

**April 22, 2008 Presentation to the Citizen's Inquiry into the Impact of Uranium Mining
Ottawa, Ontario**

On both my own behalf, and on behalf those for whom I am making this presentation, I thank for the opportunity to be here with you and that you have afforded us a little extra time for our presentation.

For the record my name is Phillip Penna, I am a past volunteer staff, board member, and current member of the Inter-Church Uranium Committee Educational Co-operative in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. I have been asked by ICUCEC, the Coalition for a Clean Green Saskatchewan, and my father, Dr. James Penna to present to you today the most recent information that has been produced or commissioned by ICUCEC. Some background information on these organizations and persons will be given you as attachments to this presentation.

Due to the importance of this new information, I will not be giving you a history of uranium mining in Saskatchewan and its social, environmental, political and spiritual impacts on our province. Though these are significant and weighty matters, we collectively felt it best to present to you this 18 minute video presentation by Dr. Chris Busby of the University of Liverpool and his analysis of the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Areva for their proposed Midwest Uranium Mine in northern Saskatchewan.

The reason for this decision is that Dr. Busby presents to us in clear, concise and understandable language how uranium works, that is: how and why it is matter of grave environmental and human health concern, and as a result, why the nuclear industry as a whole is morally and philosophically bankrupt and should be shut down and abandoned immediately, and why it is justified for all citizens of this country to stand in solidarity with Robert Lovelace who has been unjustly, and I would suggest unlawfully, imprisoned.

The information here speaks for itself. It is non-controversial, the only problem is that it is ignored by the regulatory bodies here in Canada and around the world. It is ignored at our peril. All I ask of you, members of the panel as well as the members of the audience, is to replace with whatever name of the nuclear project you and your community is facing every time Dr. Busby refers to the Midwest Uranium Project.

After this presentation, I will make some brief closing projects.

< video presentation >

We are sure many others would also like a detailed and heartfelt response.

Yours truly,

Bill Adamson, retired Professor of Pastoral Theology, past President of St. Andrews Theological College, University of Saskatchewan, member of the Saskatchewan Conference of the United Church.

Dale Dewar, Associate Professor, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan; past President, Physicians for Global Survival.

Jim Harding, retired Professor of Environmental and Justice studies; author of "Canada's Deadly Secret", past Councillor, City of Regina.

Jim Penna, retired Professor of Philosophy, Saint Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan; past Trustee, Saskatoon Separate School Board.

Dick Peters, Regional Coordinator, for KAIROS Prairies North Region, Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives.

Michael Poellet, Ph.D., for Inter-Church Uranium Committee Educational Co-operative (ICUCEC).

Graham Simpson, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan; past Board member, Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation (SCIC).

Sylvia Thompson, retired United Church of Canada Diaconal Minister, for Saskatchewan Non-Nuclear Clearing House (SNNCH).

Karen Weingeist, concerned citizen, for Coalition for a Clean Green Saskatchewan.

Dave Weir, for Regina Non-Nuclear Network.

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sites in 7 countries, including Canada, was published in the European Journal of Cancer Care.) The International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE), representing 100,000 doctors from 40 countries, recently endorsed a non-nuclear energy policy in part due to the risks that nuclear presents for human health. The doctors are, of course, concerned about the prospects of huge radiation releases from future nuclear meltdowns like Chernobyl and the risks from nuclear proliferation that come with any expansion of the nuclear industry.

You are so willing to debate the pros and cons of a universal drug plan. Why are you not willing to debate the implications of nuclear expansion for the life or death of children? With all your talk of health promotion averting rising healthcare costs, how do you justify supporting what is clearly a cancer causing industry?

Is Nuclear Peaceful?

Lastly, why is it that you never discuss nuclear weapons when you support uranium mining and nuclear expansion? Each of you may prefer to hide behind the outdated notion that uranium from Saskatchewan is only used for “peaceful purposes.” Can we consider such a toxic cancer-causing substance as uranium to be “peaceful” in any sense?

