

SUBMITTED BY: JOHN DROZDOWSKI
R.R. #1,
McDonald's Corners, Ontario

I'd like to personally thank everyone here today for showing up, and also to those, not present, who submitted a contribution. Give yourselves a pat on the back! The time has come to yell-out enough is enough! We need to turn off our computer, or the HD-TV, or the car engine and ask this question. What are we doing and where are we going? I don't pretend to have the answers, later I'll offer some suggestions to consider. We must ask the questions now, so we can think things through. One has to make the time. This naïve trust that our government or someone else will take care of it, for us, because it's their problem, is avoiding our responsibility as a result of our involvement, as consumers.

To have a better sense of where I'm coming from, I should add that I have an educational background in the Sciences, and many years of work experience in trouble shooting and problem solving. I wouldn't want to individually tackle the problems of the day, however, I can say, more heads are better than one, and since we're all in same boat, let's put our heads to together. My dad always said, "The way you make your bed is the way you sleep in it."

Thomas Homer-Dixon wrote "The Ingenuity Gap" in 2001. In his book, he questions whether -or-not we can create and implement useful ideas fast enough to solve the very problems - environmental, social and technological - we've created. He believes that the world is rapidly exceeding our intellectual grasp and we are all caught dangerously between a soaring requirement for ingenuity and an increasingly uncertain supply. It seems to me, even if we have ingenuity to solve the environmental problems associated with using uranium as an energy resource, there's other factors at play, such that, sound science is not being applied. Conflicts of interest are driving this influence.

Collective brain storming isn't going to be an easy job. It's like a poker game now, the players of interest aren't showing all their cards. Expert opinions are just opinions, some having more weight than others, however, are they the opinions of a poker player? Do they have a stake in the outcome, or represent someone who does?

Let me give you some examples of what I mean. Politicians, purveyors of propaganda, it's now called, spin come up with quick fixes, to give the appearance of good governance. What's the hidden agenda? Is the cure worse than the disease? Are they thinking things through? Are they buying time, to come up with a better solution later? Then there's the role that big business plays in the scheme of things. What's a reasonable return on investments? What's fair for all? What about legal and ethical corporate responsibility. The standard practice of the day, is not being a good corporate citizen, but making sure one follows the letter of the law and not necessarily

the intent of the law.

Yes, we need energy, but are we good stewards of the land? Do we know the real costs of our actions? Looking at the Tar Sands projects as an example, I say not! We're proceeding with the Tar Sands as if we're desperately worried about running out of oil. Large amounts of water and natural gas are being used to extract the oil leaving lake sized lagoons of toxic waste, to magically be dealt with later. This resource isn't going anywhere, yes there's a finite supply, but it becomes more valuable as time goes on. Given time, a more energy efficient and environmentally friendly method of extraction could be developed.

Are we going to be proceeding in the same way with utilizing uranium? I say it's high time we put the brakes on. It's not about, not in my backyard, it's about the big picture! We're not living sustainably.

What do we do now, you ask? I suggest the implementing the 3Rs, recycle, reduce and reuse. Why is it cheaper to buy a new printer for a computer, than to, just replace the ink cartridge?

We can buy time by practicing conservation! It creates jobs and stimulates the economy! Pay farmers a fair price, don't influence how they best use their land by offering subsidies. Subsidise the replacement of energy inefficient appliances, homes and buildings, not to forget energy inefficient transportation. Why are we producing and promoting the social acceptability of using crotch rockets to get us to the drive-thrus and work in 5 minutes tops?

IN SUMMARY, WE AS CONSUMERS HAVE TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR: creating the demand for, the use of uranium; and the problems created by it's use now, with our current track record of tidying up the loose ends later.

LET'S BE CONSCIENOUS OF MAKING CHANGES NOW, IN OUR CONSUMPTIVE LIFESTYLES, SO WE CAN ALL GO DOWN THE RIGHT ROAD TO A BETTER FUTURE!