

# YES!

## I WANT TO STOP URANIUM MINING FROM CONTAMINATING OUR WATER AND AIR.

Let's convince the B.C. government to reactivate the Royal Commission of Inquiry Health and Environmental Protection Uranium Mining. To help out, here's my **tax deductible donation** to pay for court costs and for distributing publications like this.

☐ \$15 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Tell me more about uranium mining.** I've enclosed an extra \$5 for an information package with detailed reports and references.

☐ **Yes!** I phoned and/or wrote Mr. Vander Zalm.

☐ **Yes!** I will distribute \_\_\_\_\_ copies of this brochure. Mail them to me at:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your cheque payable to "Greenpeace" and mail to: 2623 West Fourth Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1P8

**Take your pick:** environmental devastation by uranium mining



—OR—  
a healthy long term agricultural economy

Public pressure stopped uranium mining seven years ago and with your help—we can stop it again!

Greenpeace—along with the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, The Confederation of Canadian Unions, and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs—is now leading a legal action to oblige the Government of B.C. to:

1. Reinstate the Uranium Moratorium, and
2. Reinstate the Royal Commission to complete its mandate regarding the health, safety and environmental impacts of uranium exploration and mining.

This issue is so important, that Greenpeace is paying all court costs of all plaintiffs, as well as presenting affidavits from expert witnesses including:

- Dr. Ian D. Gummeson, M.D., Chairman, Environmental Health Committee, B.C. Medical Association
- Dr. Rosalie Bertell, Director of Research, International Institute of Concern for Public Health, Toronto
- Dr. Jay M. Gould, Environmental Research Director, Council on Economic Priorities, New York

- Dr. Ruth Weiner, Professor of Environmental Chemistry, Western Washington University, Bellingham
- Larry Stoffman, Director, Western Occupational Health Resources, Vancouver
- Dr. Terry Anderson, Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Vancouver School of Theology

**Pick up the phone**



1. **Phone Premier Vander Zalm.** Call 387-1715, or write to: The Honourable W. N. Vander Zalm, Premier, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4.

Explain to him in your own words that: "I'm worried... we must listen to the health experts about uranium mining. Our fruit and vegetables will get contaminated. So will our wildlife. Please ban uranium mining in our province—forever." We believe Mr. Vander Zalm is a reasonable man and a gardener himself. Surely he wouldn't want uranium mining in B.C. if he knew the facts.

2. **Get more involved.** Talk to your friends. Find out more. And ask your local government to insist on a public inquiry.
3. **Send us the attached donor card—NOW!—even if you just enclose \$5.00 to help us with printing costs.**

## FIVE GOOD REASONS TO STOP URANIUM MINING IN B.C.



### Pick Any One

**R**ight now British Columbians are facing an extremely serious environmental danger from proposed uranium mining. Already significant uranium deposits have been identified in the Clearwater/Birch Island areas and in the Okanagan in the Kelowna/Hydraulic Lake/Blizzard Lake areas.

Even if you don't live near these areas, the uranium mining planned here may affect your health as well as the health of your family.



## ✓1 The mining companies take away the uranium and leave behind millions of tons of radioactive tailings

While the nuclear power and weapons industry wants you to believe that mining uranium is a mysterious process that only 'high-tech' scientists can understand, the process is actually quite simple.

Uranium is found in sandstone deposits and other rock formations. The raw uranium ore is crushed and ground to a sandy consistency at mills usually located near the mines. Sulfuric acid is then used to extract the uranium, creating a mixture known as "yellowcake." Yellowcake is the basic raw material of nuclear reactor fuel. From an average ton of uranium ore, they'll extract only about 4 pounds of yellowcake. What's left over is a gray, sandy waste material called tailings. These tailings contain radium and radon gas.

*"Uranium tailings will have appreciable radioactivity for more than 100,000 years."*

—British Columbia Medical Association

## ✓2 We'll be paying the clean-up costs for centuries

Once uranium ore is ground up, it's thousands of times more dangerous than when it's in the ground. That's because crushed ore provides more surface area for radioactive by-products to escape into the atmosphere and water.

*"If left unexploited a uranium ore body releases relatively little radon-222 alpha radiation to the environment, but mining releases very large quantities of it."*

—British Columbia Medical Association

Not only will uranium tailings remain radioactive for hundreds of thousands of years, but until then they will require expensive long-term maintenance that we ALL must pay for. If abandoned, the radioactivity from tailings piles will be washed by rainfall and spread into local soil and ground water—and inevitably affect local plants and animals.

