

Reason for Revolution

Contributed by Robin Matthews
Tuesday, 12 June 2007
Last Updated Tuesday, 12 June 2007

In British Columbia, the population, today, is in the process of being robbed in one of the largest, dirtiest, fraudulent deals in Canadian history - with very little time to reverse the direction. It is a move to destroy democratic management of an absolutely key B.C. resource, to implant foreign corporate rule raking in billions of dollars, to kidnap and erase resource ownership by British Columbians, and to impoverish them in a move to create what will be - put in simple terms - a fascist relation between private corporate capitalism (heavily foreign, heavily U.S.) and the B.C. government through an inferior and rapacious exploitation of B.C.s water resources.

At the root of this robbery is Gordon Campbell, his cabinet, and his MLAs. They have lied, have hidden information, have legislated to prevent democratic participation and to keep information completely from British Columbians. They are doing everything they can to shut off the voice and to kill the aspirations of British Columbians for the continuation of a fair, publicly owned, service oriented energy system intrinsic to the health and prosperity of the Province.

The history - for at least the last five years - has been of resistance from nice public organizations, nice unions, a love-in Legislative Opposition, nice researchers and nice freelance journalists working on the issue, getting nowhere, losing ground each day, and being made to look like grade school dummies by the relentless manipulation and corrupt practice of the Gordon Campbell mob and its corporate puppeteers, Canadian and U.S. A few times people and groups have stalled the political thuggery. But the Campbell juggernaut has pushed past all fair and decent dealing - gaining, not losing, power.

The corrupt deal in B.C. must be stopped soon by whatever means works. British Columbians must use every means - including a General Strike to stop the B.C. premier Gordon Campbell handing over the public wealth of B.C. to private corporations dragging and B.C.s key energy resource into a system largely owned and controlled and mismanaged in the U.S. where the hugest portion of profit will flow.

The mystery is why Gordon Campbell and his cabinet are not dogged, confronted, and forced into public focus every day. Each time they move to pass legislation stripping British Columbians of democratic rights, or to sell out B.C.'s water, the Opposition should stop the legislature from operating. That is the Opposition's democratic obligation: to focus the attention of British Columbians when government power is destroying the Province and the democratic rights of Canadians. The Opposition MLAs should block debate and the passage of all legislation. The press and media of B.C would then be forced to tell the reason for the opposition's obduracy, thereby exposing the Campbell government. That is what democratic opposition is about.

Unions should refuse to work, should stop the economy - a democratic

weapon available to them. In France the workers did just that recently. French government passed legislation to begin the destruction of French unions. With students and other supporters, the French unions took to the streets and closed institutions until the French government withdrew the legislation completely.

What is the core of the theft in B.C.?

Having promised not to privatize B.C. Hydro, the most valuable water generating electric system in North America, Gordon Campbell is destroying it.

One. By his 2002 B.C. Energy Plan B.C. Hydro is prevented permanently from developing further electrical generation and is being forced to buy from private generators.

Two. Campbell is burying B.C. Hydro in billions of dollars of debt through advance energy purchase agreements with those private corporations.

Three. Campbell has opened all B.C.'s hundreds of rivers to virtual gift-takeovers by a network of foreign, often U.S. corporations.

Four. He has passed legislation - Bill 30 - which prevents all B.C. Municipalities from having any power over zoning of electrical generating facilities erected by private (many foreign) corporations on B.C. rivers. In effect, he has strangled the democratic rights of B.C. Municipalities.

Five. Campbell has forced B.C. Hydro to out-source a third of its staff to Accenture, a highly dubious Bermuda-based operation. All metering, billing, and financial services of B.C. Hydro have been handed to Accenture by the B.C. government. Accenture came into being from its original life as Arthur Anderson Consulting which was so implicated in the Enron scandal it was virtually destroyed and had to disappear. Its reappearance is as Accenture. It is now a major "partner" in the B.C. water generated energy system.

The government agreement with Accenture is kept secret from the voters of British Columbia, kept so by legislation, denying British Columbians their democratic rights.

Six. Campbell forced a second split in B.C. Hydro to create the B.C. Transmission Corporation. Its purpose is to make B.C. Hydro accessible to all (private) producers so it can become an instrument (of the often U.S. "private" owners of B.C. rivers) to ship electricity to the U.S. at inflated prices - which will become the prices British Columbians pay.

Seven. Unknown to most British Columbians, B.C. Hydro - instead of increasing its electrical generating capacity - is paying out well over \$400 million per year to purchase from the burgeoning private operators. That is a totally unnecessary situation.

Eight. Those private operators are The Independent Power Producers of B.C., many neither independent nor "of B.C.". Unrestrained, they will make multi billions selling to U.S. buyers in a system that will force up nearly all living costs for British Columbians

Nine. To mask his ultimate intention, Campbell has wooed and won some First Nations groups and some real or "convenient" environmental groups. All of them can have their "participation" and ownership rugs pulled out from under them - precisely as Campbell has undermined B.C. Hydro - whenever it is convenient for the huge U.S. corporations wanting to own B.C. power.

Ten. The Campbell government is doing everything it can to prevent resistance from British Columbians, passing legislation to cut off citizen groups and municipal rights and trying to shut up organizations or institutions it can't erase - like the Squamish-Lilloet Regional District which is a key obstacle to the complete meltdown of the citizens rights in B.C. that Campbell is determined to destroy.

That is the "what". Why is it happening?

British Columbia is up against a global development that is ruthless, rapacious, and without conscience. The corporations in North America which are trying to corner all electric generation as a privately owned commodity intend to grab B.C. water resources for themselves. Who are those people? Where does their power come from?

The reactionary government of Stephen Harper is in a love affair with the U.S. government and - in effect - with the U.S. military industrial complex. The Gordon Campbell B.C. government is a sub-office of that general structure, determined to replace the democratic power of British Columbians with the power of "North American capital", "of an integrated economy", "of an unimpeded free trade area". Whatever phrase is used to describe the goal of the Campbell government, it is - in simple terms - to rob British Columbians of their heritage in a publicly owned resource with public service as its mandate and to destroy democracy in the Province in order to imbed unchallenged and uncriticized private corporate rule in its place.

The history of B.C. Hydro's dark days can be written briefly. In the premiership of Bill Bennett (judged guilty of insider trading on the Stock Market when premier) the gas section of B.C. Hydro was sold off on condition that it remain a B.C. Company headquartered in B.C. It became (as a private company) B.C. Gas and then Terasen.

A few years ago Gordon Campbell slipped into other legislation the release of Terasen Gas from B.C. ownership. Very soon after it was sold to Richard Kinder, a Texas, ex-Enron executive. (Observe how companies that have been in deep legal trouble in the U.S. provide key figures in the B.C. Hydro story.)

Kinder is said to have made two billion dollars in one year from

Terasen. He quickly brought into its ownership the Carlyle Group.

In any country concerned to protect its population Campbell's foul betrayal of trust would be declared sedition. It would be called criminal theft from the B.C. people in favour of private interests (many foreign), inimical to the well-being of Canada and British Columbia.

Will we seize the opportunity?

Accenture Responded

In the story by Robin Matthews entitled "Reason for Revolution," we would like a correction. Accenture is not and has never been engaged in the practice of public accounting. Accenture has had no involvement in Arthur Andersen's audit services, including audit services to Enron. Accenture LLP and Arthur Andersen LLP had been separate legal entities and had operated independently since 1989. In 1990, the United States Securities and Exchange Commission formally recognized Accenture LLP as an entity separate and distinct from Arthur Andersen LLP. In 2000, all remaining historical contractual ties between Arthur Andersen and Accenture were completely severed.