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I've attended every minute of every meeting that the NWMO held here in Timmins. The thing that struck me was the narrow framework of discussion. There was no discussion on overall energy policy in Canada.

The Nuclear Fuel Waste Act uses words like comprehensive and integrated to describe the required nuclear waste dialogue with Canadians. Yet the NWMO process is narrowed to having Canadians pick one of three waste handling options.

We are expected to do that after a couple of weeks of consideration. And, we're being asked to do this by a nuclear industry that was started in the sixties without public consultation. An industry that after forty-years has yet to come up with a waste plan acceptable to Canadians.

In 1989 when forming the Seaborn Environmental Assessment Panel, the ministers of the day committed the government to having a study on energy production in Canada.

This is what Canadians want. The expressed intention of the public is to have a study which would determine where we are headed in regards to energy production in this country.

Canadians are uncomfortable with dealing with the nuclear waste problem in isolation.

They want to know if the government will increase nuclear power production and make more nuclear waste. Or, will there be a gradual reduction and eventual phase out of the costly and dangerous industry.

Will the government consider the conservation of energy and the use of alternative power production like wind ? Just think, if the government had listened to Canadians fifteen years ago we would be world leaders in wind turbine technology which produces electricity at half the cost of nuclear plants and does it without any waste product.

We would be exporting wind technology instead of CANDU reactors. We could be offering the world cheap environmentally friendly wind power instead of enhancing the proliferation of nuclear arms and exacerbating a world wide nuclear waste problem.

The question is, are we about to let our country continue on down this dangerous and costly nuclear road like a horse with blinkers ? I say enough of that crap. If the government sincerely wants to talk about nuclear waste handling, lets talk about the whole ball of wax. Lets talk about the entire nuclear industry within contemporary Canadian society.

Canadians want an energy policy review. We want to be involved in the decisions as to where our country is going to go with regards to energy production.

The government left us out when it jumped into the nuclear industry without waste plans in the sixties. The government then left us out by denying Canadians an over-all energy review in 1989. And now, the government is again leaving us out..

The NWMO process denies public involvement in decision making and is perceived as a superficial tactic meant to justify future implementation plans. However, considering the irreversibility of any accident and considering the million- year time frame associated with the nuclear waste problem, the public will not be left out again.

However, the it looks like the we are left out. The NWMO

- narrowly frames discussion to waste handling only
- writes up their perception of Canadian public opinion
- relates their interpretation of their perceptions to the government
- and then proceeds to make a final decision on implementation

That's supposed to be involvement in a comprehensive and integrated dialogue? Sounds more like a government bureaucrat's Christmas wish list.

We must ask: Will a real consensus of Canadian opinion be heard in November of 2005 and what issues will be accentuated?.

In a Canadian Policy Research Network report released in July of 2004 written at the behest of NWMO, it was stated that " Canadians have a strong sense that industry and the government are not telling them the whole truth.....they wish to have a voice in major policy choices.....even though they acknowledge and expect that if no communities volunteer, the final choice will be made by the federal government".

The report is quick to bring attention to an opinion that the government should take unilateral decision and select a site for nuclear waste.

But, what about opinions on the eventual phase-out of the nuclear industry and the use of alternate energy sources from wind at half the cost? Did those issues not warrant mention in the report discussion?

Will NWMO also forget to mention these issues to the government in 2005. I suppose it is difficult for NWMO to consider the phase out of their own industry as a final solution to its waste problem and bring attention to its cheap and clean competition..

In a NWMO news release is says Elizabeth Dowdeswell NWMO president was received in Thunder Bay with "delightful media attention and attendance."

This occurred in a community that a few years ago voted 92% against having a nuclear waste industry. Did Thunder Bay suddenly have a change of heart, or, is a nuclear industry bias showing here ?

In another NWMO news release, a Timmins meeting, that was incidently held without public notification and arranged by Gary Scripnick, resulted in a photo op with smiling happy faces portraying an interest in economic benefits.

This occurred in a community that has a by-law prohibiting nuclear materials. Did Timmins suddenly have a change in heart, or, is a nuclear industry bias again showing here?

Are these are examples of how the the nuclear industry will protect itself and portray the sentiments of Canadians in a biassed manner in 2005?

Mike Kriznac said in the Daily Press today that the issue of nuclear waste can't be side lined, the fact is we have it.

No one is talking about sidelining the nuclear waste problem, far from it. It's a shining example of where a society ends up without foresight.

The government has show irresponsibility by jumping into the nuclear industry without a plan for the waste and has proved it can't think ahead. It's time for the public to step in and show direction.

The point is that the waste problem is significant enough that it undermines the feasibility of nuclear energy. Alternative energy production and nuclear phase-out must be considered as part of the solution.

In conclusion,

- considering questions as to the fulfilment of the NWMO mandate to have a comprehensive and integrated dialogue with Canadians
- considering the unsurmountable technical and social problems facing NWMO
- considering the shoddy and narrow process of informing Canadians.
- considering the lack public involvement in NWMO decisions
- and, considering the irreversible damage that can be caused by a nuclear accident

I feel that nothing less than a parliamentary debate on Canadian Energy Policy is required. The debate would include discussion on nuclear power phase-out, nuclear waste, and include alternate forms of energy production and the conservation of energy use.