“Opportunity Cost” Killing Nuclear Power Future

Excerpted from Umar Iraan analysis in Scientific American, June 3, 2016

“All three generations of nuclear technology that are out there today require babysitting,” said Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates during a panel last month in Washington, D.C. “The nuclear industry has never designed an inherently safe product.”

The question then is why are reactors tacking into the wind, in terms of economics and politics. Vermont [socialist] Sen. and Democratic presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders has proposed in his various year-end speeches in the United States...

“Michael Jacobson, an energy researcher at Stanford University who found that it’s feasible for much of the world to run on wind, water and sunlight, acknowledged that nuclear energy has some carbon benefits but said it has an insurmountable drawback: Opportunity costs, namely the billions of dollars needed upfront and the decades it takes to plan and build reactors. See: “[Stanford scientist unrolls 50-state plan to transform US to renewable energy.quot; Stanford Report, Feb. 26, 2014.”

“If you’re looking at just one technology in isolation, maybe you don’t care about that opportunity cost,” [Jacobson] said. “But when you’re comparing the two technologies, that becomes relevant. If you have $1 to spend, would you rather spend that on nuclear or wind?”

It is no longer a question of whether these 21st-century technologies can replace nuclear power and fossil fuels. The question is when.

—MICHAEL MARIOTTE, 1952–2016

Prince Tops Our Anti-Nuclear Playlist

By Kelly Lundeen

LUCK, WI—Four hours had passed in the Nuke-watch office on April 21, 2016. I had been concerned with the scandals and disasters of nuclear weapons when I got a barrage of personal text messages. “I heard bad news about [an] area in your state. Are you all okay?” Within an hour of the news of his death, I had five text messages in my inbox. I thought, “Why is this news? He’s a pop star so important as to make me away from pondering the impending radioactive holocaust?”

The truth is I love Prince’s music and have been dancing to it since I was five, or maybe younger. But, why should I care? In the office the conversation shifted. “What did Prince have to say about nuclear weapons?”

In 1981, at age five, I was not cognizant that trying to keep up with the times of nuclear weapons was important. But before I’ll let that happen / I’ll dance my life away.”


A roots reggae band better known for their anti-racist songs, the Ominous has laid out a plan to decommission every reactor in the United States [at dontbankonthebomb.com].

“The Priests of the Golden Bull” was an anti-nuclear protestor by Buffy Sainte-Marie. It is no longer a question of whether these 21st-century technologies can replace nuclear power and fossil fuels. The question is when.

“Why is the death of a pop star so important as to take you away from pondering the impending radioactive holocaust?” —Tapan Kumar Chand, managing director Tapan Kumar Chand told the press.

Cambridge City Council Votes to Divest $1 Billion from Nuclear Weapons

In March, a unanimous vote of the Cambridge, Massachusetts City Council declared that the city would withdraw any portion of its $1 billion pension fund from “any entities that are involved in the production or upgrading of nuclear weapons systems.”

Cambridge-area activists, university scientists, and students drew on the annual report of financial institutions involved in nuclear weapons manufacturing compiled through the Don’t Bank on the Bomb initiative of Netherlands-based peace group PAX to make the case for a divestment resolution to the City Council.

Cambridge Mayor Dianna Simonne announced the decision, saying, “In Cambridge we care about our name, we care about the planet, and we care about future generations.”

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Nukewatch Quarterly

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Nukewatch in the News

In 2012, the $7 billion aluminum company signed a memorandum of understanding with NPCIL to build the two new reactors at the Kakrapara Atomic Power Station. The cost of the project was $1.5 billion. The Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) would be the 3rd and 4th reactors at Kakrapara. Units 1 and 2, built in 1982, went online in 1993 and 1995 respectively.

Unreported in the Business Standard report was any mention of the long-standing, large-scale public protests involving thousands of opponents that have confronted the project since its inception. The company has already pulled out of the construction [at dontbankonthebomb.com with NPCIL following a change in technology of the project. Initially, it was decided to build the plant with indigenous technology, but it was decided to use foreign technology. The foreign technology will not only be more expensive, the gestation period of the project will also be more and we are [not] in a mode that we want to do such a thing anymore,”

Nalco Chairman and Managing Director Tapan Kumar Chand told the press.


In 2013, Nalco had planned a 26 percent stake in the new entity. But before I’ll let that happen / I’ll dance my life away.”

After the last song has played, the only difference be

Principal Top Our Anti-Nuclear Playlist

By Kelly Lundeen

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