

The need for nuclear power*

We must face the fact that a growing world population with both rising standards of living and volatile rising expectations will demand a huge amount of power in the years ahead. By the year 2000 this country will require the production of 130 quadrillion British thermal units of all types of energy per year to supply the wants of 300 million people. The world will need many times this number. If we assume world use at one-quarter of the U.S. per capita consumption, this would, in the year 2000, amount to 650 quadrillion units of energy needed for six or seven billion people, a staggering total.

No doubt a large amount of this energy, particularly in terms of oil for the transportation and power fields, will come from fossil fuels over the next few decades. But, in spite of forecasts of large reserves, we know that these natural resources are limited. We also know that there is a limit to nature's ability, and to our own human tolerance, to absorb all the pollution that would result should we try to burn up all these fuels over the next century or so. I am not going to document the pollution loads that would accrue from the combustion of that massive amount of fuel. I think the members of this committee have many times been made aware of these amounts and their consequences. Fortunately, we have for the generation of electric power an alternate fuel—nuclear energy.

As I have said on other occasions, I believe that nuclear energy has arrived on the scene, historically speaking, in the nick of time. I base this belief on several factors:

1. The projected demand for power based on population growth and increasing per capita consumption of electricity.
2. The need for a cleaner and more manageable source of energy to reduce the degradation of the environment.

**Excerpts from testimony before the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, Oct. 29, 1969.*