

S.Bruneau – Oct 5th 2018 Muskrat Falls Inquiry

Q - Have you any final comments you would like to make

In 2012 before the Ziff report was ever commissioned and just months before the final project sanction, the Government of the day said in response to my presentation that natural gas wasn't even worth studying (reference the telegram). It was said that the Atlantic Accord didn't allow for it and that economics prevented it anyways because it couldn't be cheaper than Muskrat Falls. A little while later that same Government paid Ziff to do what it said wasn't worth doing. It appears that commissioning ZIFF at that late stage was an admission that this work had not been done earlier by Nalcor or any other organization that should have. It also raised the question of the ability of an involved party to actually get an arms-length objective piece of consulting work. It would have been a nuclear blast to all the protagonists if Ziff had come back saying gas was cheaper than Muskrat. But they didn't. But significantly, nor did they say that Muskrat was cheaper. They simply said that the demand on the Island was too small to justify the costs of a gas project and therefore it was uneconomical.

Although I have laid out the various reasons why I believe the Ziff report is not good value for money, no matter what was paid, I do wish to thank them for not attempting to make personal digs or derogatory comments that stray from the facts of the case. I find it troubling however, that even now people who had the courage in 2012 and earlier to disagree with the grounds for sanctioning the Muskrat Falls project are being deemed by some as unpatriotic and unhelpful. Was the same thing said about similar voices when the upper Churchill contract was signed? Is this name calling and public ridicule the reason why so many people refused to be heard in public opposing the project? I received numerous calls of support "off the record and under the table" from people with substantial credibility and experience that were shocked by the prospect of Muskrat Falls sanctioning but were unwilling to speak publicly about it. I've even read recently from the dwindling supporters of the sanction decision that somehow opinions like mine are serving a serious injustice to the people of the Province! I'd say let the people of the Province decide exactly who has dished them a serious injustice. And to that I would like to say thank you to the Inquiry for providing a respectful and safe platform from which to restate my 2012 research in light of the uncontested work commissioned afterwards that helped clinch the decision to move forward with Muskrat Falls.

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