From: Tim Phillips
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2012 11:09 PM

Subject: Industrial Wind Turbines

Dear Mayor Bratina and Councillors,

In view of the article below and the recent report of Ontario's Auditor General, the Green Energy Act is a very expensive and environmentally useless policy. The attached articles further demonstrate that the Green Energy Act does not meet its stated purposes. It has been implemented in a forceful and nondemocratic manner. Mr. McGuinty continues to ignore any concerns about the effects of wind factories on health, property value, the financial condition of Ontario, wildlife, or fractured relationships within communities. The documents to which the government refers in its defense of the policy are flawed, inadequate and were funded by the wind energy associations/multinationals. Their claims have been refuted by experts in their field. (eg. John Harrison, professor emeritus in physics at Queen's University; Michael Trebilcock, Law & Economics (U of Toronto); Ross McKitrick, Environmental Economics, (U of Guelph) to name a few.

I cannot imagine why any community would consider having industrial wind turbines and especially without proper studies to clarify the presence or intensity of problems. We live north of the town of Shelburne Ontario where approximately 150 turbines are presently operating. Eighty-six more are planned and another smaller project (11 turbines) next to our farm will begin operating this spring. We have been told by real estate that our property value has already declined by 25 to 40 per cent.

We have worked very hard for over two and a half years on our own time and money to resist a corrupt government, lobbyists, and wind companies that are funded by all of us. We have sat in meetings of our council watching wind company personnel threaten members of our council with a lawsuit if they would not approve the permits to put up these huge machines. We don't just wonder, we know what kind of place Ontario has become. The wind company personnel do not live anywhere near turbines.

I have met several people who have had to leave their homes; they are not able to stay in their homes because of the wind turbines often due to infrasound which the Ministry of the Environment finally admitted that they do not know how to measure. See the attached file "Study: Falmouth......" in which consultants have measured and explained what it does. The only people in our community in favour are those who have signed leases and will receive approximately $20 000 per year even when the electricity is not needed but is given priority over other sources of electricity. People who have been friends for years are not talking to each other. This is what Mr. McGuinty wants for Ontario and we have had no input.
I am not telling you what to do but our lives have been turned upside down. There is a great deal of government propaganda in the media. Dale Goldhawk on AM 740 is an exception. Be careful with what you hear. If your council would like to come and talk to residents here, I'm sure it could be arranged and you would be welcome. Mr. McGuinty turned down a similar offer.

Something must be done so that this can never happen again. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Tim & Janette Phillips
RR1, Maxwell, ON
N0C1J0
Wind farms blasted

By Bob Boughner

Posted 14 hours ago

RIDGETOWN - Southwestern Ontario's flourishing wind energy industry came under fire Wednesday from the co-founder of Greenpeace.

Dr. Patrick Moore told more than 1,000 area farmers the industry destroys more jobs than it creates, and causes energy prices to climb for all users.

"The industry is a destroyer of wealth and negative to the economy," said Moore, speaking at the 19th annual Southwest Agricultural Conference at Ridgetown campus of the University of Guelph.

Moore, who now refers to himself as the "sensible environmentalist," said the solar bubble has burst and thinks the wind bubble is about to burst.

"I'm happy for the farmers who are receiving royalties for allowing the wind towers to be built on their farms," he said. "They deserve it - but the cost to consumers will continue to climb - partly because of rate increases and partly due to tax increases."

Moore said there wouldn't be wind farms in southwestern Ontario if taxpayers weren't paying the bill.

"They are ridiculously expensive and don't work half the time," he said. "And no matter how many are built, they won't replace coal, gas or hydro or nuclear plants, because they are continuous and wind is not always reliable."

Moore told his audience the wind energy industry in Spain has resulted in a 30% unemployment rate among people under the age of 30.

The speaker was also highly critical of the organization he co-founded, claiming it's counter-productive today from an environmental standpoint.

"The organization should at least base its positions on science," he said.

Moore said Greenpeace, launched in British Columbia, is now based in Europe. He spent 15 years with the organization chasing whaling boats, trying to stop the seal hunt, and protesting against hydrogen bomb testing.

He now serves as chair and chief scientist of Greenspirit Strategies.
"I was against three or four things every day of my life for 15 years," he said. "I decided to become a sensible environmentalist and have spent the last 25 years doing just that."

Moore described as "ridiculous," the claims by Greenpeace that chlorine is the devil's element and PVC is the poison plastic.

"Most of our medicines are based on chlorine," he said.

He blasted Greenpeace for opposing golden rice, which he said helps prevent blindness in as many as 500,000 children.

Moore took exception to the stance against salmon farming by both Greenpeace and Dr. David Suzuki.

"We have to recognize that poverty is the worst environmental problem today," he said.

bboughner@chathamdailynews.ca.
A California court tells the naked and ugly truth about a proposed PG&E wind farm, the Manzana Wind Project:

We reject the application because we find that the Manzana Wind Project is not cost-competitive and poses unacceptable risks to ratepayers. We find that the proposed cost of the Manzana Wind Project is significantly higher than other resources PG&E can procure to meet its RPS program goal. Moreover, it will subject the ratepayers to unacceptable risks due to potential cost increases resulting from project under-performance, less than forecasted project life, and any delays which might occur concerning transmission upgrades and commercial online date.

