Carter aide looks at energy

(Continued from page 2)

with prices gone down, many people have been changing their minds and look to this as something in the intermediate term. It might be a very good investment for fusion, it's hard to say. And it may be one of the best ways to go for developing countries, where small scale fusion, small-scale fission is very expensive, but one of the beauties of solar-electric is that you can do it on a small scale without much penalty.

The Tech: How many years are we talking about for solar?

Press: There are some people who think that solar-electric will be competitive for village-size power transmission in developing countries in 15 years.

The Tech: What percent of American energy needs can be met in fifteen years with solar?

Press: I would have to guess that, because the technology is changing so rapidly, I just hate to guess. In terms of very large scale -- you know, 1.000 megawatt plants -- I'm not so sure. But in terms of 30 megawatt plants, there might be a fair market for that. One way to gauge that is that private industry, using its own money, is now really moving into this area to conduct their research.

The Tech: The President's energy proposals, stressing use of coal, have been criticized by environmentalists, because [coal] is dirty fuel. Is that a major problem?

Press: So far as coal is concerned, it's expensive but the technology is developing to make it clean. The scrubbers and other devices will reduce the risk until it is very small. The Tech: Thank you.

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