

provide employment whether energy is cheap or expensive...

Whatever is done about nuclear power over the next few decades, real energy costs will continue to increase into the next century...In the long run, however, the economy should be able to absorb higher energy costs with little effect on growth or employment...

Whatever the income loss due to higher energy costs, nuclear power can do little to reduce it in this century since nuclear power will at best have only a small cost advantage over coal...

"Defer Indefinitely Commercial Plutonium Reprocessing"

The principal immediate issue affecting nuclear power is whether the United States should proceed with the reprocessing and recycling of plutonium...

On the basis of our analysis of plutonium reprocessing and recycling, we have concluded that the international and social costs far outweigh economic benefits, which are very small even under optimistic assumptions. We believe therefore that a clear-cut decision should be made by the U.S. government to defer indefinitely commercial reprocessing of plutonium. Although the question of plutonium reprocessing and recycling is now before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, we believe that, in view of the important international implications, the President should make the decision to defer plutonium reprocessing...For this reason, we conclude that the government should not take over or subsidize the completion and operation of the Barnwell facility.

"Postpone Commercial Breeder Beyond End of the Century"

The priority and timing of the plutonium breeder is inevitably a central and budget and policy issue since the commitment to this program currently dominates federal energy research and development activities. The plutonium breeder which produces more plutonium than it consumes in operation, can in principle improve the utilization of uranium by a factor of as much as 100...

The Liquid Metal Fast Breeder Reactor (LMFBR) has become the centerpiece in the U.S. energy research and development program...The present U.S. program, directed at the early commercialization of the LMFBR, is not necessary to the development of the breeder as insurance...We believe therefore that the breeder program should deemphasize early commercialization and emphasize a more flexible approach to basic technology. In such a program, with a longer time horizon, the Clinch River project, a prototype demonstration reactor costing \$2 billion, is unnecessary and could be canceled without harming the long-term prospects of breeders...

Although long lead times are required for a project as complex as the breeder, we believe that the decision on commercialization, now set for 1986, can safely be postponed beyond the end of the century...

"Greater Reliance on Coal"

Three years after the Arab embargo, the coal industry is still not operating at full capacity; and, in the absence of new demand, coal prices have fallen from their peak.

'Carter Administration Has No Disagreements'

In interviews this week members of the team that authored *Nuclear Policy: Issues and Choices* said that the Carter Administration looks favorably on the program outlined in the report. Asked about the Carter Administration's response, a spokesman for the MITRE Corporation, which oversaw the report's preparation, said, "I know that Mr. Keeny (the chairman of the report's study group — ed.) has met with Dr. Schlesinger at least twice recently. In fact, he met with him last Saturday (March 19)." The spokesman concluded, "The results were favorable."

Hollis B. Chernery, a member of the study group and vice president for development policy at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, confirmed the MITRE spokesman's evaluation. "The Carter Administration has responded quite favorably," he said. "There is a coincidence of views and I know of no disagreements."

Nevertheless, the prospects for coal should not be underestimated since coal will be generally competitive with nuclear power for a long time to come and will in all probability become the material from which synthetic gas and oil will be manufactured...Energy for the United States in the period after 1990 will be characterized by a much greater reliance on coal.

"Solar and Fusion In the Next Century"

It is frequently argued that solar, geothermal, or fusion energy would be viable alternatives to nuclear power if they received a fair share of the research and development funds. It is our judgment that these forms of energy cannot compete with nuclear, coal, or other fossil fuels as major sources of electric power until well into the next century.

Solar: For the long run, solar energy is especially interesting, since it is essentially unlimited...However, solar electric power will become competitive only after considerable research and development and a large increase in the cost of electricity...

Present capital costs per kwe of rotor-style windmills are substantially higher than for fossil or nuclear plants...Nevertheless, wind power has the potential of meeting a significant portion of electrical energy requirements in some areas, albeit at a cost which may be three to five times that of nuclear electrical power...Biomass methods are unwieldy and of low efficiency, but well-proven in small scale...

These (solar, etc.) sources cannot be counted on as an economic alternative to coal and nuclear power in the next three decades. They should be considered as possible alternatives to or competitors of breeder reactors, fusion or coal later in the 21st century...

Fusion Power: Fusion, like solar energy, offers the promise of practically unlimited energy...Although it is