There’s a lot more at the American Spectator link, but that simple quote above exposes a lot of wind’s problems, including the inconvenient difference between a wind turbine’s capacity and actual performance, the uncertain useful life of turbines and the exposure of customers tied in to paying a fixed sum for intermittent energy. That last point is one that should resonate with Ontarians.

Even before all the promised wind capacity is plugged into the grid, the unpredictability of wind power has forced Ontario to give away electricity when it is generating more than it can use, but consumers still pay producers a fixed amount per kilowatt hour:

“The IESO would experience surplus conditions roughly 14.5% of the time based on average wind output,” it predicts. Under normal market conditions that would cause the price to fall to zero or below and some generators would shut down. But the new wind farms, operating under current contracts that pay the operator 13.5 cents a kilowatt hour, would see all of their power flow onto the grid at the contract price.

There is no incentive for wind producers to stop the turbines, it doesn’t matter to them if the energy they send to the grid is worth zero – they get paid 13.5 cents per KW/h regardless. If you think that’s bad, solar producers earn nearly 80 cents per KW/h – again a guaranteed sum regardless of the market price of power. Today’s spot price for electricity generated by all sources is 3.69 cents per KW/h (link price will change daily).

The Star article also mentions wind power’s really dirty little secret – it doesn’t save a single ounce of CO2:

There’s one other, counter-intuitive problem with increased wind generation. At the moment, more wind power means more gas-fired power. Because wind power is variable, it has to be backed up by natural gas-fired generators, kept idling to be switched in if the wind dips. The reserve generators also have to be paid for, and they boost carbon emissions that wind power is supposed to prevent.

Renewable energy early adopters Spain and France have slashed wind and solar subsidies in the face of economic reality, leaving Ontario with some of the most generous renewables subsidies on the planet. No
wonder rent-seekers are salivating at the prospect of money for nothing.

The provincial government is committed to spend $1.1 billion this year on the Orwellian named Ontario Clean Energy Benefit – a subsidy to offset increasing energy costs caused in large part by unaffordable and uneconomic green energy subsidies. The OCEB cannot sustain that high level of consumer credits any more than the province can sustain the wind and solar subsidies.

Premier McGuinty has built a green house of cards that he hopes will stand long enough to get him past October’s election. The opposition thinks differently and if you live in Ontario you should give them a hearing. If you live in a jurisdiction that has grand plans for renewable energy, learn from the mistakes of California, Spain, Italy, Ontario and the UK, and go with coal, gas or if you like green – nuclear. Don’t rely on bird shredders or solar panels – the cost is too high and the benefit too little.
FALMOUTH — A study released last week concludes wind turbines in Falmouth negatively affect abutters' health.

The analysis was partially funded by a grant from Bruce McPherson, who opposes the Falmouth wind project and other turbine projects on Cape Cod. Its results assert that wind turbines cause "visceral" physical reactions and that sound waves from turbines are felt more intensely indoors than outside.

Related Links

- Cape Cod Times wind energy coverage

"We did not expect it," said Stephen E. Ambrose, a Maine environmental sound consultant who co-authored The Bruce McPherson Infrasound and Low Frequency Noise Study.

Ambrose declined to release the amount he was paid but said he and a partner each spent about 800 hours on the study.

Ambrose and Robert W. Rand, who also specializes in sound studies, conducted their research over three days in April, Ambrose said.

The two former employees of Stone & Webster Inc., a Stoughton engineering firm that designs and builds power plants, have conducted peer reviews on acoustics from turbines for several towns in Massachusetts, Maine and Wyoming.

For this study, Ambrose and Rand lived in a house near Blacksmith Shop Road for three days while measuring pressure originating from infrasound. They documented the intensity of sound frequencies from a privately owned turbine in the Falmouth Technology Park and how their bodies responded to it. The turbine studied is roughly the size of Falmouth's two municipal turbines.

When the two arrived at the house — located 1,700 feet from the turbine — on April 17, they began feeling effects within 20 minutes, according to the study. Both felt nausea, dizziness and anxiety, among other side effects.

They also reported having difficulty performing "normal activities" associated with the investigation, which included setting up instruments and observing measurements, the report states.

According to a chart included in the study, the discomfort and sick feelings intensified as wind speeds increased and the blades spun faster.

Previous sound studies that showed no negative health effects were done outdoors, Ambrose said. The recent study, which used low-frequency microphones to measure sound waves, showed sounds are more intense indoors than out. Data from this study showed a 10 dBG (a measurement for infrasound) increase outdoors and a 20 dBG increase indoors. The effect is similar to "living in a drum," he said.
An independent review of the acoustics data indicates it is scientifically valid, Nancy S. Timmerman, chairwoman of the Acoustical Society of America's Technical Committee on Noise, said in an email. She added that she can speak only to data on acoustics, not physiological effects reported in the study.

