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## Nuclear Power Equals Trump Profits

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Image by Planet Volumes.

Nuclear power is inseparable from Donald Trump. If you support atomic energy, you are also supporting the financial fortunes of the Trump family.

Trump is a major investor in the nuclear industry. He has invested heavily in the development of fusion power and stands to massively profit from its proliferation.

He also controls the obliteration of the regulatory apparatus designed to guarantee its safety in the United States. Trump's war in Iran has vastly escalated the potential threat of potentially apocalyptic drone strikes on atomic reactors, now a factor in Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine.

Team Trump has made a very public and effective show of tangibly attacking nuclear power's primary replacements, wind turbines and solar panels, along with geothermal and battery backup.

He has also heavily assaulted electric vehicles, which threaten the business of his fossil fuel backers.

But neither he nor the major media have talked much about Trump's direct financial interests in killing them off. Or about his destruction of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other agencies directly and indirectly promoting atomic power, from which he profits, while at the same time obliterating any reasonable assurance of public safety from the inevitable upcoming reactor disasters.

The Trump family's money-losing Truth Social company has recently become part-owner of a major fusion nuclear power endeavor.

Among much more, the investments mean the Trump family stands to profit directly from White House attacks on wind, solar and other inexpensive, clean renewable energies, which for decades have been driving fusion, fission and fossil fuels toward economic oblivion.

"A Trump-sponsored business is once again betting on an industry that the president has championed, further entwining his personal fortunes in sectors that his administration is both supporting and overseeing," reported an [article](#) on the front page of the business section of the New York Times last month. "This one is in the nuclear power sector. TAE Technologies, which is developing fusion energy, said...that it planned to merge with Trump Media & Technology Group. President Trump is the largest shareholder of the money-losing social media and crypto investment firm that bears his name, and he will remain a major investor in the combined company."

The headline of the piece: "Trump's Push Into Nuclear Is Raising Questions."

Primary issues have to do with economic conflicts of interest and public safety.

"The deal," the article continued, "would put Mr. Trump in competition with other energy companies over which his administration holds financial and regulatory sway. Already, the president has sought to gut safety oversight of nuclear power plants and lower thresholds for human radiation exposure."

CNN ran an [article](#) headlined: "A \$6 billion nuclear deal has Trump's name all over it. It's raising serious ethics questions."

CNN reported: "Nuclear fusion companies are regulated by the federal government and will likely need Uncle Sam's deep research and even deeper pockets to become commercially viable. The merger needs to be approved by federal regulators — some of whom were nominated by Trump."

CNN quoted Richard Painter, chief White House ethics lawyer under President George W. Bush, as saying: "There is a clear conflict of interest here. Every other president since the Civil War has divested from business interests that would conflict with official duties. President Trump has done

the opposite.” Painter is now a professor at the University of Minnesota Law School.

“Having the president and his family have a large stake in a particular energy source is very problematic,” said Peter Bradford, who previously served on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, in the Times article. The NRC, which Trump and Elon Musk’s DOGE have now gutted, was once meant to oversee the safety of the nuclear industry in the United States.

“The Trump administration has sought to accelerate nuclear power technology — including fusion, which remains unproven,” Bradford said. “That support has come in the form of federal loans and grants, as well as executive orders directing the NRC to review and approve applications more quickly.”

Still, the White House press secretary, Karoline Leavitt, said in a statement that “neither the president nor his family have ever engaged, or will ever engage, in conflicts of interest.”

And the Times piece said, “a spokeswoman for Trump Media” said the company was “scrupulously following all applicable rules and regulations, and any hypothetical speculation about ethics violations is wholly unsupported by the facts.”

It went on that “Trump’s stake in Trump Media, recently valued at \$1.6 billion, is held in a trust managed by Donald Trump Jr., his eldest son. Trump Media is the parent company of Truth Social, the struggling social-media platform. The merger would set Trump Media in a new strategic direction, while giving TAE a stock market listing as it continues to develop its nuclear fusion technology.”

The Guardian quoted the CEO of Trump Media, Devin Nunes, the arch-conservative former member of the House of Representatives from California and close to Trump, who is currently chair of the President’s Intelligence Advisory Board, saying Trump Media has “built un-cancellable infrastructure to secure free expression online for Americans. And now we’re taking a big step forward toward a revolutionary technology that will cement America’s global energy dominance for generations.” Nunes is the would-be co-CEO of the merged company.

A current member of the US House, Don Beyer, a Democrat from Virginia, said in a statement quoted in Politico that the deal raises “significant concerns” about conflicts of interest and avenues for potential corruption. “The President has consistently used both government powers and taxpayer money to benefit his own financial interests and those of his family and political allies. This merger will necessitate congressional oversight to ensure that the U.S. government and public funds are properly directed towards fusion research and development in ways that benefit the American people, as opposed to the Trump family and their corporate holdings.”

By federal law (the Price-Anderson Act of 1957), the US commercial atomic power industry has been shielded from liability in the event of major accidents it might cause. The “Nuclear Clause”

in every US homeowner's insurance policy explicitly denies coverage for losses or damages caused, directly or indirectly, by a nuclear reactor accident.

As his company fuses with the atomic industry, Trump acquires a direct financial interest in gutting atomic oversight — which he has already been busy doing. In June, Trump fired Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Christopher T. Hanson. No other president has ever fired an NRC Commissioner.

