



Media Release
(For Immediate Release)

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Mackenzie Gas Project Angling for Public Subsidies

(*Yellowknife, NWT*) Alternatives North hopes that the revised cost estimates filed on March 12, 2007 for the Mackenzie Gas Project (MGP) don't prompt consideration of government subsidies for the project.

Alternatives North spokesperson, Ben McDonald, described the new cost estimates, "as a blatant attempt by some of the world's richest companies to blackmail public governments into corporate welfare.

"There's lots of speculation that the proponents are angling for public subsidies or the project is dead. Some are saying the companies now want to roll the Mackenzie gas together with Alaskan gas and not use a Mackenzie Valley route at all. The finger pointing has begun about who's going to be blamed for the ultimate situation. But however that is eventually spun, Alternatives North insists that no government consider subsidies for this project," McDonald said.

The proponents have been saying for almost a year that revised cost estimates were being developed. Detailed cost estimates have yet to be filed and are not expected before the end of the month at the very earliest.

"Once the full cost information is available, we look forward to a thorough *public* verification of the new numbers presented, and to a detailed *public* financial analysis of all the project costs and benefits. That's the sort of government action the people of the Northwest Territories deserve."

Imperial Oil earned \$2.6-billion in 2006, the highest profits the company has ever made. It is about 70% owned by Exxon Mobil Corp., the most profitable publicly traded company on Earth. During a teleconference on March 12, the Senior Vice-President of Imperial Oil is reported to have said about the MGP, "We expect double-digit returns on this kind of investment, and we're nowhere near that."

"Canadian taxpayers and northerners should not be made to subsidize the exorbitant profit levels of monster corporations. It's that simple," McDonald said. "Any government that provides any sort of concessions will reap the whirlwind of a huge public backlash."

The estimated cost of the project has more than doubled from \$7 to \$16.2 billion.

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