Jim Cummings, executive director of Acoustic Ecology Institute, another expert who looked at the study, said in an email the results could be a red flag on the correlation between infrasound and negative health effects, but more data are needed to establish proof.

"This is an indication, for sure, but a short sampling to base large claims on," Cummings wrote. "This and one other recent paper from the Association for Noise Control Engineers conference, Noise-Con, are both good indications that infrasound could be more problematic than generally assumed."

Falmouth Selectman Mary Pat Flynn, chairman of the board, said the study is one of many the board has received about wind turbines. Others show little or no harm caused by turbines, she said.

"We've had a number of studies sent to us, and they all have different points of view, and they all have different outcomes," Flynn said.

Ambrose and Rand's study comes as the state Department of Environmental Protection prepares itself for a sound study of the Falmouth-owned Wind 1 turbine. Environmental regulators agreed in September to conduct the study after Falmouth selectmen reached out to the department in September.

"It's still in the works, still under review," said Ed Coletta, a DEP spokesman. "We're hoping to get it done soon."

Last month selectmen announced the town would shut down the 1.64-megawatt Wind 1 — except during the tests — until April's town meeting. The town also plans to start up the Wind 2 turbine for 60 days, during which time officials plan to log complaints from residents.

The announcement came as a compromise after Wind 1 abutters filed a nonbinding town meeting article that asked selectmen to keep both turbines off until "mitigation options are fully explored and the existence of injurious conditions upon nearby residents can be qualified."

Wind 2, which has sat idle for about a year, could begin spinning for its trial period before mid-January, said Gerald Potamis, Falmouth's wastewater superintendent, who oversees the two municipal turbines.

Next month, Falmouth selectmen will choose a consultant to help advise the town on minimizing the impact of wind turbines on neighbors, Flynn said. Four firms were presented to selectmen during a meeting Dec. 19. The board will accept suggestions from residents until Jan. 4 and plans to choose one Jan. 9, Flynn said.

Note: I just published my critique of McPherson, at http://windfarmrealities.org/?p=1327. In my view it is very well done, an important piece of science that should be convincing to every government that moratoriums are warranted. Wayne Gulden

The study can be downloaded from this site. http://randacoustics.com/wind-turbine-sound/wind-turbines-published-articles/the-bruce-mcpherson-ilfn-study/
Mike Crawley and Liberal Party Politics

Mike Crawley, CEO of International Power Canada had the OPP investigate individuals as he was fearful of the “potential” of a protest at a small ribbon cutting ceremony this coming Friday.

Here are a few excerpts regarding Mr. Crawley from the Ontario Legislature:

Mr Runciman: Once again the Premier clearly avoided the questions dealing with adherence to bid requirements. We’re talking about a contract that provided a company headed by a prominent Liberal with a guaranteed 20-year, $66,000-a-day contract. This is a very lucrative deal, and the hard-working taxpayers of Ontario have a right to know if this contract was awarded appropriately.

Today I received information indicating that Mr Mike Crawley, the president of AIM PowerGen, sent an e-mail in the midst of the bid process to various parties encouraging their attendance at the energy minister’s fundraiser at $5,000 a pop. Premier, I’m sending copies of this material over to you and asking that you have an independent third party review the contract award process to ensure that it was absolutely above-board.

Mr Hampton: The McGuinty government has tried to make a big thing out of a little bit of wind energy, but what do we discover when we look at who is getting the contracts for the 300 or so megawatts of wind turbines? One Mike Crawley’s name comes to mind. Who is Mike Crawley? Mike Crawley has done just about every job that a Liberal hack could do. If you read his résumé — all you have to do is go to the federal Liberal Party’s Web site and it’s right there — he’s counted paperclips and he’s sharpened pencils, he’s answered the phone and he’s been the gofer for this and the gofer for that. He’s made his living being a Liberal hack.

What is he going to get for his dedicated work as a Liberal hack? He’s getting a $475-million guaranteed hydro contract at 8 cents a kilowatt hour, wholesale price. People wonder why their hydro bill is going to go up. Let me tell you, your hydro bill is going to go up because the McGuinty government is going to be busy shovelling money into the back pocket of this Liberal hack.

If you go and look even at his own CV, it says that his other experience in life besides counting paperclips for the Liberal Party is some sales at the Bank of Commerce. Has this guy ever worked for an electricity company? No. Does he know how to put the plug-in in the wall? I doubt it. Has he got any experience working for an electricity company? No. He is a Liberal hack and he’s going to get a $475-million contract, guaranteed at 8 cents a kilowatt hour. That’s why the hydro bill is going to go through the roof.

It is bigger than that. What I found really interesting was the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario — certainly not friends of New Democrats; they probably wouldn’t want to be caught dead talking to New Democrats. The association of major power consumers are very, very clear on what’s going on. In their brief they say that if you stack up the privatization of electricity under the McGuinty government, and then you stack up the Mike Crawleys, who get their $475-million contracts, and then you stack up some of the other henanigans, like the duplication now of private sector bureaucracies and public sector bureaucracies, “For industry, the price of electricity is going to go up by at least 30%, more likely 50%.” They’re very clear about what is going to happen. Bowater paper came and said, “You’re going to see more paper machines shut down. You’re going to see more paper mills shut down.” Steel companies came and said the same thing.
Mr Runciman: It just shows you how non-partisan we can be. In the announcement yesterday, you handed the folks at AIM PowerGen an incredibly lucrative contract, made even more lucrative by the fact that you fixed a price for the energy they’ll hopefully produce at eight cents per kilowatt hour, roughly 60% higher than the fixed price consumers will now pay.