Earlier, more than 100 Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff were purged by Elon Musk's DOGE operation. There has been a stream of Trump executive orders calling for a sharp reduction in radiation standards, expedited approval by the NRC of nuclear plant license applications and a demand to quadruple nuclear power in the United States — from the current 100 gigawatts to 400 gigawatts in 2050. Such a move would require huge federal subsidies and the virtual obliteration of safety regulations. Trump has essentially ordered the NRC to "rubber-stamp" all requests from the nuclear industry in which he is now directly invested.

Trump's Truth Social fusion ownership stake removes all doubt about any regulatory neutrality. No presently operating or proposed US atomic reactor can be considered certifiably safe.

Trump's fusion investments are also bound to escalate Trump's war against renewable energy and battery storage, the primary competitors facing the billionaire fossil/nuke army in which the Trump family is now formally enlisting. That membership blows to zero the credibility of any claim nuclear reactor backers might make that atomic energy can officially be considered safe.

The NRC has long served as a lapdog to the atomic power industry. The acronym NRC has often been said to stand for "No Real Chance" or "Nobody Really Cares." The commission has been forever infamous for granting the industry whatever it might want, no matter the risk to public safety. It has employed some highly competent technical staff, lending some gravitas to the industry's marginal claims to even a modicum of competence.

But the NRC is well known for trashing even its established staff. Most notable may be the case of Dr. Michael Peck, a long-standing site inspector at California's Diablo Canyon twin-reactor nuclear power plant. In an extensive report, Peck warned that Diablo might be unable to withstand a likely earthquake. The NRC trashed his findings. Now he's gone from the agency altogether. His warnings have been ignored at a reactor site surrounded by more than a dozen confirmed seismic faults.

The splitting of the atom, fission, is the way the atomic bomb and nuclear power plants work up to now. Fusion involves fusing light atoms. It's how the hydrogen bomb works, and it comes with many extremely complex health, safety, economic and ecological demands.

In an article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Daniel Jassby, principal research physicist at the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab, working on fusion energy research and development for 25

years, concluded that fusion power “is something to be shunned.”

His piece was titled “Fusion reactors: Not what they’re cracked up to be.”

“Fusion reactors have long been touted as the ‘perfect’ energy source,” he wrote. And “humanity is moving much closer” to “achieving that breakthrough moment when the amount of energy coming out of a fusion reactor will sustainably exceed the amount going in, producing net energy.”

“As we move closer to our goal, however,” continued Jassby, “it is time to ask: Is fusion really a ‘perfect’ energy source? After having worked on nuclear fusion experiments for 25 years at the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab, I began to look at the fusion enterprise more dispassionately in my retirement. I concluded that a fusion reactor would be far from perfect, and in some ways close to the opposite.”

“Unlike what happens,” when fusion occurs on the sun, “which uses ordinary hydrogen at enormous density and temperature,” on Earth, fusion reactors that burn neutron-rich isotopes have byproducts that are anything but harmless,” he said.

A key radioactive substance involved in the fusion process on Earth would be tritium, a radioactive variant of hydrogen. Thus, there would be “four regrettable problems”— “radiation damage to structures; radioactive waste; the need for biological shielding; and the potential for the production of weapons-grade plutonium 239 — thus adding to the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation, not lessening it, as fusion proponents would have it,” wrote Jassby.

About nuclear weapons proliferation, “The open or clandestine production of plutonium 239 is possible in a fusion reactor simply by placing natural or depleted uranium oxide at any location where neutrons of any energy are flying about. The ocean of slowing-down neutrons that results from scattering of the streaming fusion neutrons on the reaction vessel permeates every nook and cranny of the reactor interior, including appendages to the reaction vessel.”

“In addition, there are the problems of coolant demands and poor water efficiency,” Jassby continues. “A fusion reactor is a thermal power plant that would place immense demands on water resources for the secondary cooling loop that generates steam, as well as for removing heat from other reactor subsystems such as cryogenic refrigerators and pumps....In fact, a fusion reactor would have the lowest water efficiency of any type of thermal power plant, whether fossil or nuclear. With drought conditions intensifying in sundry regions of the world, many countries could not physically sustain large fusion reactors.”

“And all of the above means that any fusion reactor will face outsized operating costs,” he wrote. “To sum up, fusion reactors face some unique problems: a lack of a natural fuel supply (tritium), and large and irreducible electrical energy drains....These impediments — together with the colossal capital outlay and several additional disadvantages shared with fission reactors — will

make fusion reactors more demanding to construct and operate, or reach economic practicality, than any other type of electrical energy generator.”

“The harsh realities of fusion belie the claims of proponents like Trump of ‘unlimited, clean, safe and cheap energy.’ Terrestrial fusion energy is not the ideal energy source extolled by its boosters,” declared the scientist.

Of course, for Trump, whether it has to do with tariffs, health care, affordability, the democratic process ... and on and on, reality is not a concern, especially when it involves public safety or legitimate profit.

Trump’s war on Iran has also vastly escalated the danger of drone attacks on atomic reactors, an apocalyptic threat now being used by Russia’s Putin against nuclear power plants in Ukraine. Any atomic reactor (there are 94 now licensed in the US) is vulnerable to a major disaster perpetrated by a single drone strike, as would be any future fusion plants completed by Truth Social.

Amidst his escalating attacks on renewable energy and atomic safety, the Trump family’s investments in nuclear fusion live under a bad cloud that threatens us all.

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