

Benchmark 3

Drawing Some Conclusions

Create your own interpretations about world events and concerns. From the research we will make judgments and support those judgments with the knowledge you have gained.

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The Socio-Cultural Domain

The Middle East always seems to be an area of unrest in the world. If people think about, the majority of the wars seem to happen there. Iran is a country in the Middle East with an extreme amount of power per say. The other countries that surround them are frightened of their nuclear program.

Iran's nuclear program began in the Shah's era, including a plan to build 20 nuclear power reactors. Two power reactors in Bushehr, on the coast of the Persian Gulf, were started but remained unfinished when they were bombed and damaged by the Iraqis during the Iran-Iraq war. Following the revolution in 1979, all nuclear activity was suspended, though subsequently work was resumed on a somewhat more modest scale. Current plans extend to the construction of 15 power reactors and two research reactors (Pike 1).

With these weapons, they could kill thousands even millions of people. This is causing the other countries in this region to desire to develop nuclear programs. Take for example; if you are playing football and everyone has cleats but you then you are at a

disadvantage. The other countries want to have nuclear weapons as well to protect their country and its people.

I do believe that many countries are interested in nuclear energy as a way to bring their societies into a more technological world. Many of the countries that are initiating nuclear programs are somewhat underdeveloped to countries such as Britain, Russia, and the United States.

HISTORY OF NUCLEAR WARHEAD STOCKPILES -- 1945-1995

NOTE: Totals are estimates. Lists include strategic and non-strategic warheads, as well as warheads awaiting dismantling.

	1945	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995
UNITED STATES	6	3,057	31,265	26,675	22,941	14,766
SOVIET UNION	0	200	6,129	19,443	39,197	27,000
BRITAIN	0	10	310	350	300	300
FRANCE	0	0	32	188	360	485
CHINA	0	0	5	185	425	425

Source: National Resources Defense Council

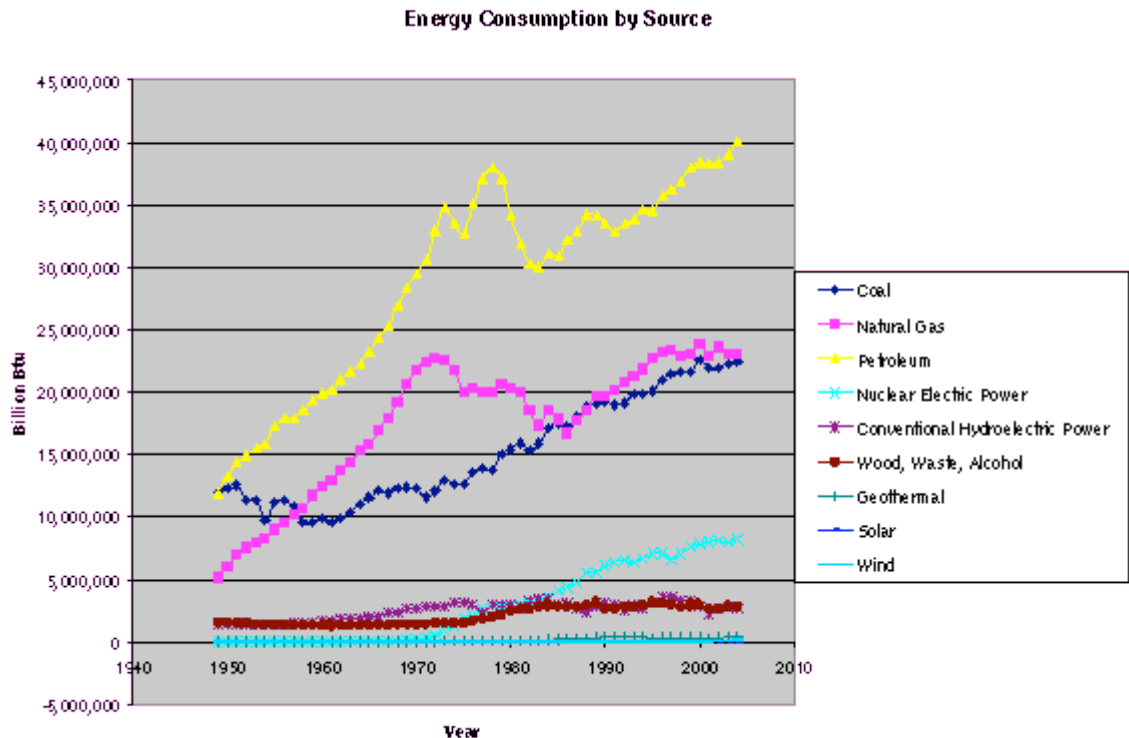
Growing Interest

The growing interest in nuclear energy was reflected in the number of non-nuclear countries that took part in a workshop to discuss requirements that must be in place before starting a nuclear program. The meeting was held December 4–6 at the International Atomic Energy Agency's headquarters in Vienna. Of the 42 countries participating, 20 were potential new entrants: Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Cameroon, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, and Poland (More Countries 41).

These countries appear to be trying to make up for their shortcomings in other areas, and become strong players in the nuclear world. They believe that by having strong nuclear programs, it could jump start the development of other areas that need improvement.

The United States and Russia

In the world, the United States and Russia are very strong countries. Both countries have nuclear programs that outshine most of the worlds. Nuclear energy is a small part of the world's energy source, for now.



Graph found from the website
<http://physics.ius.edu/E/EnergyUse.html>

With countries that are striving to develop nuclear programs, I believe it is necessary for the United States and Russia to work on their own. Although, I do not believe that both countries need to start over on their development, some improvements should be made.

Nuclear power development should be continued in these countries, because their enemies don't look like they are stopping their own. If these countries cease to improve their nuclear programs, they could put their country behind others and possibly in danger.

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