This is a deliberately inflated price. The trouble is, it’s not for one year or five years; it’s for 20 years. In AIM PowerGen’s case, that’s worth $475 million in return for a modest 99 megawatts of power, a mere drop in the bucket, given that Ontario can now produce 30,000 megawatts.

Your Liberal friends are now cashing in on a decision you made to the tune of a big red-ribbon-wrapped $475 million. How do you justify this extraordinary cost to a senior Liberal for a relatively small amount of power?

Mr Runciman: The reality is that we are talking about the principal of this company, who is a senior Liberal operative, one who is highly involved in both the provincial and federal Liberal parties. He has just been handed a contract worth close to half a billion dollars for a 0.3% contribution to power output. Can the minister guarantee that neither Mike Crawley nor AIM PowerGen had any undue influence over this process? Can you guarantee that?

Mr Runciman: I agree that this is not $9 million in backrooms; this is $24 million a year for 20 years to a Liberal crony.

Can the minister explain how it was that Mike Crawley led a policy session of your Liberal Party policy conference just three weeks ago? The subject was renewable energy. We have a copy of the program, the Ontario Liberal Party annual policy development conference in November. Mike Crawley, now recipient of this half-billion-dollar Liberal government contract, was presenting a closed-door session on renewable energy. Only registered Liberals could listen to this one. Minister, $475 million is a very sweet payback for speaking at a Liberal conference, wouldn’t you agree?

Mr Runciman: The minister has a dramatically different view of the world, now that he’s sitting in the government benches, versus what positions he took on this side of the House. The facts are that Mike Crawley is a former top assistant to former Liberal leader Lyn McLeod. He is the current Ontario president of the Liberal Party of Canada. He’s an influential Liberal insider, and that’s made clear by the fact that he was featured in this session on the need for renewable energy at your own policy conference. Now he’s the recipient of a $24-million-a-year contract for 20 years, and that’s a contract for a modest amount of renewable energy.

Minister, I think people deserve a better answer than they’re receiving from you here today. Please explain the situation, which on the surface seems to be very difficult for you to deal with.

Mr Runciman: That’s the standardized response. I didn’t hear millions of dollars or billions of dollars talked about in that response, and that’s the reality of this contract: $24 million-plus a year for 20 years, close to half a billion dollars over that term, to a Liberal insider. It has a strong stench of unethical behaviour, especially considering it’s for a 0.3% increase in Ontario’s power supply.

Given what we believe is an obvious conflict of interest, will you immediately put this contract on hold, pending a review by Ontario’s Integrity Commissioner? If you have nothing to hide, let the independent Integrity Commissioner look at this $475-million deal. Will you do that?

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): This question is for the Acting Premier. Just a few months ago, on June 24, the energy minister stood in the Legislature and boasted that 90 companies had come forward and expressed interest in generating renewable electricity in Ontario and that the total of the offers was 4,400
megawatts. In other words, there were a lot of companies that came forward, a lot of operators came forward offering to generate renewable power. Can you explain how it is that the president of the Liberal Party of Canada, Ontario wing, gets a guaranteed 20-year deal to sell electricity to the hydro system at prices 60% higher than the current wholesale price?

The McGuinty government is giving the president of the Liberal Party a rich private hydro contract. I say that’s cronyism. I say it’s conflict of interest. Will you immediately terminate this rich contract for your Liberal friend?

I want to just talk about Mr Cràwley’s expertise. Just go to the Liberal Web site. There’s Paul Martin. There’s Mr Crawley. Here’s his expertise: Mike Crawley, president. Mike Crawley has extensive party experience. He has served the party in a number of capacities, including on riding executives, campaign teams, young Liberal executives and staff positions with federal MPs, the party office and the office of the Leader of the Opposition in Ontario.

This guy is a Liberal hack. He’s a Liberal hack, and you’re handing him a $475-million contract. Where I come from, we call this wrong. Where I come from, we call this cronyism. Where I come from, we call this conflict of interest.

Mr Hampton: Will you terminate the contract?

Hon Mr Duncan: What the member failed to indicate was that Mr Crawley is also the president of the Canadian Wind Energy Association. Mr Crawley was also appointed by the Conservative government to sit on the energy supply and conservation task force. *(How convenient!)*

Mr Hampton: I even go to his own CV, and he says he’s held senior management positions in the public and private sectors. He’s held a number of sales management positions with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. This guy had no involvement with wind energy until the Conservative government appointed him to a task force, and you have continued to put him in positions like that since becoming government.

Here is what really stinks: **He goes to the Liberal policy conference three weeks ago and tells you what your hydro policy should be, and then three weeks later, he gets a $475-million contract.** Where I come from, this stinks. This stinks. Will you do the responsible thing and will you terminate this blatant conflict of interest, this blatant payoff to your Liberal friend?

