

KEEP A LIGHT ON FOR CANADA

WHY WE NEED TO RECLAIM ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY — BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

George W. Bush is relying on Canadian energy to fuel America's military and economic expansion. But he knows that he doesn't need to invade our country to get what's left of Canada's dwindling supplies. One of the recommendations of the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America, signed by Bush, Paul Martin and Vicente Fox in March 2005, is a "continental energy and natural resources pact."

During the Council's Citizens' Inquiry on Canada-U.S. Relations, Canadians urged the federal government to resist the further depletion of our energy supplies, and to aggressively promote a transition to a renewable energy economy. Here are some of the things they told us:

CANADA IS ALREADY GIVING AWAY TOO MUCH OF ITS ENERGY.

NAFTA's "proportional sharing" clause ensures that the only way Canada can export less oil or gas to the U.S. is by cutting domestic consumption by an equal proportion. Canada now exports over 60 per cent of its gas supply to the U.S. How much more could the U.S. want?

THE WORLD IS RUNNING OUT OF OIL.

Oil production in the United States peaked in 1971. The extraction of oil from the Athabasca tar sands is only prolonging the exhaustion of Canada's supply by a few years. Experts argue that oil is far too cheap and suggest that it should triple in price to reflect the reality of a global oil peak.

OIL EXTRACTION WASTES AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF WATER.

Extracting oil from Alberta's tar sands requires three barrels of water for each barrel of oil produced. The extraction process also converts a good share of this water into toxic waste, permanently removing it from the hydrological cycle. The scarcity of oil is directly contributing to a global water crisis.

A COMMON ELECTRICITY GRID WOULD LEAD TO BLACKOUTS AND SHORTAGES FOR CANADIANS.

In August 2003, millions of Canadians were affected by the existing integration of the power grid, when a system failure in the U.S. left them without power for days. The only purpose of an expanded electricity grid would be to export more electricity to the U.S.

CANADA SHOULD FOCUS ON DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY.

This would reduce Canada's dependence on fossil fuels and help combat climate change. The only way to protect the sovereignty of Canada's energy supplies is by reducing consumption and halting mass exports.

Guy Caron is the Campaigner-at-Large for
The Council of Canadians, focusing on
Canada-U.S. relations.