About 85% of the uranium exported to the U.S. remains available for use in weapons after the enrichment process that creates reactor fuel. This depleted uranium (DU) is used to produce nuclear bombs and other DU weapons that are presently killing civilians in the Middle East. Each of the 300,000 uranium bullets fired during the U.S. “Shock and Awe” invasion of Iraq likely had a bit of Saskatchewan within it. The extremely carcinogenic uranium aerosols from these exploding bullets are now in the air and on the land virtually forever, and are already responsible for vast increases in birth deformations and childhood cancers in the region. How does this violence of the so-called peaceful atom truly make you feel?

All of you, we are sure, would endorse human rights. Are you aware that it is a war crime and a crime against humanity to make and use weapons that indiscriminately kill civilians? It is no longer possible to hide behind the reassuring rhetoric of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, so, we ask: what is your position on Saskatchewan uranium being a major source for these horrendous uranium weapons? Be honest. Do you believe that the end justifies the means: that short-term economic benefits of uranium here justify spreading radiation and cancer across other people’s homelands?

Can you turn your heart and head away from such suffering, and from our complicity in it? Do you really support economic growth at any cost? Do you place short-term benefits and votes here, above concerns for global impacts and future effects? Surely if the labour movement is willing to make the sacrifices to make the conversion to sustainable jobs, business should also be willing to come on side. But where is the political leadership on the necessity for such conversion? Why are you not raising these vital questions? Do you think the continuation of political amnesia is really good for our wellbeing and for our democracy? Or for our grandchildren, who will reap the burdens of inaction on preventing radioactive contamination and climate change?

We are looking for some sign that those of you wanting to lead our Province actually care about what the nuclear and uranium industry is doing to people and the planet, and about getting serious about averting cataclysmic climate change. This is too big an issue for you to duck during this election. So, why the general silence on these vital issues of sustainable energy, environmental and human health, and the travesties of radioactive war? Have we so lost our way, and become so amorally parochial, that such considerations no longer matter enough to be raised and debated during an election in our province?

where nuclear provides only 16% of electricity and 3% of primary energy worldwide, uranium reserves would run out in 85 years. Meanwhile, each job from nuclear costs one million or more dollars in capital.

How do you justify diverting scarce capital into a costly uranium refinery, or nuclear power plant, when there is such urgency to create truly sustainable, non-polluting, renewable energy systems to avert catastrophic climate change? Especially when these sustainable alternatives are cheaper, create far more and much safer employment, and can get on-stream quickly enough to make a difference?

We are not picking on Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is not alone in having a huge economic dilemma over sustainability. Even though asbestos has proven to be highly carcinogenic, and is continuing to kill thousands of people exposed to it, the world's largest asbestos mine in Quebec has not yet been shut down. Short-term economics there, too, dwarf human health, the environment and morality. The consequences of spreading radioactivity from uranium and nuclear across the planet are, of course, far more devastating, and include the added dangers of catastrophic nuclear reactor accidents and the spread of radiation weaponry.

Is Nuclear Environmentally Healthy?

You all seem to have accepted some version of the nuclear industry propaganda that it provides the “clean” magic bullet for global warming. But the nuclear fuel system contributes to GHGs. Saskatchewan uranium is enriched at two dirty coal plants in Kentucky, and let's not forget the huge quantities of energy used in uranium mining. For example, the Globe and Mail reports that the Cigar Lake mine requires the largest cement plant in Saskatchewan to try to stabilize its underground tunnels.

The private nuclear plants proposed for Alberta will be used to enhance the production of heavy oil, the dirtiest of all fossil fuels. The Battleford area is most likely being targeted for a uranium refinery because of potential demand in the tar sands. We ask you in all sincerity: what does this proposed twinning of nuclear and heavy oil say about the nuclear industry's “environmental ticket”?

The new Candu design proposed for Alberta would use reprocessed spent reactor fuel (nuclear waste). This would increase the pressure to make Northern Saskatchewan and/or Alberta an international nuclear waste dump. Again, as with uranium mining, it would primarily be Indigenous land that would be sacrificed for this military-industrial venture. What is your position on Saskatchewan becoming a nuclear waste dump?

