January 31, 2007

City of Hamilton Council
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger and City Councillors,

Subject: Moratorium on the Construction of any New Nuclear Power Plants within the Municipal Boundaries of the City Of Hamilton

Last week I attended your council meeting and was moved by the celebration of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of victims and survivors of the Holocaust and the award for coaching and the presentation on diabetes. As a Rotarian, I am involved in the Polio Plus Program and I therefore appreciate the importance of these civil minded activities.

I attended the council meeting last week to speak to the motion on Nuclear Power plants. Since the motion was delayed until the next council meeting I would like to provide some factual information to shed light on some of the statements made in the motion:

WHEREAS Germany and Belgium recently legislated the phasing out of their nuclear reactors, in favour of green energy options and energy efficiency.

Germany and Belgium did in fact legislate phasing out their nuclear reactors. However, they continue to import a large fraction of their ongoing electricity from Electricity de France, a utility that generates more than 70% of its electricity from nuclear power. In addition, German Chancellor Angela Merkel* recently urged her coalition partners to extend the operation of the country’s 17 nuclear plants on the basis of their high level of safety and their effectiveness in controlling greenhouse gas emissions. The Swedish government has also indicated that it will revisit its policy to phase out its nuclear program especially in light of public opinion polls that indicate their existing policy is not sustainable. Countries like Finland, China, Romania, Japan and many more are building new nuclear capacity because of its environmentally sustainable nature.
2) WHEREAS an April 2006 report released by Greenpeace predicted more than 270,000 cancers will be caused by radioactive fallout from Chernobyl, and of these, 93,000 will be fatal.

These figures are grossly incorrect. The tragic events of April 26, 1986 are in many ways peculiar to the type of reactor involved, the philosophy and the inadequate training of those operating it, and the political infrastructure governing the country (the former U.S.S.R.) at that time. Canadian designed CANDU reactors have a world-renowned safety record designed with a defence-in-depth philosophy operating in a strong regulatory environment.


One of the co-founders of Greenpeace, Dr. Patrick Moore, a Canadian, publicly accuses the anti-nuclear movement of misleading the public and fear mongering. Dr. James Lovelock, the renowned British environmentalist fears that our planet will be lost without increasing reliance on nuclear power.

Ontario communities like Pickering, Whitby, Oshawa, Bowmanville, Port Elgin and Kincardine welcome new build nuclear reactors because of their inherent safety features, economically and environmentally sustainable power generation and high skilled/high paying jobs that bring so many other social benefits to these communities.

Moreover, a recent Ipsos poll shows that 62% of Ontarians support nuclear power, with some of the strongest support appearing in southwestern Ontario (see http://cna.ca/english/Studies/CNA_Nov-06_Report_for_website.pdf). It is also interesting to note that CANADIAN nuclear technology produces medical isotopes that are used in some 34,400 radiological procedures each day for medical diagnostics and cancer treatments around the world. Like the show of hands at last week's council meeting regarding diabetes, whom among us does not have a friend or relative who has received such a nuclear-based life saving procedure?

In closing I wish to advise you that the more people learn about Canada’s world-class CANDU technology, the more amenable they are to using nuclear energy to power our province. At this moment nuclear reactors supply electricity for every other school, church, hospital, business and home in Ontario.

On behalf of our 86 member companies, some operating in your own constituencies, we respectfully ask that you reconsider this motion until you have heard all the facts, other than those allegations made by people who may have a vested interest in drumming up fear to mislead and frighten Canadians.
Perhaps the City of Hamilton Council could consider inviting a credible source of information on nuclear technology, such as a professor from McMaster University (where a nuclear reactor has been operating for many years), to make a brief presentation. I would be happy to help you contact such an expert.

Sincerely,

Martyn Wash

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Martyn R Wash BSc., B. Eng, B. Economics
President

* At the DAVOS World Economic Forum (WEF) in Switzerland last week:

- Tony Blair stated in the closing address to the assembly of more than 2,000 top CEOs and experts in all fields, stated that in UK, nuclear energy must be part of the mix of the energy supply.

- Montek Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, India, said that his country is increasingly turning to nuclear power to cut its CO2 emissions.

- Yuliya Tymoshenko, Prime Minister of Ukraine, indicated that energy independence from Russia is a strategic goal of the new government. She invited business leaders at the roundtable to invest in nuclear power projects.

The consensus of 2,400 participants at the World Economic Conference was that Climate Change is the greatest threat to the world and the number one issue the world is unprepared to deal with.