...we have the president of the Liberal Party of Canada, Ontario wing, and even his own CV says that he was in sales management for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, and before that he was a political hack. You are going to give him a $475-million contract at 60% higher than the current price of electricity. Meanwhile, for low- and modest-income families, who have been hit by an over-20% increase in their hydro prices, you are only going to give them a dollar for every extra $20 that you take out of their pockets. Maybe you can tell me, is this the McGuinty government’s definition of “change” — you whack ordinary Ontarians with double-digit hydro price increases and you give the president of the Liberal Party a guaranteed $475-million contract?

Mr Hampton: Do you know what? Ninety companies came forward, and somehow the president of the Liberal Party, who has virtually no experience in this field, comes out on top.

According to the McGuinty government, you could have a bank robbery and you could have the bank robber walking off with the money and as long as you had an independent consultant who said, “It’s all fair,” that would be fine with the McGuinty government.

Here is what is happening out there. It’s a very cold day today; in many places, it’s snowing. Across Ontario people who have to use electric heat are using a lot of electricity. They are being whacked with double-digit
hydro rate increases. Many of them can barely afford it, yet the McGuinty government definition of “change” is that those people should be whacked; they should have money taken out of their pockets so that the president of the Liberal Party can walk away with a $475-million guaranteed contract. I ask you again, is this the McGuinty government –


And finally (2008):

The idea behind the standard offer was to encourage local communities to put together ten megawatt projects. The OPA provides small electricity generators (from residential photovoltaic rooftop generation of one kilowatt up to small wind farms of ten megawatts) with a standard pricing regime. John Kourtoff, president of Toronto’s Trillium Power Wind Corporation says, “The SOP is very good, but it’s been abused by the industry. It was meant for community power, but developers chopped big projects up into smaller, ten megawatt parcels.”

Namely, Mike Crawley, AIM Powergen and the Harrow project. They have abused the Standard Offer Program, thus pushing the smaller investor aside by piecemealing 4 projects into one in order to obtain the premium government sponsored subsidy.

A SUBSIDY THAT WAS NOT MEANT FOR THEM OR THEIR PARENT UK CORPORATION.

This will give AIM literally millions of undeserved premium subsidies over the life of the Harrow project contract yet ....the Ontario government turns the other way pretending not to notice.
By Ross McKitrick
Stratford Beacon Herald

Anyone remember the Sprung Greenhouse fiasco? In 1987, Newfoundland Premier Brian Peckford attempted to boost local employment by subsidizing the building of a massive hydroponic greenhouse operation that its inventor, Philip Sprung, said would turn the province into a world leader in green produce. His plan had failed in Alberta, but in Peckford he found a gullible partner willing to abandon common sense and start signing over other people's money. During the construction phase the premier pointed with pride to the hundreds of jobs apparently created. Meanwhile the province kept signing cheques and promising that cucumbers and economic renewal were on the way in equal measure.

Cucumbers did start appearing. The problem was each one cost $1.10 to grow, and the wholesale market price was just over 50 cents. The greenhouse went bankrupt and ceased operations by 1990. The jobs vanished, and the tiny province was left with $14 million in debts to pay.

Never forget: jobs are created by profitable businesses, period. Industries reliant on subsidies do not generate jobs, they destroy them. Subsidies create short-term jobs that have to be financed by new taxes on profitable activity, which drives away long-term investment and ends up costing jobs.

People in Ontario ridiculed the Sprung fiasco at the time. But I guess we didn't really learn anything, for now we are madly building our own versions of the Sprung greenhouses. This time they are called wind turbines.

Their salesmen have found in Dalton McGuinty their own Brian Peckford. They convinced him we can become a world leader, not in green produce, but green energy. Common sense has been jettisoned and the cheques are flowing.

We already have green energy. Most of our electricity comes from non-emitting hydro and nuclear generation, at a fraction of the cost of wind-and solar-generated power. By the government's own data, Ontario air pollution has fallen dramatically since the 1970s through the use of scrubbers and automobile technology (check it out at airqualityontario.com). Most of our remaining smog precursors originate in the U.S. An expert report to the government in 2005 — which was promptly marked "Classified," but a copy of which I obtained — showed that closing our two coal-fired power plants would make no measurable difference to summertime smog levels, especially since they would require gas-fired replacements.

Wind turbines, like solar panels, can generate electricity but they require backup gas generators to compensate for the fluctuating yield.

And, like Sprung's cucumbers, those green electrons don't create jobs, they annihilate them. Wind turbines don't run on wind, they run on subsidies and rigged prices, or "feed-in-tariffs." Green energy will only be a source of jobs the day the industry can produce electricity at competitive market rates and still pay its own bills.

Ontario was not the first region to fall for the scam. Spain did years ago. Recently an independent analysis showed the plan destroyed 2.2 jobs for every one created. Over the past month Spain has slashed subsidies for green power producers and capped the size of the sector. France has also begun eliminating subsidies in the wake of a report showing that, after the temporary, subsidy-driven construction jobs end, the price hikes and tax increases will lead to long-term declines in jobs and growth. And Germany — producer of half the world's solar electricity — just announced accelerated cuts in solar subsidies in response to the same economic realities, with hints the subsidies may not survive a scheduled review in 2012.

