

EDITORIAL

WHAT CAN WE DO?

POOR ORIGINAL

I am against having nuclear energy because I think it is unsafe because of what could happen. Besides nuclear energy we could use other sources of energy such as coal because there are 3.2 trillion tons of known coal deposits in this country. And if we find more deposits it will take a long time for us to run out. I think Con Edison should be permitted to burn coal at the Ravenswood 3 and Arthur Kill plants. The technology exists to do this and still meet federal air quality standards. As an initial move, Con Edison had proposed a one-year fuel test at our Ravenswood 3 and Arthur Kill plants to demonstrate that burning coal would not violate federal air quality standards. During the test, Con Edison would use 1.5 percent sulfur oil, the sulfur equivalent of the 1 percent sulfur coal that would be used in the converted plants once the test proves successful. These steps taken together could save our customers more than 71.5 billion dollars through 1990.

Authority Chairman Frederick Clark, recently recommended that the project be scrapped because its estimated cost has risen from \$1.3 billion dollars to \$3.1 billion dollars in the last 20 months. The general public utilities corp. estimated that the total cost of the Three Mile Island radiation leak accident might exceed the \$300 million dollars worth of insurance it carries on the nuclear plant. So that's a lot of money that insurance company is losing because of the danger the plant causes.

We also could use solar heat for energy. The total energy from the sun is equal to 180 trillion kilowatts of electricity. If solar energy could be converted to useful power at 100% efficiency--which is not now technically possible--we could have 700 times more power in the United

States than we currently use. Solar energy works when solar panels on a roof collect energy from the sun's rays to provide hot water and to heat the house. Heat from the sun is absorbed by water circulating in coils in the panel and stored in a tank. More and more houses are being designed to utilize solar energy.

When new houses are built they should have the solar panels built right in. They should have broad sides facing the south so the windows get direct sunlight. They should have 6 inch walls instead of 4 inch walls so they could have better installation and to keep the heat inside the house and not heating the whole neighborhood.

To put solar panels in a newly built house is very economical. But in an older house to be converted into solar panels it would take 10 years saving on heat to get your money back. So it is better to build solar panels right into a newly built house than to convert it into an older house.

There are 5 sola-heated heat houses in operation now on Long Island where on a 45 degree day last winter the heat was passed from solar panels to a rock heat storage bin in the basement of one of these houses averaged 103 degrees. The average monthly cost was estimated at 137.50 dollars compared to 390.62 dollars a month for oil heat in the same sized house.

So there are a lot of other sources of energy we could use instead of nuclear energy that is a lot safer.

By: Kerry Johnson 83

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