No Energy Security Without Nuclear

By Nancy Spannaus

July 18, 2019—A thoughtful analysis of the recent Manhattan blackout published in the *City Journal* of July 15, prompts this brief post. The author, the former editor of *Popular Mechanics*, puts the blackout in the context of the miserable state of the aging electrical transmission system in the country, and of the threatened transition to an even more insecure system based on wind and solar (so-called renewables).

New York's Indian Point Nuclear Plant, threatened with shut down.

What I would add to his analysis are two further points of emphasis.

First, as this blog has been stressing, the threat to secure electrical energy in this country is in the process of being escalated dramatically by the totally unnecessary shutdown of our nuclear power plants. From a height of 102 plants, we have now gone down to 97, not because of any problem with the plants, but only because our government has made a political decision to subsidize inefficient, unreliable forms of energy, while deregulating the overall system. The loss of these plants represents a major hit to reliability and supply, the

latter problem somewhat masked by the low level of industrial production.

Were we to embark on the crash program of infrastructure replacement and upgrades that is required to prevent crashes and improve productivity overall, we would soon find our electricity supply totally inadequate.

The second point I would add, is that expanding our nuclear energy fleet is the front-end of dealing with our problems of power infrastructure. This is not because it is “zero-carbon” (which it is), but because it represents a higher energy density, and is a stepping stone to even cleaner, more efficient energies of the future, *i.e.* thermonuclear fusion power. There’s important news on that, but I’ll leave it for another post in the near future.