



CNSC Hearings, LaRonge, SK.--10 min
presentation, June 9,2004--Re: Cluff Lake
Decommissioning

President Keen, Members of the Commission.

The points in my written intervention, which I wish to emphasize are the need for a clean-up of the contaminated sediment in Snake Lake, and the neglect of alpha radiation and its by--products, by Cogema.

The Comprehensive Study Report acknowledges that selenium contamination of the sediment in Snake Lake is causing deformities in fish (pp.10-12, 6-51), molybdenum is causing a risk to zooplankton and northern pike (p. 6-45), uranium and radium have increased levels in Snake and Island Lake (p.6-46), and elevated concentrations of metals and arsenic are found in Cluff Lake.(p. 6-45)

The shallow waters at Snake Lake, at only one metre in depth, and which is at the receiving end of the contaminated waters, needs to be dredged and cleaned.

Cogema's "passive" approach, or "do nothing" approach, states that the Lake will restore itself in 50 to 100 years is totally unacceptable! It is an insult to the people and the environmen of Saskatchewan. It was content to extract some \$620 million dollars from uranium yellowcake, and yet is

too cheap to invest in any cleanup of the mess it is leaving behind.

It quickly brushes aside the task of dredging (pp. 8-12,9-1). It states that dredging would destroy the aquatic organisms (Responses G5--2 & 4, BA-5) But dykes could be set up to remove the water from one section while dredging goes on, then the water and its organisms could be let back into the area, before another section is dyked and dredged. Suddenly, Cogema has become feeble and inept in its engineering, especially when it comes to cleaning up its mess! In other Projects like Rabbit Lake, dykes were used to hold the lake water back in order to mine uranium from under the shoreline.

It is inadequate to say that sediment concentrations were last measured in 1998, so that all we need now is computer modeling. It is inadequate to say that radiation doses are so low that we do not need to measure it or to estimate its risk.
(Responses--BA--6)

Secondly, Cogema in its CSR continually avoids dealing with alpha radiation. It mentions frequently testing for gamma radiation, and then doing the multiplication bit, plus most references are to future possible testing. This is old science. Drs. Pentreath and Woodhouse in Britain have emphasized that alpha radiation is so different and distinct from gamma radiation, that it needs a whole new set of categories and measurements. There are needed current tests, for radium and its daughters, and the alpha radiation which they give off for many years.

In the studies and reports, the word "mitigation" is used time and again. Let me ask CNSC, how do you mitigate the effects of radium and its daughters, and its alpha radiation, once it is brought to the surface of the earth? How do you mitigate alpha radiation? How do you put the genie back in the bottle?

The CNSC staff say that the cleanup of the contamination spill of tailings storage vaults is satisfactory. However, the Nov. 12,1981 Inspection

Report states that the leach tails had a radioactivity level equal to 300% uranium ore. (p.4). Three drums had tipped over, and rubber tired equipments had tracked through the spill. It also said that a meter was used to measure the radioactivity and "immediately went off the scale." (p.2). so that they had to get a stronger type of meter. On April 22, 1982 another 5 containers of tailings, out of a total of 2,916 vaults, with concentrated radium waste tipped over and leaked 800 gallons of contaminated liquid, with values for radium R-226 up to 90Bq/L. R. G. Barsi and Kevin Scissons stated, "Decommisioning plans for this site must take into account this pad contamination.." (p. 5)

So, for how many years will such a radium level continue to decay into radium daughters? Has the CNSC seen records of recent tests of this pad? It is not good enough for staff to say that future monitoring will trigger appropriate measures if warranted. The testing is needed now, not sometime in the future.

Finally, I mentioned in my written statement that previous citizen interventions have gone into a "black hole," without responses or explanations. This year there was a Response to Public Comments. Unfortunately, the CNSC staff did not have the decency to send a copy to the intervenors. Instead, a copy was sent to the CEAA. We learned of it from a friend and had to seek it out, and could have missed it altogether.

Moreover, I resent the "mantra" used by the staff. The clause, "that the project is not likely to cause significant adverse effects on the environment, taking into account the proposed mitigation measures" is repeated 13 times in a few pages of the Response to Citizens. Joseph Goebbels of the Propaganda Department of the Nazi Regime said that, "If you say a thing often enough the people will begin to believe it."

In addition, the staff keep writing, "This CSR has been reviewed by technical and scientific staff of the CNSC and other federal and provincial

agencies, "(13 times in a few pages) so that everything is alright, and we dont need the critique of the peasants (although citizens involve biologists, chemists, physics personnel, sociologists, philosophers, and theologians), and for surety, it is the Minister of the environment who makes the decision--even though the scientific and technical staff have told him what to think and what to say.! For so-called public consultation, this condescension is unhelpful!

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