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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Aug. 3, 2006

The Editor  
Victoria Times-Colonist

Re: "B.C.'s Approach to Cutting Emissions Isn't Working," Aug. 3.

I take exception to the view expressed by Matt Price of the Conservation Voters of B.C. (CVBC).

In the recent Call for Power results we saw two projects that included an element of coal-fired electricity, one of several sources of power provided for in B.C.'s Energy Plan. Vastly improved technology is making coal a viable source for energy production. There is no reason why we shouldn't be using this abundant resource to ensure energy self-sufficiency, provided it can be done right.

Under the Environmental Assessment Act, all electricity generation projects 50 MW or greater, as well as any designated reviewable by the Minister of Environment, must obtain an Environmental Assessment Certificate to ensure that environmental impacts are identified and mitigated. The assessment process examines major projects for potentially adverse environmental, economic, social, health and heritage effects that may occur during the life cycle of the project.

Years ago, the widespread use of coal in inefficient burners caused unacceptable levels of sulphur dioxide and particulate matter to be released into the atmosphere. But it's not like that today. Advanced coal technology includes new processes for combusting or converting coal into a usable energy form.

EPCOR's 450 MW Genesee 3 plant, located just outside Edmonton, is an example of how new technology is helping coal-fired plants produce much-needed energy while reducing emissions. This plant features high-temperature and high pressure combustion, low NO<sub>x</sub> burners to reduce nitrogen oxides and an SO<sub>2</sub> scrubber to reduce emissions of sulphur dioxide.

Coal-fired electricity projects have the potential to help us fill the growing demand for energy while meeting stringent air emissions standards to ensure that human health and the environment are protected. British Columbia, like Alberta, has adopted new air quality emission guidelines which are among the highest standards in North America. These guidelines set emission limits for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and mercury.

We have great coal resources in B.C., and utilizing them with care now will help us meet the energy needs of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Richard Neufeld, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources  
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