Everywhere it's the same story. Green energy salesmen bamboozle gullible governments into signing cheques in return for empty promises of jobs and growth. As the bills mount, prices rise and the economy sags, the inevitable unravelling begins. It will happen here too. The only question is how many jobs will disappear and how much economic hardship we will put up with before having the common sense to shut the scam down once and for all.

Ross McKitrick is a professor of environmental economics at the University of Guelph; senior fellow of the Fraser Institute; member, Academic Advisory Board, John Deutsch Institute, Queen's University, Kingston, and member, Academic Advisory Board, Global Warming Policy Foundation, London, U.K
Windmills: Bigger waste than eHealth

Posted: October 01, 2009, 1:06 AM by NP Editor

global warming, wind power, Michael Trebilcock, climate change

Wind reduces CO2 emissions at a subsidy cost of about $124 per tonne — one of the most expensive plans in the world

By Michael Trebilcock

Ontarians take note. A detailed new Danish study shatters most of the myths that the Danish-based wind turbine industry has been propagating in Canada and around the world as to the virtues of wind power. The study, Wind Energy: The Case of Denmark by the Centre for Policy Studies in Copenhagen, strongly reinforces reservations that I have noted in previous op-eds in this newspaper.

While proponents of wind power like to claim that almost 20% of Danish electricity is generated by wind power, in fact over the last five years wind power has accounted for only about 9% of domestic electricity consumption. The other 11% or so — generated when the wind was blowing in the middle of the night or at other times that power was unneeded in Denmark — was exported to Norway and Sweden at spot prices that were substantially lower (often zero) than the subsidized prices guaranteed to Danish wind turbine operators. Meanwhile, when the wind wasn’t blowing in conformity with Danish needs, Denmark needed to import balancing power from Norway and Sweden, typically at substantially higher costs.

Wind power doesn’t reduce CO2 emissions, costs consumers more and kills jobs

By Michael Trebilcock

It is important to understand why the Danish government, which appears to have commissioned Mr. Pedersen’s comments, is sensitive to critiques of the Danish experience with wind power. Denmark is home to Vestas, the world’s largest wind turbine manufacturer, with 20,000 employees and a market share of between 20% and 25%. As the market for its turbines in Denmark and other European countries becomes saturated, it seeks to export the Danish experience worldwide. To this end, it recently ran a multi-million dollar global ad campaign with the slogan, “Believe in the wind,” claiming that Denmark has solved the problem of dirty electricity through wind power.

Mr. Pedersen has various objections to my earlier comments in the Financial Post, which were excerpted from my submission to the Ontario Legislative Committee on the Green Energy Act and subsequently published in edited form by the C.D. Howe Institute. These latter two documents contained many of the citations which Mr. Pedersen complains were lacking in the excerpted version in the Financial Post.
Ontario’s Power Trip: Power without the people

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Financial Post Staff  August 17, 2010 – 7:36 pm

How a tiny group of vested interests — the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association — holds sway

By Parker Gallant

In the political power corridors where the Ontario government’s green energy regime is legislated, regulated, discussed, manipulated, twisted, turned and imposed on the people, one group keeps cropping up: the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA). Among other things, the OSEA claims prime responsibility for the Ontario Green Energy Act, the 2009 legislation that introduced massive subsidies to green energy and triggered multibillion-dollar spending on wind and solar power and new transmission infrastructure.

OSEA’s political clout scored another victory last Friday when the Ontario government reversed itself on a plan — announced July 2 — to cut the massive subsidy price paid for small-scale solar electricity to 58¢ for each kilowatt hour from 80¢. The cut, to be imposed on 16,000 solar project applicants, would have saved $1-billion. But now, under lobbying from OSEA, Ontario Energy Minister Brad Duguid has reversed himself. The new price would be 64¢ but the old price of 80¢ would be paid on all projects for which applications had been received as of Aug. 13.

Not only would the $1-billion savings be lost, new costs would be added since — mysteriously — the number of solar project applications had jumped to 19,000 from 16,000 since July 2. It was a tribute to the influence of OSEA, whose slogan is “Power to the People” — even if that power is priced at 80¢ a kWh. As somebody once joked, at that price you could shine a light on a solar power panel and make money.

Any group that powerful deserves attention. I tracked OSEA down recently at the Ontario Energy Board, the provincial regulator charged with overseeing Ontario’s multibillion-dollar electricity system. OSEA had submitted a request to the OEB to act as an intervenor at the board’s regulatory proceedings. In this case, the OEB had established a consultation process to discuss transmission facilities to connect renewable power to the grid.
The grid plan was imposed on Hydro One, the province’s transmission giant, by former energy minister George Smitherman in a directive last September. The directive, issued under new Green Energy Act powers, told Hydro One to spend $2.3-billion to connect the province’s new heavily subsidized solar and wind energy generators to the provincial power system.

