battery storage. Besides, solar farms and wind turbines would take a lot of space if they were to become the primary source of electricity, unlike nuclear power plants. Lastly, nuclear power generates electricity much more efficiently than other sources. According to the [Department of Energy](https://www.energy.gov/ne/articles/nuclear-power-most-reliable-energy-source-and-its-not-even-close), we would need to build two coal plants or four renewable plants to create the equivalent of electricity as one single nuclear power plant.

Challenges certainly exist with regards to the use of nuclear power. Anti-nuclear activists always cite cost as the greatest concern, which is a legitimate concern. The two reactors in Georgia, under construction at the moment will accrue to approximately $10 billion each. However, there are several ways to control expenses for constructing and building a nuclear reactor. [Some scientists](https://thebulletin.org/2019/06/why-nuclear-power-plants-cost-so-much-and-what-can-be-done-about-it/) have suggested standardizing nuclear plant design to lower capital cost. In France, only one agency takes charge of building nuclear power plants. Consequently, the French have accumulated plenty of experience in building nuclear reactors over the years. On top of that, we could also adopt smaller nuclear reactors that do not call for expensive maintenance. It is also worth noting that we are paying for efficiency, consistency, and a greener future.

We must act soon to phase out dirty fossil fuel and phase in clean nuclear power. There are two avenues to accomplish this goal. First, the Office of Nuclear Energy (ONE) should work with physics departments of large universities to promote better understanding of the safety of nuclear power plants. Since the 1979 Three Mile Island incident, there has not been a single major accident involving the 98 nuclear reactors in the United States, thanks to more stringent regulation and greater security measures. Nevertheless, the public still maintains either hostility or indifference towards nuclear power. The ONE could do more to change this perception. Second, Congress should establish more incentives and encourage public-private partnerships for opening more nuclear power plants. The French government takes sole responsibility for building its nuclear fleet, but at a great expense of the taxpayers. On the other hand, in the U.S., private companies alone shoulder the costs. Policymakers should explore possibilities for a middle ground, shifting some of those costs to the federal government so that nuclear power becomes more prevalent.

Nuclear energy is the better energy for America. It performs at high efficiency and consistency and most importantly, at very little damage to the environment. We must convince the public of these advantages and disillusion them of their misconceptions about this green source of energy. Ultimately, we all aspire for a future that relies less and less on fossil fuels.