

April 8, 2008

There is no reason to mine uranium anymore. Even though the Harper and McGuinty governments may not realize it, we are now in a post-nuclear age. With Germany and Japan leading the way, solar power is now the fastest growing energy source, with its output doubling every two years and this rate will increase exponentially as more countries switch from dirty oil, coal, and nuclear to clean decentralized renewable power. Solar power is attracting government and venture capital on an unprecedented scale. The President of the European Union said that solar power would unleash a money-spinning bonanza in Europe. He predicted hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

At the same time, it is becoming clearer every day that the only thing the nuclear industry does well is public relations. When you look at the full uranium cycle from mining to nuclear reactors to nuclear waste, you find a dirty, dangerous, horribly expensive, heavily subsidized, and unreliable source of power, not the myth of "clean, reliable, affordable power that is propagated by the nuclear industry. The Union of Concerned Scientists in the U.S.A. says: "...that a large scale expansion of nuclear power in the United States or worldwide under existing conditions would be accompanied by an increased risk of catastrophic events-a risk not associated with any of the non-nuclear means for reducing global warming. Expansion of nuclear power would also produce large amounts of radioactive waste that would pose a serious hazard as long as there remain no facilities for safe long-term disposal. Prudence dictates that we develop as many options to reduce global warming emissions as possible, and begin by deploying those that achieve the largest reductions most quickly and with the lowest costs and risk. Nuclear power today does not meet these criteria".

Every month, Hydro One customers pay a debt retirement charge to pay for previous nuclear mistakes and cost over-runs. The Harper government plans to give AECL \$2 billion dollars and the McGuinty government plans give the nuclear industry hundreds of millions of dollars to refurbish and operate the reactors in Ontario. If that happens, Ontario will have more dirty, inefficient reactors and we will soon be paying double or triple what we now pay Hydro One for debt retirement charges to pay for future nuclear mistakes and cost over-runs. Already, the Ontario taxpayers are on the hook for the \$150 million which is half the cost of the \$300 million budget over-run to refurbish the Bruce nuclear reactors.

The worst consequence of subsidizing the nuclear industry is the diversion of money that could be used for conservation and clean renewable energy. If we took the money we throw down the nuclear black hole and spend it on conservation and clean power, we would have immediate results in reducing energy demand, increasing renewable power, and creating thousands of jobs.

Wolfe Erlichman



Nuclear is not the future

April 07, 2008

Re:AECL abandons effort to sell

U.K. reactors

Business, April 5

Why don't you investigate whose pockets were lined by the \$10 million of taxpayers' money that was spent on trying to sell the unreliable Candu reactor to Britain? The nuclear lobby in universities, government and private industry sucks in billions of taxpayers' dollars and leaves us with stranded debt on our hydro bills.

It's time to turn the page on the dirty, expensive and unreliable disaster that is nuclear power. If Ontario decides to buy nuclear reactors instead of investing in conservation, smart-grid technology and truly green power, it will be the worst mistake of Premier Dalton McGuinty's government.

Wolfe Erlichman, Godfrey, Ont.