We hope each of you has reflected on the more-than-disturbing fact that the plutonium in nuclear wastes is toxic for at least 8000 generations – which is five times the period it took humans to migrate from North Africa around the whole planet. The continued production of nuclear wastes in return for small economic payoffs today places unjustified burdens on future generations. Please tell us: in what sense can expansion of this industry be considered the moral, let alone sustainable path to follow?

How is promoting nuclear as “clean” more credible than tobacco industry's claims that its product was benign? The Canadian Nuclear Association (CNA) has publicly stated that harm from low-level radiation has not been proven; meanwhile the U.S. Surgeon General now considers low-level radiation from radon gas to be the second leading cause of cancer after smoking. Uranium mine tailings will release radon into the larger environment for millennia. Is appeasing the corporate community blinding you to these vital matters of worker and public health?

The August 13th MacLean's reported a study that found that children 9 and under, living near nuclear facilities were 24% more likely to die of leukemia. (This study, reviewing 17 studies, covering 136 nuclear

Coalition for a Clean Green Saskatchewan

November 1, 2007

Open Letter to SK Political Leaders

Filed under: Atomwaffen - Nuclear Weapons, Depleted Uranium Poisoning (D.U.), Elections & Media, Nuclear Power, Uranium, activism, ecological racism, military industrial complex, mining, nuclear, nuclear waste — politicsnpoetry @ 1:34 pm

OPEN LETTER TO THE LEADERS OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC, SASK AND LIBERAL PARTIES OF SASKATCHEWAN

Why Are You Ducking The Nuclear Question?

There is something surreal about this election, for none of you has had to fundamentally justify your pronuclear policies. Saskatchewan is now the major front-end uranium supplier of the global nuclear system, and this issue demands public scrutiny.

Last year Premier Calvert travelled to France to get support from Areva to build a uranium refinery here. Saskatchewan exports all its uranium, and some argue a refinery would add value before export, and strengthen the provincial economy. Meanwhile, Calvert is on record as opposing nuclear power here, and in this election has highlighted a commitment to expand non-polluting renewable energy use at home. What's good for the goose (us) is, apparently, not good for the gander (those who import uranium from us).

David Karwacki and Brad Wall haven't pointed out this huge disconnect, perhaps because they wish to hide their own. In the televised leaders' debate about the future political direction of the province there was not one mention of "uranium" or "nuclear", even when directly asked a question about global warming.

Sask Party literature quotes the Suzuki Foundation that Saskatchewan has the highest per capita greenhouse gases (GHGs) in Canada. Yet Mr. Wall won't come out and say whether or not he supports nuclear power replacing coal plants here. And Mr. Wall doesn't quote Suzuki on how heavy oil development in the tar sands (which all of you want to further develop in Saskatchewan) is soon to become the world's largest single source of GHGs?

As the leaders of your parties you are letting each other off the hook on nuclear and energy policy. This is patently irresponsible in view of the Saskatchewan economy becoming more dependent on the production of non-renewable energy that contributes to radioactive contamination and global warming. That the media has not asked you the hard questions is disconcerting. So let us ask you a few.

Is Nuclear Sustainable?

Any short-term economic spin-offs from a uranium refinery would depend on the continuation of billions in public subsidies that have kept the nuclear industry afloat. Without these subsidies the market cost of nuclear would likely triple. Despite this help nuclear is quickly losing ground to renewable energy sources, which already produce more electricity globally than nuclear. Aren't you concerned that our growing dependency on a non-renewable energy economy will cripple our future?

All of you acknowledge the need for a sustainable economy, yet seem unwilling to evaluate your pronuclear policies in those terms. The IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) estimates at today's low usage,

- To bring about a complete end to uranium mining in Saskatchewan, the ecologically sound stewardship of Saskatchewan uranium mine tailings, and just reparations to those who have been affected by the uranium industry in Saskatchewan from the 1950's to the present.
- To do our part to bring about an end to the nuclear industry world-wide, and the ecologically sound stewardship of radioactive materials created or exposed to the environment as a result of the nuclear industry.

