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BCUC INQUIRY RESPECTING SITE C

F 156-2

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Below is an updated, and corrected version of a submission I provided about 24 hours ago. Unfortunately, in my haste, numerous typographical and grammatical errors were embedded in my commentary. I therefore wish to submit this version with its corrections, which make the document more readable and comprehensible. I also added a few other thoughts to my commentary.

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I have no technical expertise to determine if the project is on time, on budget, the best thing for BC residents in terms of energy production or how any of the three potential decisions will alter rates.

My gut, and some experts external to BC Hydro have stated the power generation this dam would provide is not needed for the benefit of residents of BC or the majority of its established industry. Others have analyzed the economics and claim that the project will not only cause huge increases in our electrical rates for many years to come, but that the project is likely to come in way over the claimed budget, as is often the case with such mega-projects. Environmentalists have stated that hydroelectric power is not nearly as "green" as it is claimed to be. The destruction of river valleys, farm land, the carbon footprint of these activities, methane production from rotting organic matter under the water, and the process of constructing a monster dam from tons of concrete, one of the most greenhouse gas intensive materials, indicates that this project is not clean nor environmentally positive. Many indicate that smaller projects using alternative electrical generation methods are better, cheaper, more scaleable and require much less debt to be created over shorter periods, can also allow, as appropriate, for private enterprise to partner in the development of such projects. Many smaller tailored energy projects can provide more sustainable and wider variety and geographically located employment, distributing provincial funds more diffusely and slowly, benefiting more communities. Further communities can enter the discussion as to which type of energy generation they might prefer, and at what scale it is required. This also limits power loss through the need for long transmission cables..

As I said, while my gut tends to lean toward those experts statements, I am not capable of determining the veracity of such comments.

I have, however, read the first 30 pages of the preliminary report, and what appears to be obvious to me is that the members of the BC Utilities Commission may be no better positioned to determine these things. This is not meant to be an attack on the competency of the BCUC members, but on the nature of the structure of this inquiry.

In my readings, one thing keeps on coming to the surface. For the most part, the Commission members need to rely upon information provided them principally by BC Hydro, and to a lesser extent by Deloitte LLP, which may have expertise in certain fiscal matters, but may not be able to answer many of the questions raised in the terms of reference.

I will be as clear as I can be. I do not trust BC Hydro to provide fair, honest and accurate submissions to the Commission. What was once a reliable, upstanding crown corporation appears, from my experience and readings, to have become little more than a tool and fund generator for the prior government, and a self-serving organization which is only concerned with creating jobs for its employees and those private

corporations and unions they associate with. While again, I only have a gut reaction, it might prove edifying to find out what type of political donations these contractors might have been providing the prior government.

If, as the Preliminary Report states, the vast majority of the data required to answer the questions within the terms of reference will be provided by BC Hydro themselves, I have absolutely no faith that the final report will be more than a rehashing of the already well publicized opinions of BC Hydro executives that the project must go ahead. Even with the replacement of the CEO, the embedded culture of the corporation is still stuck in the same self-serving mode which has become its norm.

BC Hydro has not been an advocate for the rate payer nor the environment for at least a decade. If the Commission does not also employ data which can confirm or debunk that which is provided by BC Hydro, I fear the Commission members will simply be led down the garden path, and will be doing the bidding for BC Hydro, and its many contractors and unions.

I recognize the Commission is on a very tight schedule to deliver the final report, and this places undue pressure to try to streamline the inquiry, however, it may prove to be a huge error. Clearly, the prior government twisted and connived the reports regarding BC Hydro while skimming our rates and fees to sneak funds into general revenues. They may well have awarded contracts to friends and cronies, and they have made "deals with the devil" which lock us into overly long term power generation from private sources at well over market rates.

Please dig beyond the facts and figures provided by BC Hydro, unions, or contractors involved in the Site C project, or the Commission may well make decisions based upon unreliable information.

Thank you.