

Selective Inattention to Nuclear Details

Selective inattention to nuclear details is evident in the editorial opinion of the Star Phoenix (Sat. Nov. 5, 2005) The editors ignore the fact that nuclear reactors give off radioactive tritium into the atmosphere.

They ignore the fact that enrichment plants preparing fuel bundles for nuclear reactors give off large amounts of chlorofluorocarbon gas which are destroying the ozone layer of the atmosphere. This CFC gas also contributes to global warming 10,000 to 20,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

They ignore the massive amounts of carbon fuels used in the caterpillars, trucks, and motors used in constructing a nuclear reactor plant (e.g. Darlington for 12 years at \$18 billion dollars.)

They harp on "moral responsibility," when Saskatchewan has already paid its dues, by accepting the huge deposits of radioactive tailings in the JEB pit, from 9 different mines, which is only 100 metres from the Fox Creek water system. Imagine keeping the surrounding pumps working for 1000 years! The milling process grinds the ore and its radium and uranium into fine powder, thus releasing all the alpha radiation in it for our benefit! Some 70% of our uranium exports go to other countries. They use it for making reactor fuel bundles, and the remaining depleted uranium into weapons. The weapons indiscriminately shower radioactivity around areas in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and recently Iraq. The USA has six different plants producing depleted uranium weapons, and is selling those weapons to 29 other countries.

Why would Saskatchewan have a "moral responsibility" to take a double whammy, first with the mine tailings, then with the high level wastes from other peoples' reactors?

The editors are interested in business, profits, and a share of an estimated \$24 billion. They display "selective inattention" to the dangerous ramifications of the nuclear industry. They do not care for the welfare of our environment and its many waterways, nor the welfare of our citizens with all the alpha radiation released for our "value added" benefit! They ignore the vast uneconomic cost of nuclear power without government subsidies propping it up. No one has yet calculated or factored in the immense costs of dismantling and decommissioning huge radioactive, worn-out reactors for burial by robotic equipment.

There are approximately 22 reactors in Canada, 80 in the USA, and 442 in the world, all with their swimming pools filled with red-hot radioactive waste, toxic for thousands of years. Then there are thousands of nuclear missiles on hair-trigger alert, plus more and more depleted uranium ammunition being used---all of this a nuclear accident waiting to happen!

Why would Saskatchewan enlarge its part in this dangerous cycle?