

## **“Make environment a Priority”**

1998, I wrote and circulated a piece on why the environment was ignored in the last election in response to Bueckert’s Globe article, June 5th, 1998, “Make environment a priority”

EXHIBIT

DRAFT

Possibly submitted as an Op-ed piece

In Dennis Bueckert’s Globe article, June 5th, 1998, “Make environment a Priority”, global poll says, “he points out that environmental concern is mounting primarily in developing countries.”

During the Election, the Green Party of Canada ran a strong campaign; continually pointing out that Green Party policy was in line with what governments in Canada have agreed to nationally and internationally but never implemented. When I was in Montreal during the 1997 election, I went to Jean Chretien's walkabout in a market. I introduced myself and said I would like to debate him on Canada's non-compliance with international obligations and commitments including climate change. He ignored me and walked by.

During the election, Canadian governments' failure to discharge obligations

And to act on Commitments was generally ignored. Yet several weeks ago, Brian Emmet, Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, confirmed that "Canada has failed to live up to its promises to Canadians and to the world".

During the Climate Change discussion leading up to and during Kyoto, the Green party issued six press releases and circulated them across Canada. Among the releases was a report card giving Canada a failing grade for its non-compliance with the Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992). The Green party particularly pointed out that Canada was remiss in not invoking the Precautionary Principle, which was an integral part of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. This principle affirms that under the threat of climate change, lack of scientific certainty should not be used to justify the postponing of measures to prevent the threat. The media in Canada during the Kyoto discussion continually interviewed Fraser Institute scientists who, when pressed, admitted that they were funded by the fossil fuel industry; these captive scientists continually cast doubt on the legitimacy of scientific concern about climate change of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

In countries with less discriminatory electoral systems, members of the Green party are being elected and are then able to continually raise environmental issues in legislative bodies. Every party now in the

Canadian Parliament functions at some level of vested economic interests detrimental to the environment, whether it be the interests of corporations or of specific unions that profit from environmentally unsound practices.

Is there any party in Parliament that will seriously address the continued mining of uranium in Saskatchewan and Canada's contribution to the nuclear arms industry? Is there any party that will seriously call for the phasing out of fossil fuel and the transfer of funds to develop environmentally sound energy systems? Is there any party in Parliament that will call for moving away from car dependency and for autoworkers to begin to design public transit systems instead of cars? Is there any party in Parliament that will demand no more cutting of old-growth forests both because of obligations to protect and conserve biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity and to conserve carbon sinks under the Framework Convention on Climate change?

Neither is there is a voice in national electoral debates or in Parliament calling for the difficult measures that have to be embraced to move towards socially equitable and environmentally sound employment.

Now is the time to act on addressing public concern. Now is the time for precaution, to heed warnings, to prevent negligence, and to finally be responsible for the rights of future generations.

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