Common sense says that within the next twenty years British Columbia could become contaminated with radioactive wastes—poisoning our air and depositing radioactive elements thousands of kilometres away. Even if you live hundreds of kilometres from the mine, it could affect your garden, your water supply and the clean air you breathe.

Quite simply: if uranium mining is allowed in British Columbia, the quality of our environment will drop dramatically. And we'll never get it back again.

The only truly safe way to deal with our uranium is to leave it undisturbed in the ground.

## ✓3 Exposure to uranium can cause cancer

*"The present average allowable exposure to the public by uranium mines promulgated by the Ministry of Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources of 0.02 WL could result in 200–300 extra cases of lung cancer per 10,000 people per lifetime. These levels are possible from uranium mines. In the light of current knowledge this might be considered tantamount to allowing an industrially induced and publicly sanctioned epidemic of cancer."*

—British Columbia Medical Association

The potential health risks from uranium mining are so bad that our doctors consider it irresponsible to allow any further development of uranium mines until safe, permanent disposal technology is developed for the wastes that have already been generated.

In Saskatchewan, the public learned this lesson the hard way as they watched theoretically impregnable concrete vaults at Cluff Lake—said to be capable of isolating wastes for hundreds of years—crack and break after only a few years. Other older mines in Saskatchewan are widely recognized as disaster areas. **The Beaverlodge mining site has contaminated local fish so heavily, that the radioactivity of their flesh far exceeds 'safe' limits set by the Federal Government.**

## ✓4 Uranium mining creates too few jobs at too high a price

If mining were to begin on the uranium deposits in the Okanagan, not only would very few local jobs be created but the long-term effects of the mining would devastate this area's economy.

Since uranium deposits are so close to Okanagan agricultural areas, any leaching of radioactivity from proposed mines could seriously damage our fruit growing industries. Today, fruit growing and tourism are a \$200 million annual industry here. And these are permanent industries. Yet even the hint of residual radioactivity would destroy the markets for our apples, peaches, apricots, pears and grapes.

*"Uranium tailings will remain radioactive for hundreds of thousands of years and will require such expensive longterm surveillance and maintenance by government and the local citizenry as to make statements about uranium mining providing revenue very misleading."*

—British Columbia Medical Association

In Saskatchewan, it cost the taxpayers \$1 million to create each job in the uranium mines. Potential uranium mines here would have an annual payroll of only about \$2.6

million. When the mine runs out in about 15 years and the pay cheques stop, the massive clean-up job would just begin.

And that's a job NOBODY wants.

## ✓5 Now they're trying to hide the facts from you

Seven years ago, the provincial government appointed the *Royal Commission of Inquiry, Health and Environmental Protection, Uranium Mining* who began hearing testimony from world experts on the possibility of allowing uranium mining in British Columbia.

As they began releasing their findings, there was a massive groundswell of public protest. The protest was so strong that the provincial government terminated the Commission and announced a seven-year moratorium on uranium development to get concerned citizens off the backs of the mining companies and foreclose the debate. Although the Commission was unable to complete its mandate, most people stopped worrying—for a while.

Today, the uranium mining moratorium has run out—despite major protests from medical, religious, labour, teachers, native and environmental groups. Premier Bill Bennett's seven-year moratorium expired in February, 1987 and the present provincial government refused to renew it. But the questions concerning public safety remain.

When the Commission was terminated by the provincial Cabinet, two-thirds of the expert witnesses were still to be heard. The Royal Commission was ended:

- **before** the planned second stage of Community Hearings where the general public could be heard,
- **before** the commission recommended comprehensive standards for public safety,
- **before** atmospheric contaminant standards for uranium mining could be made,
- **and before** the Commission completed a full review of the critical biological pathways of radiation in the environment.

Greenpeace believes you have the right to know all the facts relating to your health and the environment before uranium mining is allowed to proceed in British Columbia. Because the *Inquiry Act* states that royal commissions "shall...complete the inquiry entrusted to them", we've asked the courts to declare that the government acted illegally when it cancelled these critical hearings.

**You have the right to argue for the protection of your health and the health of your children.**

Please help us fight for a permanent moratorium on uranium mining in B.C.

# URANIUM MINING IN B.C.?

Atlin

Fraser Lake

Clearwater/Birch Island

Kelowna/  
Hydraulic Lake/  
Blizzard Lake