

News  
From \_\_\_\_\_

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
OCTOBER 21, 1987

CONTACT: JERRY BURKOT  
202-225-3452

## CANADIAN POWER IMPORTS HIT BY RAHALL BILL

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) today introduced legislation aimed at mitigating the growing threat to national energy security and coal industry employment posed by increased imports of Canadian power.

In recent years, the amount of Canadian power imported into regions of the U.S. has dramatically increased causing domestic utilities to delay or cancel the construction of new powerplants. This translates into less employment in the construction and mining industries. Meanwhile, the Canadians are building new electrical generating capacity solely for export to the U.S.

According to Rahall, the Canadians have used the acid rain issue as a marketing tool for their electricity exports, telling utilities in the Northeast that they can avoid the acid rain controversy by purchasing Canadian hydroelectric power. "While Canadian concern over the alleged threat acid rain poses to the environment may be genuine, the fact remains that it is a powerful sales tactic for increased power exports to the Northeast," Rahall said.

Rahall noted, however, that on a comparative basis with the U.S., Canadian environmental safeguards on its power generating facilities are minimal. Canadian electricity exported to the U.S. is generated by nuclear and coal powerplants in addition to hydroelectric.

In introducing the "Environmental Equity Act of 1987," Rahall is seeking to address this situation by requiring the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to determine whether Canadian power generation and transmission facilities comply with similar environmental safeguards as are applicable in the U.S. If they do not, the power could not be imported.

Rahall stated on the House floor that increased dependency on Canadian power has national security implications and results in less coal industry employment as utilities cancel new powerplant construction. Meanwhile, Canadian efforts to play upon concern over acid rain in the Northeastern U.S. is suspect in light of their aggressive power marketing tactics and due to the fact there are very little environmental safeguards over power generation in Canada.

Listing what he called the "three ironies of Canadian concern for the environment and their power sales tactics," Rahall said the first involves the extensive construction of dams on Canadian free-flowing rivers for hydroelectric power generation purposes. The second deals with the increase in high level nuclear waste from Canadian nuclear powerplants constructed for electricity export purposes. The third involves the fact that Canada does not have a single smokestack scrubber on any of its coal-fired powerplants. "This is the ultimate irony making suspect the compatibility of Canadian plans to significantly increase electricity exports to the U.S. and their stated concerns over acid rain and the environment," he said.

Rahall commented that the cost of electricity generated in the U.S. reflects the enforcement of numerous laws such as the Clean Air and Water Acts, Superfund and the federal surface mining law. "We have said in this country that we will pay the price for clean air and water and the restoration of our land in return for a stable supply of electric power," Rahall said. "Taking advantage of cheap power generated in a country without similar safeguards is not only dishonest, but represents unfair competition to domestic industries."

"In effect, by increasing its dependency on imported Canadian power that is being generated solely for the U.S. market, the Northeast and other regions are simply contributing to further environmental degradation in that country in the form of more dams constructed on free-flowing rivers, increased unregulated emissions from coal-fired powerplants and larger amounts of high-level nuclear waste," Rahall said.

"It is time that the Northeast and other regions which are becoming increasingly dependent upon Canadian power face the fact that there is no free ride in power development."