ICUCEC: A History

<http://www.icucec.org/icucec%3A-history?page=0%2C0>

Who We Are

Inter-Church Uranium Committee Educational Co-operative (ICUCEC) is an inter-church coalition that works to:

- educate people about the nuclear industry in Saskatchewan
- halt all nuclear development in the province, including the mining of uranium.

In doing so, we:

- support economic development alternatives in and for Northern Saskatchewan
- promote alternative sustainable energy options

ICUCEC's role is that of a nuclear "watchdog" in Saskatchewan and its members make submissions to panels and government regulatory agencies. ICUCEC has even taken CNSC (Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission) to court over its failure to abide by its own regulations.

ICUCEC, registered under the Provincial Co-operatives Act, has a membership of around 70. It is funded largely through individual donations, with some support from church groups. Open board meetings are held monthly.

Mission Statement

The Inter-Church Uranium Committee is founded on three principles from Judaeo-Christian teachings:

- "Thou shalt not kill."
- "Blessed are the Peacemakers."
- "Humanity cannot live on bread alone."

These principles lead us to a respect for all life, a desire to build a just, peaceful and ecologically sound world, and a belief that social well-being must be measured, not only in terms of outward, quantitative, material growth, but also in terms of inward, qualitative, moral and spiritual growth.

We acknowledge, with sorrow, that Saskatchewan mines some twenty-five to thirty percent of the world's uranium, and that, from here, our uranium goes forth to fuel the world-wide nuclear energy and weapons complex.

Based on our desire for peace, ecological wisdom and human health and well-being, our organization stands in opposition to uranium mining in Saskatchewan and to the uranium/nuclear industry around the world.

Our organization exists to achieve the following goals:

- To educate people in Saskatchewan and elsewhere about the many peace, environmental and health issues arising from the mining of uranium in Saskatchewan and the nuclear industry world-wide.
- To be a voice for people affected by the uranium industry in Saskatchewan.
- To prevent the further expansion of the uranium/nuclear industry in Saskatchewan.
- To stand in solidarity with others opposing the nuclear industry across Canada and around the world.

In conclusion, let me reiterate a point that Dr. Busby makes:

a) the philosophical underpinnings of the uranium and nuclear industry, namely, Utilitarianism, is not enough to justify uranium mining and is superceded by international human rights law. For this reason, I argue that Robert Lovelace is unjustifiably and illegally in jail.

b) Dr. Busby mentioned the spreading of uranium contaminated dust through wind. I have here three slides for a powerpoint presentation which you will receive electronically. The first two slides show how dust caused by exploration activities - blasting - moves over a 48 hour period from northern Saskatchewan down through Winnipeg and over to the Great Lakes. The third slide shows how this dust moves over a 6 day period. It shows how the immediate area of the mining activity will get bombarded with this dust, and then move over Manitoba and into northern Ontario and beyond. The effects of uranium mining are global in nature and therefore everyone has a stake in each uranium project.

c) Lastly, I want to quote a statement in the *Report of the Joint-Federal Provincial panel of Uranium Mining Developments in Northern Saskatchewan*, Chaired by Dr. Donald Lee, in their February 1997 report on the McArthur River Uranium Mine Project. It is of critical concern to those of who live in the shadow of the uranium industry in Canada:

“Although the Government of Canada prohibits the use of Canadian uranium in nuclear explosive devices, it permits the sale of uranium to foreign buyers in accordance with its policy of fungibility. This policy requires that, for all Canadian uranium sold, an equivalent quantity must be accounted for in non-military applications. However, no process exists to separate Canadian uranium from uranium acquired from other sources. This policy of fungibility, therefore, fails to provide assurance to the public that Canadian uranium will not be used in weaponry.” (Section 13.5, page 54)

I note that this statement has never been refuted by either the Governments of Saskatchewan or the Governments of Canada. In light of all of the above, it should be eminently clear that it is time that we all met our moral responsibilities as citizens of this country to rise up and stop the uranium industry from digging up one more atom of uranium. It is time to leave it in the ground.

Thank you.