

TAR SANDS DEMONSTRATIONS

EUROPE:

PROJECT CONCEPT

July 17th, 2010

London – Berlin – Vienna - Paris – Amsterdam

Raising awareness about the world's largest and dirtiest energy project

Summary:

On July 17th, 2010, demonstrations in support of stopping the development of the Canadian tar sands will be held in five different European cities. The purpose of the demonstrations will be to raise awareness in Canada and Europe about the destructiveness of tar sands development. In order to maximize the amount of attention the demonstrations receive, the demonstrations will be held at the height of tourist season in Europe and at the unique location of Canadian embassies (where possible). The hope is the demonstrations will inspire Europeans in joining concerned Canadians and concerned citizens of the world in campaigning for shutting down the tar sands.

Why should Europeans be concerned about the tar sands?

- **One Planet** – as one of the dirtiest energy projects in the world, the development and expansion of the tar sands will assist in pushing climate change to the ‘point of no return’ which will have an effect on Europe and the entire planet.
- You want a **real climate deal**? In the last few years, the Canadian government has done its best to block a climate change agreement (at the last two UNFCCC’s, Canada was voted “Fossil of the Year” by environmental groups). The tar sands are the ‘mental block’ that is keeping the Canadian government from agreeing to effective CO2 emissions cuts. Remove the mental block and we are one step closer to a fair and just climate deal.
- **The EU is yielding to the tar sands industry** – a leaked EU draft on fuel standards (*Reuters*, March 24th, 2010) revealed the EU plans to treat oil derived from tar sands the same as conventional oil in regards to carbon footprint. The carbon footprint of “dirty oil” is three times that of conventional oil. For the Reuters report, go to <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62N3T920100324>
- **Europeans fund the tar sands** – the world largest energy project needs a lot of capital. Whether it is through European oil companies – British Petroleum (UK), Shell (UK and Holland), Statoil (Norway), Total (France) – financial institutions - Royal Bank of Scotland (UK), UBS and Credit Suisse (Switzerland) or at the pump - Shell, Total, and Exxon - Europe is VERY much involved.

What will people be demonstrating for?

1. Demanding the Canadian government shuts down or stops further development of the tar sands.
2. In solidarity with concerned Canadians who are campaigning for shutting down or stopping further development of the tar sands.
3. Demanding the EU bans imports and financing of “dirty oil”.

Who are the demonstrations raising awareness amongst?

The three ‘awareness’ target groups are:

1. European environmental groups
2. Non-activist Europeans
3. Canadians traveling through Europe

At the moment, the tar sands are not a high priority for environmental groups in Europe, with the exception of the UK. By trying to involve as many environmental groups as possible, the demonstrations will assist in making the issue of tar sands development become a bigger issue among these groups. Canadians hearing of, seeing, or participating in the demonstrations will be inspired to give the tar sands a second and very serious thought. The demonstrations themselves will raise awareness about the tar sands among average Europeans who know little to nothing about the tar sands.

Where will the demonstrations be held?

- In five of the most popular cities in Europe for tourists to visit in order to reach the maximum number of Canadian travelers in Europe.
- The unique location of Canadian embassies – virtually no one in Europe demonstrates in front of Canadian embassies.

The demonstrations will take place in European cities where Canadian travelers are most likely to be in order to facilitate their participation and involvement in the demonstrations. Demonstrating in front of the Canadian embassy has a dual purpose. Firstly, the Canadian government is the only institution that can stop the expansion and/or development of the tar sands. The embassies are the

representations of that government. Secondly, due to the fact demonstrating in front of Canadian embassies is unheard of, the unique location will generate attention from the media, Europeans and Canadian travelers.

Note: in the case that the selected city has no Canadian embassy (Amsterdam), a consulate will suffice. If the Canadian embassy or consulate is not in a centrally located or in a impractical location for the demonstration, a substitute location will be found. There is no point holding the demonstration in a location where they will not be seen or not easily accessible to the local population.

When will the demonstrations take place?

The demonstrations will take place on July 17th, 2010, at the height of the tourist season in Europe in order to reach the maximum amount of Canadians traveling in Europe. Recent developments in Canada and the EU indicate the time is right for a project such as the “Tar Sands Demonstrations Europe”:

- Canadians are becoming more and more fed up with Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s government. Harper’s December 30th, 2009 decision to prorogue or suspend parliament not only hurt him in Canadian opinion polls, but also created a backlash in the form of the grassroots movement – Canadians Against Proroguing Parliament – the likes of which Canada has never seen before. Harper’s Throne Speech to Parliament on March 3rd, 2010, clearly indicated tar sands development will increase and environmental protection will decrease, further upsetting environmentally conscious Canadians. Harper’s government is THE government of rapid tar sands development and expansion, but as a minority government, it would not take much to bring it down.
- In regards to the EU, it is evident from the March 24th article in Reuters that the EU is shifting from taking a tough stance on “dirty oil” to falling in line with the demands of big oil companies. Europeans are becoming even more accomplices to this “climate crime.”

How will the demonstrations raise awareness?

The goal of the demonstrations is to raise awareness about the tar sands amongst the aforementioned target groups. Each group will be reached in different ways:

1. European environmental groups – by inviting, encouraging, convincing and inspiring various groups to participate in the demonstrations it draws more

attention and interest to the tar sands' issue. The demonstrations will help these groups realize that tar sands development is also a priority for their groups' activities.

2. Non-activist Europeans – as stated earlier, the uniqueness of the location will get people's attention. Info sheets will be handed out during the demonstrations to inform people what the tar sands mean to Europe and the planet.
3. Canadians – most Canadians are aware of the tar sands, but do not know how destructive tar sands development is. The uniqueness of the location will also get Canadians attention, but more importantly by putting up posters for the demonstrations near hostels for example, Canadians will be encouraged to participate in the demonstrations.

In general, the demonstrations have to be creative, fun and positive to generate attention and raise awareness. This applies to before, during and after the demonstrations. To serve this purpose, the demonstrations cannot be 'against' anything (Canada, Canadians, big oil companies, etc.), but 'for' something (solidarity with Canadians, stopping further tar sands development, etc.). It is much easier to be against something than for something.

End Game:

From the awareness that the demonstrations will raise about the tar sands, the hope is that a new campaign by environmental groups across Europe will begin to keep "dirty oil" out of the EU and vice versa. Canadians will realize that the development of the tar sands is a road their country should no longer go down. People, regardless of nationality, will be inspired to join the movement to stop climate change from reaching the point of no return.

***Be Creative, Have Fun, Stay Positive; The
Three Pillars of Raising Awareness
- some guy on the subway -***