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**Written Closing Remarks from  
Sheila Burr**

**Observations écrites finales de  
Sheila Burr**

In the Matter of

À l'égard de

**Ontario Power Generation Inc.**

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OPG's Deep Geological Repository (DGR)  
Project for Low and Intermediate Level  
Radioactive Waste

Installation de stockage de déchets radioactifs à  
faible et moyenne activité dans des couches  
géologiques profondes

Joint Review Panel

Commission d'examen conjoint

**October 2014**

**Octobre 2014**



## **Summary**

**by Sheila Burr**

**on the Joint Review Panel hearings  
held in Kincardine, Ontario**

**September 9-18, 2014**

**regarding the proposal  
by Ontario Power Generation**

**for a Deep Geologic Repository  
for Low and Intermediate Nuclear Waste**

**October 6, 2014**

There are many valid reasons why the location for this DGR is unsuitable.

Everyone agrees that leaks are inevitable. The proximity to Lake Huron, source of drinking water for millions, makes the location completely unacceptable.

The 10 metre deep strip of porous limestone proposed to store the radioactive waste lies between a layer containing oil products suitable for removal by fracking, as is currently being promoted in the nearby Collingwood area, and a layer containing water.

Although the neat diagrams show these layers exactly parallel with each other and thus predictable, layers do vary in thickness from one place to another. Any puncture during construction either up or down could result in serious problems.

Constructing a mine in an established, populated, agricultural and tourist area makes no sense.

Who wants to vacation, let alone reside, near a construction site that is operating 24/7 for many years?

As respectful global neighbours, Canada should understand the concerns of American residents and return the courtesy that the US extended to us when we objected to nuclear facilities being placed near our border.

Both countries are committed to protecting the water of the Great Lakes.

A major reason for the difficulty in solving the problem of what to do with radioactive waste is the way the various types are grouped.

I think that the categories of nuclear waste need to be rearranged and responsibility for them redirected if necessary.

Intermediate waste belongs where it was originally assigned, with high level waste, since the half lives are similar.

It is now possible to consume used spent fuel to operate nuclear plants with molten salt reactors.

Several US companies, such as Transatomic Power, are eager to do this and one, Terrestrial Energy Inc., is located in Canada with offices in Mississauga and Calgary. <<*link removed*>>

The existing spent fuel already accumulated in Canada could provide all our electrical needs for many decades to come. Utility prices could come down and thus manufacturing would be attracted.

This is the obvious, efficient and ethical way to eliminate the serious problem of radioactive waste... use it to make electricity!!

Low level waste, after incineration, can continue to be stored as is done currently. Three hundred years is a manageable amount of time to care for a substance. Many buildings that are over 300 years old are well-maintained and used today.

With spent fuel supplying molten salt reactors, and low level waste being carefully monitored, the only remaining issue is the part of bulky decommissioned waste that contains long-lived radioactive components.

As I attempted to point out, there have been many methods for transmuting such substances as zirconium and new ways continue to be discovered. Any materials that cannot be easily reclaimed for re-use, can be neutralized.

The World Nuclear Association, to which OPG belongs, states that "used nuclear fuel may be treated as a resource or simply as a waste." [*Radioactive Waste Management* updated Nov 2013]

When we choose to use it as a resource, then it may be under a different level of government. In any event, reassigning federal and provincial responsibility is a minor, relatively simple part of this issue.

As a taxpayer currently being charged thousands annually to run the appliances in my home, I would much rather see my money spent to

convert our nuclear fission plants to molten salt ones than have it used in futile attempts to bury this valuable 'waste' in the ground.

Dr. Charles Rhodes of Xylene Power gave a clear rationale of the need to stop using fossil fuels in order to prevent the tipping point of climate change from advancing to about 70 years from now.

I am encouraged by the Rockefellers' recent decision to divest their investments in fossil fuels.

Clean nuclear, operating by burning spent fuel, can help in this transition. The result in a matter of decades will be the elimination of the deadliest radioactive waste.

Conversions of fission plants to molten salt ones will create jobs and permit the continued safer use of nuclear to reduce carbon emissions while other really safe methods of renewable energy production are being put in place.

There are many, many reasons to deny this application.

I hope, for all our futures, that the Panel will exercise its right to do this, and thus help Canada move toward a safe, sustainable future.

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