



March 2, 2011

The Globe and Mail

Letter to the editor:

Re: Margaret Wentz: Social Compact

I read with interest the column on *the uprising in Wisconsin – Tuesday, March 1, 2011*. In it Ms. Wentz concluded that the new folk heroes in the US are the down to earth, common sense types determined to protect the people from the ravages of unions and make government affordable again.

We have much the same situation in Ontario over at the 'green energy' place- Ministry of Energy. The Liberals thought they could appeal to a certain part of the electorate by promoting wind and solar energy at unrealistic prices and costs to consumers. Instead we have a mess of epic proportions that leaves eye sores in rural Ontario and high costs in the urban and suburban centres; billions and billions for everything from transmission lines to new gas peaker plants to produce energy when the wind does not blow and the sun does not shine.

Geothermal energy- the other renewable- offers a unique opportunity to heat and cool nearly every building in the province by means of geothermal energy. This form of energy can be recovered from the earth beneath every building site, without any need for energy transmission lines. The use of geothermal energy offers benefits to the users, to the local and provincial economy, to utilities, and to society. It can use competitive market forces to develop a self-sustaining market.

Geothermal energy is recovered from the upper 200 metres of the earth beneath each building. It is then upgraded by the use of heat pumps to provide heating and cooling of the building, as well as a supply of hot water for domestic use.

The importance of geothermal energy is that every Ontarian has access to this energy source in their own backyard. A geothermal energy system recovers the thermal energy that is stored in the soil and rock of the earth. By using a system of pipes buried in the ground, a mixture of water and environmentally friendly anti-freeze is circulated to recover or dissipate heat. These systems are highly energy-efficient, quiet, and clean.

A geothermal energy system is a unique technology. Every Ontario property owner has access to geothermal energy in their own back yard. It increases the comfort of users

while reducing their energy bills. It provides local employment opportunities while reducing the trade deficit. It reduces the cost at which electric utilities provide service. It reduces the burning of fossil fuels, thus improving the environment. The sealed components of geothermal energy systems (pipes in the ground and the heat pumps) make them highly reliable, with low operating costs. Finally, they provide local employment for system installation and maintenance.

Paralleling Ms. Wente's conclusion – geothermal energy may be wind and solar's and this government's worst nightmare because when they are offered on a level playing field geothermal energy wins every time.

*Smart Ontario politicians should be taking notes.*

Earl Morwood  
Executive Director  
Ontario Geothermal Association