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To: Committee, ISR (REPS)
Subject: Submission into Dev. of NonFossil Energy

Submission No: 20

Committee Secretariat
Inquiry into Development of the Non-Fossil Energy Industry

Dear Committee,

In the past my politics have usually been green so I'd always welcomed 'wind power' when I thought about Renewable Energy. Now however, after educating myself about wind power, I'm much more discriminating in my choices of future energy. Wind power energy appears great in more than just theory, however the ill-considered, mindless, almost vandal-like, choice of location for industrial wind power-plants is far more destructive than simply blighting the ancient landscape. Long before they're even approved they destroy the cohesion and camaraderie, the soul of the community, of the small country town they're hoping to move into. The miniscule benefits for green house emissions are not worth the enormous damage this will do, to communities, to families. A wind power plant proposed for Smeaton Victoria isn't the gradual growth from the suburbs outwards; this is a giant industrial 'alien' suddenly landing in amongst an old established rural community.

My reason for objecting to wind power in particular is because I've now realised that trying to stop the destruction of a small community is even more important than trying to stop the destruction of the peace or the ancient landscape. Both obvious reasons to oppose wind power stations.

Over the past 27 years I've always felt welcome in our tiny local hotel. (I worked there on & off for 2 decades!) Whatever the discussion whether it was politics or football teams, we've always managed to cheerfully get through all our disagreements with a beer, and with a simple respect for that person's 'misguided' opinion, and we move on. During the past fortnight I have been so saddened.. no, I've been absolutely shocked at the change in the townspeople's attitudes towards one another over this issue! Apart from the brainless acts of violence outside, there's now a horrible hint of 'nastiness' sitting in on every discussion. Every conversation comes back to the proposed windfarm.. It's sad that I'm now avoiding the only place in town I used to always feel safe and welcome.

I realise I'm submitting more from a personal point of view but I still expect the destruction of community soul to be considered just as important as the physical destruction of the landscape. These sudden industrialisations inflicted upon small peaceful towns like Smeaton should be researched by psychologists, not just businessmen, ecologists, politicians, etc. In our little town I'm seeing an 'atmosphere', that despite past political, sporting, religious etc disagreements, I've never seen before.

I'm hoping this may be understood more by those with some socio-psychological knowledge, not just renewable energy knowledge.

Solar panels on every new home/office block/factory built (subsidies for the rest to switch) make so much sense that obviously a government body isn't going to take it seriously. I realise the government would miss out on the g.s.t. on our power bills, etc., if we all individually went solar, so I can't expect them to ever take it seriously. Although I think I'd be prepared to pay some kind of solar tax to replace the gst the govt would've received from my power bill if they were serious about solar..

As for coal.. No government of any description from Red to Green and every party in-between, will announce the end of coal powered energy production, EVER.. While companies make money out of digging it out of the ground, it's here to stay. The companies and politicians can scream green all they want,

