

## Gates Goes Nuclear

What's your opinion of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates? He's been lifted up as tech genius and he's been demonized as an arrogant billionaire who stifles fair competition. No matter what anyone thinks about Gates, he does have an amazing brain. And he's putting it to good use for humanity.

We bring this up because Netflix recently released a three-part series on Gates called, "Inside Bill's Brain". It's a fascinating look at one of the world's most intense thinkers. Our interest was piqued because Bill has lots of options. He could be relaxing on his own private island. Or he could be spending his money on propaganda campaigns or in a quest to become president. Instead, he's straining his brain to fix a few of the world's most challenging problems.

Gates has combined billions of his own dollars with billions from Warren Buffet on several issues that plague the developing world, such as a lack of fresh water, inadequate vaccination for disease, and a desperate need for sewage treatment solutions. These are all huge, complex problems, but Gates has taken on more than that. He's working on a new design for nuclear power plants, which could potentially bring abundant, affordable nuclear energy to the people that need it most. The new design is called the "Traveling Wave Reactor".

There are many advantages to this idea over nuclear plants in operation today. Consider that most current reactors were designed in the late 1960s and were built in the 1970s with manual controls operated by humans. Bill's brain is telling him that technology can automate key processes, thus eliminating the chance of human error, something that has made people fearful of nuclear.

The Chernobyl disaster happened because of a poor design and bad communication. The meltdown at Fukushima occurred because the Japanese located the back-up diesel generators at ground level. The engines that should have stopped the meltdown were rendered useless when Fukushima was hit by a tidal wave. The Traveling Wave Reactor, if it works, would not melt down if power was lost the way the Chernobyl and Fukushima reactors did. It would simply stop generating power.

Another exciting feature is that this new design could use several fuel sources, including spent fuel from existing reactors. Generating electricity with hazardous nuclear waste would be a game-changing solution to a multitude of problems.

As the Netflix series shows, Gates was on the verge of making a deal with China when President Trump began talking about unfair trade practices. That controversy put the deal on hold. Gates was very disappointed, but we think it could be a good thing.

Why in the world would we want China to develop this important energy technology? We at the Clear Energy Alliance believe the Traveling Wave Reactor should be built in America where we can make sure that it is properly and safely designed. Unfortunately, activist groups... the ones that claim they are fearful of catastrophic man-caused climate change... are leading the opposition against nuclear power that produces no carbon dioxide emissions. NIMBY groups fight it as well.

Finally, the thing we really appreciate about Bill Gates is that he is devoting his time, his money, and his incredible brain to work on real energy solutions. That's wonderful. Michael Bloomberg and Tom Steyer take note. There are better ways to spend your billions.

For the Clear Energy Alliance. I'm Mark Mathis. Power On!



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