

DCN: 7228

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BRAC Commission

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AUG 09 2005

TO: Anthony Principi, Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Chairman, Base Closure Commission
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BRAC Commission

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Received

RE: Base Closings (BRAC)

Dear Chairman Principi,

I support your effort to realign and/or close selected bases. That job needs to be done periodically. Good luck.

I hear a lot of negative flack about it. The locals involved should accept reality and look for more positive options such as possible new businesses.

For example, create a new industry such as plants to manufacture solar/hydrogen power plants for the nation and the rest of the world. See my attached essay.

It would create many new jobs, improve the world, and reduce our dependence on oil.

Government financial support, as seed money, may be appropriate to start a new industry.

Sincerely,

K. L. Gray

HYDROGEN ECONOMY

A hydrogen economy is one where the electric power system of a society is changed from a few high power AC generation plants and long transmission lines to many smaller individual DC power generators.

For example, homes, farms, and businesses would have their own source of power -- their own DC power plant.

Each local power plant would have racks of solar panels, storage batteries, a water tank, and a source of water. The solar panels (cells) would use sun rays to charge the storage batteries and also separate hydrogen from water and other readily available materials. Hydrogen would be stored under pressure in a hydrogen tank. Oxygen, likewise, could be stored, or released into the air. Thus water is converted into a power source with an improvement in the environment.

The large stationary hydrogen tank would have a hydrogen dispenser to fill smaller mobile hydrogen tanks such as tanks on cars, trucks, tractors, etc. The dispenser might have controls such as measuring gauges, credit card and cash terminals, etc. to expedite easy flow of hydrogen fuel to end users. A person with a hydrogen tank could become a fuel station to replace oil stations across the country.

Local solar-hydrogen power plants might have inverters to change DC (direct current) to AC (alternating current) so extra power could be sold to the national power grid. Or they could run a DC motor to turn an AC generator to generate the AC.

Large power plants may continue in areas where large amounts of power are needed such as manufacturing plants, aluminum rolling mills, and steel mills. We could reduce the number of high-voltage transmission lines.

Hydrogen is used in fuel-cell vehicles to produce DC electricity to run electric motors to turn wheels. The waste product is pure water.

People would drive computer controlled fuel-cell cars in addition to the internal combustion cars we drive today. People, in driving across country, could refuel at the numerous 'hydrogen' service stations as we do gas oil stations today.

As time goes by, internal combustion engines could be cut back so we would not be so dependent on oil, and be more friendly to the environment. We could become independent of mid-East fossil oil.

PRO and CON -- see page 2.

HYDROGEN ECONOMY

PRO:

- Less strain on environment. Less global warming, etc.
- Less pollution.
- No need for more nuclear plants -- or much nuclear stuff at all. Let's use sun power -- a grossly neglected resource.
- More reliable power and less brownouts.
- Less need for large electric power generating plants, dams, and high voltage power transmission lines.
- Less noise -- fuel cell engines are quiet.
- Less exposure to terrorism.
- Many lower risks and insurance costs.
- Opportunities to distribute a better lifestyle around the world.
- Increase the sizes of middle classes and distribute wealth more equitably around the world. This might promote peace with less warfare.

CON:

- Convincing the rich ruling elite (the establishment) to change.
- Convincing the oil and electric power industries that a hydrogen economy is better.
- Time and cost to convert. We need patience.

For more info, see:

THE HYDROGEN ECONOMY by Jeremy Rifkin.