Even though a directive exists to expand the grid, the OEB is going through the motions, as regulator, of reviewing the plan. As part of that review, it will accept interventions from various groups, including OSEA, which applied to the regulator for “intervenor status” at the hearings, which means it wanted to receive government funding for its participation in the review. Why would OSEA get government funding to lobby on behalf of its interests?

OSEA claims to speak for Ontario ratepayers. This didn’t sit well with me since I am a ratepayer who is not a member of OSEA. As an association, the OSEA website claims 1,500 members. I contacted OSEA’s executive director, Kristopher Stevens, to ask him if he would advise OEB that OSEA does not represent this particular ratepayer. He refused and instead emailed me suggesting I was against all that OSEA stood for. “If you read the line quoted in [our] submission it refers to the consumer’s [sic] interests that demanded the GEA [Green Energy Act]. As you have indicated you are not part of this group. We do not claim to speak for you and others who do not endorse the vision of a sustainable energy economy.” Mr. Stevens added that, “It is OK if you don’t like OSEA, its constituency or the valuable work we do with local people to help them make a better Ontario ... the individual consumers, faith-based groups, First Nations communities, farmers, coops, educational institutions, local entrepreneurs and other Ontarian’s [sic] seeking a better way forward for the province.”

I submitted a request to the OEB for the right to act as an intervenor so as to formally dispute OSEA’s right to claim “cost eligibility.” My grounds were: OSEA already gets massive funding from numerous government entities, it is effectively a lobbyist although not registered as a lobbyist, it didn’t represent ratepayers and it brought no expertise on the matter. The OEB turned me down and left OSEA’s status as is. The OEB’s ruling even deigned to suggest it was benevolent in allowing me to even present my position as I was a mere outsider unfamiliar with the Board’s rules.

So if I can’t represent myself as a ratepayer, what is OSEA claiming as my representative? What does OSEA stand for? Who are the principals? How much influence do they have and where do they get their money?

According to Mr. Stevens, OSEA stands for “a sustainable energy economy where every Ontarian is a conserver and generator of clean, green, sustainable energy contributing to the province’s economic, environmental and social development.” He didn’t mention that its biggest source of funding appears to be the Ontario government.

Mr. Stevens, OSEA’s executive director, provided a bit of his personal history and career path in a 2008 interview with Workopolis, the online job search outfit. “I was looking around and said there is a ton of money and opportunity here and it is the right thing to do anyways.” So he went on to do his masters degree in environment studies at York University, he told Workopolis. “Within six months I was working at the Ontario Power Authority on their communication team.
A year after that I am at OSEA as their communications director and last (month) I was promoted to executive director."

In this career path, Mr. Stevens followed in the footsteps of Brent Kopperson, another York University graduate and veteran of the power policy network that appears to have an iron grip on the energy policies of Premier Dalton McGuinty’s government. Mr. Kopperson is a founding director of OSEA. Among other things, Mr. Kopperson is a co-founder of the Green Energy Act Alliance and a former director of the World Wind Association. He is, in other words, a wind-energy enthusiast who has played an active role in promoting wind power.

OSEA claims responsibility for the creation of the basic Ontario green energy subsidy program and the Green Energy Act by working through the Green Energy Act Alliance (GEAA). Along with OSEA, the driving forces behind GEAA were a group of people who can be found today running not-for-profit or charitable organizations that accept the generosity of the Ontario taxpayers and ratepayers through grants and sponsorships from numerous ministries, Crown corporations, provincial and municipal funds, local electricity companies and each other.

OSEA has received over $1.5-million from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (which distributes Ontario lottery winnings), approximately $200,000 from the Toronto Atmospheric Fund (a City of Toronto fund) and money from the OPA, Ministry of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment, Aboriginal Affairs, Hydro One and many local hydro distributors. OSEA’s website also claims direct funding support from the Community Power Fund or CPF (which OSEA’s website claims it created).

In other words, taxpayers are funding OSEA and providing some of the “ton of money” Mr. Stevens prophetically saw in the green energy industry. I have filed freedom-of-information requests with four government ministries and three Crown corps — although I suspect it will be months before information surfaces, if any. It is clear, though, that taxpayers are involuntarily funding OSEA to lobby the government to take actions that will cost taxpayers even more money.

No financial information on OSEA is available. I presumed OSEA would claim penury circumstances when it filed its “cost eligibility” request to the OEB and would be required to provide financial information. The response from the OEB indicated that “no documents were filed by OSEA in support of its request for cost eligibility.” Further research on the OEB’s website shows OSEA has been claiming “cost eligibility” for some time. For example, it received funds to intervene in the OPA’s Integrated Power System Plan (IPSP) filed in 2007 (as directed by former Ontario energy minister Dwight Duncan). For the IPSP review, OSEA and the Pembina Institute, a national green think tank, jointly filed claims for “cost eligibility” of approximately $168,000.

