



LOCAL NEWS

Pierce Brosnan Brings Out Malibu's Hollywood Power to Oppose LNG

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MALIBU - In a mass event rarely seen in this small city of politically inclined and outspoken voices, about 1,000 people came out to Surfrider Beach this morning in a unified front to speak out against the highly galvanizing issue of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

Leading the way in the effort were Pierce and Keely Brosnan who brought out a whole host of other screen talent from Laird Hamilton and Dick van Dyke to Ted Danson, Halle Berry, Danny Stern, Téa Leoni, Daryl Hannah, Michael Bergin, David Duchovny, Minnie Driver, Bryan Datillo, Kenny G, Gabrielle Reece, Roma Downey, Mark Burnett and Cindy Crawford. In addition, local political figures were present such as Representative Fran Pavley who has also announced her candidacy for Senator Sheila Kuehl's seat.

The proposed Cabrillo Port LNG facility would spew air, water and noise pollution on a wide scale.

Pierce Brosnan said he came forward to speak out against LNG because Malibu is his home.

"I've lived here for 23-years, and I find it terrifying and kind of rather sinister this gas terminal they want to put out here," Brosnan said in an interview at the large gathering partly sponsored by the Brosnan Trust. "They've never done this before on such a scale. They're a mining company, one of the largest in the world. And, their track record is fairly well documented around the world. It is environmentally questionable."

Brosnan said he is concerned about the consequences of the proposed terminal if it is built.

"I am really concerned about my own backyard here and along the California coastline," Brosnan said. "It's a big coastline and big backyard. This has been creeping in quietly into our community. Not many people know about it. This could have disastrous consequences if they do build it."

Brosnan said the proposal is for 40-years, but "You know that's not going to happen. The people of Malibu don't know enough about what's happening."

Dick Van Dyke entered the Malibu Pier where the event was being held in his familiar comedic style. He was break dancing to the Hawaiian music performed in front of a whole host of smiling and giggling people.

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However, Van Dyke was not all laughs today. In moments of serious conversation in an interview with PCH Press, the longstanding Hollywood figure spoke candidly on the political corruption behind LNG.

"I voted for Ike Eisenhower, because I worshipped him as everybody else did. He told us when he left office, beware of the Industrial Military Complex. And, we didn't do it. And, now they're running the country." Van Dyke said.

Recently released congressional reports have detailed Team Abramoff's ties into at least five Non-Profit groups, the Bush Administration, Congress, the Office of Management & Budget (OMB), the Department of Interior (DOI) and the Mafia.

Team Abramoff is the group of lobbyists working under the corrupt and now convicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff during his time first at the lobbying firm Preston, Gates & Ellis and later at Abramoff's firm Greenberg Traurig. The team is mostly comprised of former aides to prominent Congressional politicians.

Both Abramoff and mining companies funnel lobbying money through one of those non-profits, [The Council of Republicans for Environmental Advocacy \(CREA\)](#), started by extremist conservative Grover Norquist and former Secretary of Interior Gale Norton prior to her appointment at the DOI and subsequent resignation for her ties to Abramoff. Also, Norton is a firm advocate for the extremist wise use policy supported by President Bush.

A former aid to Norton heads the CREA. And a former counsel to Norton is now lead council at the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) where the decision was handed down after lobbying from BHP Billiton to make the proposed Cabrillo Port considered part of the Channel Islands and not part of the closer mainland. If it were considered part of the mainland, the facility would be held to more stringent pollution standards.

BHP Billiton has spent some \$1.8 million in lobbying in the State of California for their proposed port. BHP Billiton was the seventh highest spending firm in the State at the same time it was really cranking up its campaign to gain approval for the off-shore facility.

It has been widely reported that BHP also contributed to a non-profit organization, the California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy (CFEE), that paid to bring policymakers on a 12-day trip to Europe. And, it has also been widely reported that BHP sponsored a lunch and dinner for participants during the fact-finding trip to explore alternative and renewable energy projects on that continent. The [CFEE board](#) (<http://www.cfee.net/docs/Frameset.html>) includes Renee Klimczak, President, BHP Billiton LNG International Inc., an issue that was first reported in [Pacific Coast Business Times](#).

The state Political Reform Act allows public officials to accept transportation as a gift from a nonprofit foundation, which are exempt from gift limits, on the condition the travel is related to government purpose or public policy. Both the foundation and the official must report the gift. This trip was reported.

However, critics wonder if the Political Reform Act was being taken advantage of on this point. Watchdog groups such as The Foundation For Taxpayer and Consumer Rights, contend the Act intended nonprofit



foundations to be defined as groups such as the Red Cross and not partisan nonprofit foundations such as CFEE.

"You know what we need?" Van Dyke said. "We need a few hundred whistleblowers who would step forward from government, industry, education and the Church and tell us what's going on, and we should protect them. I think things would clean-up real fast. A lot of people know what's going on and are afraid to say anything. I urge them to step out there and talk."

The proposed Cabrillo Port LNG facility would be built 14-miles off the coast of Malibu and Oxnard making more than just Hollywood talent nervous about the impacts on the environment.

Actor and activist Ted Danson also spoke frankly on his feelings about the political maneuvering behind the LNG front in California.

"It burns my ass they pick Oxnard thinking it's a little small community, and they won't have the wherewithal to stand up and fight. That irritates me. Hugely," Danson said.

