

REGISTRY

Submission to the Environmental Assessment Office,

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Concerning the Vancouver Island Generation Project

by

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Introduction

I, along with many others, have paid very close attention to the Duke Point Gas Plant, i.e. the Vancouver Island Generation Project (VIGP), ever since the intention to build the plant was first made public.

In the interim, the citizens of Nanaimo have been subject to:

- rule by decree (being instructed that the gas plant was a "committed project"; in effect, there was nothing we could do about it)
- 'arrogance (being told by BC Hydro that citizens' opposition is simply "philosophical")
- hypocrisy (Sumas 2 is an "outrage", etc., etc., etc., yet the concerns of our politicians do not extend to the people of Nanaimo).

Note that I generally do not cite sources in this submission. Documentation accessed through www.sqwalk.com is sufficient support for my argument, and so I submit the entire documentation graph beginning at www.sqwalk.com to your appraisal for the purpose of the VIGP Assessment.

The Need for the VIGP

The need to build the VIGP has **not** been established on the basis of **open, independent** analysis.

What is clear to any thoughtful observer, however, is that there is a great swirling mass of subtext and pretext involved with the VIGP (see, for example, "Energy Policy" below, and note the relevance of the GSX).

Perusal of Jim Parr's submission to the E.A.O. leads one to conclude that BC Hydro's asserted "worst case scenario" is hardly likely to be the "worst case scenario" in the real world (a.k.a. Nanaimo).

Environment

Many others have expressed numerous concerns, stemming from this gas plant, for the environment (especially at the local, but also at the regional, and larger, scale). Obviously, the planet has only one air shed.

I won't recapitulate these concerns here. I would like to point out, though, that neither BC Hydro nor anyone accompanying them had any idea (when I asked them) how the VIGP effluent will affect area trees.

And this "Vancouver Island Generation Project" is just one of who knows how many anticipated (and probably planned) "Vancouver Island Generation Projects". When I asked BC Hydro, repeatedly, how many such power plants were in the offing for Vancouver Island, I could not get an answer.

Climate

BC Hydro has committed to offset 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the VIGP (through the year 2010).

The end result, at best, is that we are 50% worse off than before.

Wait, there's more... what about the impact of aerosols produced by the VIGP? They also contribute to climate change.

See, for example,
http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Dr_David_Suzuki/Article_Archives/weekly10040201.asp

Energy Policy

The draft B.C. Energy Task Force Report reveals nothing less than just to embark on an ill-advised and ludicrously out of touch [cf. Jeremy Rifkin's article in The Guardian (U.K. newspaper) concerning the EU's energy paradigm shift] fossil fuels extravaganza, to deregulate the provincial electricity market, to see private industry burn these fuels here and then export the electricity to the U.S.A. Domestic consumers get to experience the pollution first-hand while being stuck for hefty rate increases.

we invest publicly, we make mortgage payments and own the asset at the end of the day. Clearly, BC Hydro remains our best choice to meet future energy demands.

Providing electricity is not the same as selling toasters. Every single British Columbian relies on electricity to power their homes and businesses. Stability and reliability are key features that would be lost if we dismantle BC Hydro and privatize future generation. When private energy companies say they want "the right climate" for investment, they mean higher rates for everyone. That will make a few energy companies happy, but the rest of us will pay the price.

Democracy, Self-Determination and Sovereignty

It is imperative to realize that when our politicians throw away control of our public energy infrastructure, public lands, and natural resources, because of very onerous trade agreements the rest of us will be extremely hard-pressed to regain these crown jewels after the government of the day is removed.

This is simply scandalous. Fortunately, a legal challenge begins in order to apply justice to enforce the truth: these invaluable assets belong to the people of BC and cannot be sold off by politicians.

Questions For The Proponent

1. Here are some of the questions I had that were not answered by the proponent at the EAO Workshop in Nanaimo on October 15, 2002:
2. Can you explain the exact nature of the constraints of the current Ministerial Directives that you must operate under, and how do they drive your actions in the VIGP?
3. Why don't you knock on the provincial government's forehead and insist that Columbia River (see above) benefit be reified as hydro used by, for example, Vancouver Island residents, instead of dollars into the provincial government?
4. BC Hydro has collected wind data from all around BC. Where is that data, and your analysis, available now?
5. How much money has already been spent on hardware for the VIGP?
6. What was your complete analysis (particulate "life-cycle", impact on public health, etc.) concerning very fine particulate matter (< PM3)?

Conclusion

What does the VIGP mean for Nanaimo?

It means that our quality of life will deteriorate. And the upper bound on this deterioration is completely unknown, since BC Hydro does not model future (combined) polluting activities at or near the VIGP site.

BC Hydro, you will remember, was the genius that wanted to locate this gas plant right in Port Alberni (convenient for those high-salaried employees if they wished to eat at McDonalds). Now BC Hydro thinks it can move a little further out and... jolly hockey sticks... no, some of those chemical reactions will just have the additional time they need to fix.

Bad for public health, bad for the environment, bad for climate, bad for tourism and, placed into its proper context, bad for business, bad for self-determination and bad for sovereignty.

More than 6694 of Nanaimo's citizens have already gone on record as opposing the VIGP.

4 people favour the VIGP.

Get the picture?

WE DO NOT WANT THE VIGP!