OSEA held its 1st Annual Community Power Conference last year. Sponsors included the Ontario Power Authority (through which the Energy Minister controls the Ontario electricity system), Ontario Aboriginal Affairs, Hydro One, Ontario Natural Resources, Toronto Hydro, Tourism Toronto and even Orangeville Hydro. The Ontario Trillium Foundation supplied OSEA with $127,300 for the conference. Private-sector sponsors are hard to find and seem limited to
those profiting from this sector: law firms, equipment importers, unions, etc. The first conference attracted 450 delegates over two days with the principal guest speaker being George Smitherman, then the energy minister and now a front-runner in the race for Mayor of Toronto.

The Honorary Chair of that first conference was David Suzuki — his foundation has also obtained grants from the Trillium lottery cash machine. Mr. Smitherman is listed again for the second conference coming up this November in Toronto, even though he is no longer involved in electricity issues. Is OSEA being used as a platform for Mr. Smitherman’s move to city politics?

OSEA certainly loves George Smitherman. Mr. Stevens presented Mr. Smitherman with the first-ever OSEA Community Leader Award at the 2009 conference. When the World Wind Energy Conference was held in Kingston, Ont., in 2008, the Ontario Environment Minister, John Gerretsen, contributed $100,000 of Ontario tax dollars to it. Mr. Smitherman was one of the keynote speakers at that conference. No mention was made of the fact that Mr. Kopperson, a founding director of OSEA, was a director of the World Wind Energy Association.

Consistent with the above cosy relationship, Mr. Smitherman turned up as the winner of the World Wind Energy Award 2009 on Jeju Island, Korea. For this, Mr. Smitherman was heartily congratulated by OSEA. As if to reinforce the connections, Mr. Smitherman, when he was energy minister, honoured Mr. Kopperson “in recognition of [his] participation in the creation of the Green Energy Act.”

So that’s how Ontario electricity policymaking works. It’s a small world. It should have been no surprise, then, to see OSEA succeed in its effort to lobby the current Energy Minister, Brad Duguid, to reverse his solar power price policy six weeks after he announced it.

My question, as an innocent outsider and Ontario electricity ratepayer, is this: For how long will the province’s taxpayers/ratepayers allow this relatively tiny group of vested interests to hold such sway over government policy?

Parker Gallant is a retired Canadian banker who looked at his Ontario electricity bill and didn’t like what he was seeing.

Posted in: FP Comment  Tags: Ontario's power trip

Read more: http://opinion.financialpost.com/2010/08/17/ontarios-power-trip-power-without-the-people/#ixzz0z5iZifRl
Sen. Bob Runciman says Ontario's opposition parties are failing the province's voters with their lukewarm response to the Auditor-General's report. (QMI Agency file photo)

TORONTO - Ontario's two opposition parties, operating in a minority Legislature, are failing Ontarians with their weak, predictable reaction to the Auditor General's scathing report on the McGuinty government's green energy policies.

The Progressive Conservatives and New Democrats, if they can put their differences aside in the interest of Ontarians, have the tools necessary to compel an arrogant premier and his secret circle of advisers to answer questions raised by the auditor.

They can use their combined majority in the Legislature to refer this to a standing or select committee, frame the terms of reference, and insist the committee has the independent counsel and subpoena power it needs to answer questions such as:

Why were the Ontario Energy Board and the Ontario Power Authority not consulted during negotiations leading to the $7-billion sweetheart deal with Samsung, and why was cabinet approval not sought prior to the announcement?

Why are there no cost-benefit-analyses of that deal, and the hundreds of other contracts under the Feed-in Tariff program — contracts that make little or no economic sense? Indeed, who was consulted when exorbitant rates — rates that will beggar consumers and force companies to cut or close Ontario operations — were established under the FIT program? And who benefited from those decisions?

Why were guidelines ignored and regulations violated in the rush to approve these projects?
Who was involved in the development of the Green Energy Act, which removes arm’s-length, regulation and oversight in favour of concentrating decision-making in the offices of the premier and the minister of energy?

The main challenge will undoubtedly be getting the NDP to the table. Their performance in the Legislature following release of the auditor’s report was a case of missing in action.

While the PC’s did focus their questions on the bombshell green energy elements of the report, the NDP seemed content to ignore the whole matter, apparently for fear of being labelled anti-green. A shameful and disturbing abdication of responsibility and a failure to recognize that this isn’t about the merits of green energy.

It’s about the conduct of the premier and a senior cabinet minister. It’s about who designs policy and who profits from it, and whether there’s any link between the two.

McGuinty and his crew must be delighted. The premier, who didn’t even have the basic respect for the Legislature or for the auditor general to show up to answer questions the next day, has contemptuously dismissed the findings.

Recent Liberal musings about holding off on planned corporate tax cuts — an NDP proposal — in the wake of the NDP’s silence on the revelations from the auditor, should raise eyebrows about a possible tit-for-tat relationship that effectively closes the door on Ontarians seeking answers to what is potentially one of the biggest scandals in Ontario’s history.

Tim Hudak’s PC’s have to make every effort to work with the NDP to use the power voters gave them on Oct. 6 to get to the bottom of this mess. And the NDP’s Andrea Horwath has to stare down the radical elements in her party and not allow this scandal to disappear into the ether.

To do otherwise makes her and her party complicit in McGuinty’s abuse of power.