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Wind energy will leave Mainers, the nation, shackled to a heavy weight

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Maine is headed to prison. A prison, painted green.

Let me show you the motion picture analogy.

You probably have seen the movie "The Shawshank Redemption" based on Stephen King's novel where Andy Dufree (played by Tim Robbins) is convicted on circumstantial evidence of murdering his wife.

Dufree is sentenced to two consecutive life sentences at Shawshank State Penitentiary, a fictional prison in Maine. After a noble struggle, Andy Dufree breaks out, leaving behind evidence of the warden's corruption and brutality.

In other words, Mainers have been condemned for global warming on circumstantial evidence by a stacked jury and without due process.

The jury was stacked with biased legislators, environmental sellouts, state bureaucrat enforcers, and industry insiders. The verdict -- LD 2283 The Expedited Wind Power Law -- was rushed through the Legislature.

These jurors then became our self-appointed "judges," "wardens" and "jailors."

We are promised freedom and independence, a "green redemption," if we just put in the years and pay.

Only through wind power, they say, will come salvation.

Wind turbines are hailed as "free and clean, bringing green jobs." They will bring "freedom and independence from foreigners who hate us," we are told.

But, they bring decades of torture and servitude, high cost and debt.

Maine is headed to such a prison, it seems to this columnist, replete with sleep deprivation, heavy chains of cost on the "inmates," and strict "jailers and wardens."

Recently, courageous journalists have written news stories about health complaints from the people of Mars Hill, Freedom, and Vinalhaven who say they are victims of sleep deprivation from low-frequency thrumming of the wind turbines.

Our "warden-legislators" ignore the "inmates" pleas for mercy. They are literally locked in. They now have difficulty selling their homes because of noise and visual pollution.

Others who decry the betrayal and the destruction of Maine's islands and hills -- beauty that inspires and brings many to our state -- are put down as just NIMBYs.

The "warden-legislators" gave preferential treatment for and excessive compension (through extra-ordinary incentives not granted to any other source of electricity) to developers and investors of massive wind turbine industrial parks.

Permitting is fast. The appeal process is shortened, stifled and silenced.

The current wind power law, and announced offshore wind power law, will lock Maine people into usurious long-term electricity costs. Contracts at almost double the current wholesale cost of electricity have been granted to First Wind's Rollins Project.

Spot prices for electricity from traditional sources average about \$46 per megawatt hour, the equivalent of 1,000 kilowatts. Wind energy, which is being sold at long-term contract prices not spot prices, would cost about \$80 per mwh hour, or almost twice as much. Wind is the only energy producer which has been recently allowed to sell its electricity on a long-term contract basis rather than at spot prices. This arrangement allows wind producers the advantage of providing investors with the potential for a more stable revenues, buffeted from the ups and downs of the spot market prices, and making their cash flows potentially more attractive to investors, but is more costly for ratepayers.

For every onshore wind turbine installed in Maine \$1 million to \$2 million is added to the national debt, due in large part to federal subsidies from stimulus money and tax credits granted to wind energy firms; costs and debt our children and grandchildren will be shackled to.

Incentives given to industrial wind developers mean there will be scant additions to state tax revenues.

Local property taxes are promised, but few are delivered. The town of Mars Hill for example,

receives a only net \$100,000 per year from First Wind, the company that owns the turbines.

No other business is given such favorable treatment in the state of Maine.

Unfortunately, we don't have documents like Andy Dufree to show cronyism.

Just interesting connections for all Mainers to see.

- Former governor and his son: Angus King developer of a \$283 million wind project, whose son Angus King III is head of mergers and acquisitions at First Wind.
- Former legal counsel and friend of John Baldacci, Kurt Adams, is now vice president of transmission development at First Wind.
- First Wind's attorney is Juliette Brown. Her husband, Rep. Jon Hinck, (D-Portland) was formerly with the Natural Resources Council of Maine where he worked to promote wind power. He is the current chairman of the Energy and Utilities Committee which oversees the wind industry.

Former defenders of Maine's mountains and water, The Natural Resources Council of Maine, have turned promoters for the wind power industry, after receiving contributions and money for "natural resources protection," in a deal arranged by Juliette Brown.

But, according the "warden-legislators" at the Ethics Commission, there are no problems here.

Hinck has just introduced legislation, LD 1820, to allow expedited permitting for new transmission lines, but only for wind turbines.

The new transmission lines cannot be used to buy cheaper hydro-electric power from Canada. However, that will not stop other ISO New England states from doing so. This will further lock Maine into the wind power prison.

All this for being falsely convicted on circumstantial evidence? Where is the justice in that?

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