The only other issue of late that brought together Californians from opposing political fences was the overwhelming opposition to the car tax which put Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger into office. Ironically, the Governor's support of LNG may be the issue that brings him down on November 7, 2006.

Influential Los Angeles Attorney George Kieffer's giant law firm Manatt, Phelps and Phillips has been hired by BHP Billiton to lobby for LNG. Kieffer is also First Lady Maria Shriver's personal attorney.

It has been widely reported that in September 2004, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) voted and approved Sempra Energy's request to terminate contracts with domestic natural gas suppliers from Texas and New Mexico. The CPUC's vote opened a forced shortage in California's natural gas supply. Sempra is an energy company that owns Southern California Gas and San Diego Gas and Electric. And, the supposed need to replace the shortage of natural gas is part of the platform on which the Governor stands when he says California needs more energy sources.

Sempra, for its part, is constructing an LNG project in Baja California, Mexico known as the Energía Costa Azul LNG receipt terminal. The \$600 million project site is located 14-miles north of Ensenada. This facility will be owned solely by one company – Sempra. Commercial operations begin in early 2008 and will process 1 billion cubic feet of gas per day.

In order for Sempra to sell natural gas to California, the energy giant had to go to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). And in a three to two vote, the CPUC gave Sempra the contract on a reduced basis costing Californians 1200 million cubic feet per day from New Mexico and Texas contracts.

The CPUC also approved Sempra passing off the cost of its \$800 million terminal to California ratepayers. However the CPUC has not yet approved Sempra to lock in long-term contracts for LNG with California utilities. But, without such contracts, Sempra will likely not secure financial backing to build the Energía Costa Azul LNG receipt terminal.

"What happens is big businesses decide what they want is what is best for their business, then they find the loopholes necessary and donate the money in the right places to get these things to move through without being questioned. That is not for the best of the community. That is not the best thing for California. I am thrilled the press is beginning to talk about this and expose some of this," Danson said regarding the political corruption behind bringing LNG into California. "When the air we breath, the health issues, asthma, and global warming having the impact that finally this Administration is acknowledging, we as voters deserve to know all of this."

"Our coastline in this state is a multi-billion dollar business for tourism, for attracting businesses, quality of life, and when you start messing with that, you are really being stupid from an economic point of view. Forget about environmental issues which can sometimes be easily dismissed. Quality of life, health and messing with our coastline is an economic, wallet-spark, Republican issue," Danson said.

Téa Leoni, perhaps known best for her role in the film *Bad Boys*, spoke openly about her feelings on the environmental impacts of the proposed LNG facility.

"I am here because I'm not really convinced enough thorough research has been done to ensure this will be safe for the community and the environment," Leoni said in an interview at the event. "I don't think it's so much Liquefied Natural Gas on its own is the evil property, or that this is Malibu saying not in our backyard. It doesn't appear to be a great alternative. And, I think until they could insure all of us this is something that is going to work and be right for the environment, not here. No. Not anywhere. Forget it."

Academy Award winner Halle Berry came out to speak in opposition to the LNG facility also with concerns about the environment.

"I care about the environment, about Marine life. I care about what this LNG project will do to our community. What it will do not only to the lives of the people here in Malibu, but if one of these gets passed, you're sure to bet there will be other ones that will affect other people in other areas," Barry said in an interview on Malibu Pier.

Danson said he came out to speak against LNG because he also had environmental concerns.

"I care about Marine issues, clean air, global warming, and lower on the list I care about security. And all of those seem to be at question with this terminal," Danson said. "The process of getting the Liquefied Natural Gas into our homes or wherever we will burn it, actually creates more pollution, more greenhouse gases (GHG) than the benefit of burning a fuel that is a little bit cleaner than oil. The intention may be good to create jobs and cleaner fuel, but this state has signed bills to reduce greenhouse gases. We want to be seen as environmentally aggressive against global warming. This is the exact opposite."

Residents enjoyed a gourmet pancake breakfast while they watched the morning marine layer burn-off into a beautiful sunny day.

In addition to the screen talent that came out en masse today, numerous big name surfers also threw their weight behind opposing LNG. Pro-surfers Laird Hamilton, Danny Fuller, Kalani Robb, Kassia Meador, Pascal

Stansfield, Strider Wasilewski, and Lisa Andersen were present at the event which involved a paddle-out to oppose LNG.

In addition to the big surfing names, 360 people registered for and participated in the "paddle out." The surfers paddled-out to a section of surf just in front of the Malibu pier where they formed a no symbol in form of a circle with a slash. News helicopters flew over the formation capturing the huge mass of bodies out on the water. In addition, locals stood on the beach and unfurled an approximate 50-foot sign that said 15-million people come here every year which was held up over their heads so the choppers could capture the sign's text.

After the formation of the no symbol, the surfers put on a display of talent on such a scale even Malibuites accustomed to seeing talented surfers were impressed.

Surflife reported, "This morning there's a SW(210-220) Southern Hemi hitting it's peak and a little, extreme angled NW-300+ swell. Most spots have waves in the waist-chest-shoulder plus zone while best breaks are hitting head high plus. Winds are light and variable for clean conditions."

The waves were so large when they crashed on the beach the crowd backed away and children were squealing with delight.

Tim and Hayden Riley from Ingdanger.com donated copies of their DVD [The Risks And Dangers of LNG](#) to the event. The Rileys have been involved in the movement to oppose LNG from the early stages. And, the film exposes the serious risks involved in using LNG in the United States.

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