No More Nukes!

It has been shown time and time again that nuclear power plants pose a potential risk far greater than their economic advantages, as simply demonstrated by well- known accidents in the Soviet Union and the United States. The fact is that no safeguards can be considered 100% effective; so even if a given plant is regarded as 99% safe—and none reach this level of near perfection—sooner or later the 1% flaw will come into play, with catastrophic results. Relying on nuclear plants is like playing with Russian roulette: the bullet-bearing chamber will come up eventually. It takes very little exposure to radiation to be fatal; the only difference between Hiroshima and Chernobyl is that in the first case, hundreds of thousands of people died instantaneously, and in the second an even larger number will die of cancer and other forms of radiation poisoning but over a longer, more painful period of time.

Vocabulary:

Potential- Having possibility, capability
power
Regard- To look upon and consider in a particular
way

Catastrophic - extremely harmful, bringing physical or financial ruin.

Fatal-.causing or capable of causing death

Instantaneously- Done or made as quickly or directly as possible

Discussion Points:

1. If nuclear power plants are unsafe as their opponents claim, why do most of the experts continue to advocate them as the best available energy resource?
2. What is wrong (if anything) with building hydroelectric or steam- driven power plants instead of nuclear ones?
3. Our nuclear facilities already generate more than 30% of the nation's electricity, but demand continues to skyrocket both in the public and private sectors. What alternatives to nuclear energy do we have?
4. What can the government do to persuade the public that nuclear power is both economical and safe, not only to the people but to the environment as well?