**Peoples’ Tribunal Event. Saturday, October 28th, 2017, Charlottesville, Virginia.**

 **My name is Philip Khnopp. I am a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, a landowner in Augusta County and A Virginia resident since 1962.**

 **Over the past four years I have been actively involved in the massive citizens’ resistance movement against the proposed industrial pipe-line projects known as the MVP (Mountain Valley Pipeline) project and the ACP (Atlantic Coast Pipeline) projects respectively, intended to be built in our state. I have researched the available information about MVP and ACP and, the more I study this subject the more I find myself feeling horrified by the potential for these pipelines to negatively affect the safety and well-being of many Virginia Citizens as well as to make toxic the air, water and soil of our region. Flaura and Fauna in Virginia stand to be severely impacted as well.**

 **Studies and statistics show that it is the nature of industrial pipelines to leak and explode. In my research as to the number of significant pipeline incidents which have occurred over the past ten years (nationally in the U.S.), there are an average of two such events per month. As the number of pipeline built around the nation increase (and as these structures also age), the number of such events are on the increase. The blast radius of a 42-inch gas pipeline (at 600 PSIG), is 1,100 feet and 2,200 feet in diameter. The evacuation area from a point of breach is seven tenths of a mile in one direction. And hence is 1.4 miles in total. Consider how many people would have to be evacuated even in a rural area. In the event of a pipeline burst.**

 **What I find to be even more disturbing is that (to the best of my knowing) there have been no comprehensive public safety studies on either the local, state or Federal levels, as to how to contain and mitigate the effects of a pipeline leak or rupture. The potential for accidents alone are reason for great concern, as it should be. Consider a much darker kind of potential event. Deliberate acts of domestic or foreign terrorism perpetrated against industrial pipeline structures, simultaneously, upon multiple points of such structures. Dare we think (in these times), that such events could not happen? In such a scenario it would most likely be that members of the Virginia National Guard would be among the first ones to be put into harms’ way. Without any specialized and specific training for events such as this, I can only imagine that casualties from such would be very significant. Is this what we want? Why would we choose to allow private corporations such as Duke or Dominion to build a huge and ready-made industrial (hardly to mention Compressor Stations), across many miles of our state? Would the concept of high profit-yields for a very few corporate investors, justify such potential human tragedy, be proper motivation for allowing these projects to be built? Government must not be allowed to force the will of big business upon the people. I believe in the rights of the citizens to self-determination. This is fundamental to a government that serves the people. Stand Up and speak these things loudly.**

 **Many of you already know about the phenomena of “Karst” landscapes through-out the state of Virginia. Augusta County “The Bread Basket of the South” (and also my county of residence), is rife with such limestone, porous, under-layment that is fragile and essential to the vast and unique aquifers in this county. Augusta (by the way), is the primary headwaters for the James and Potomac River systems in our state. I invite you (my fellow citizens), to consult the well-known “Sullivan Report” (extensive and thorough geo-study and analysis of the “Karst” sub-soil structures in Augusta County). I invite you to go on line and study this document and come to your own conclusions. In my assessment, Karst landscapes are a lousy and dangerous place to build industrial pipelines.**

**I want to remind my fellow citizens that both Duke and Dominion Corporations were founded as LLCs’ (Limited Liability Corporations) and are, by their very nature (as such), not going to be held accountable for any damages that will eventually occur as a result of these dangerous structures in our state, should they be allowed to be built here. On numerous occasions I have heard Duke and Dominion officials repeatedly assuring us, that these is nothing to be feared from these projects and that everything is going to be just fine. I say that when we hear such claims coming from that we respond by saying: “If you are so sure that there is nothing to fear and that these projects will bring no harm to us then you certainly won’t mid relinquishing your status as an LLC so as to completely set our mind to rest about this issue”. See how they respond when we say this to them. I would like to hear their responses.**

 **It is clear to me that the regulatory failures of these proposed projects are immense. Add to this certain conflicts of interest, Example: Governor Terry McAuliffe appointed one David Paylor to head the state DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality), which is principle in the decision making process that would allow Duke and Dominion to proceed with MVP and ACP. In 2013, Mr. Paylor attended the Pro Masters Golf Tournament. Dominion paid his way. Add to this the simple fact that FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission), functions not as a true regulatory commission looking out for the public interest but rather as a rubber stamp committee for big business. This needs to become the subject of a Senate investigation. Recently (in my own experience), I attempted to attend a “Public Hearing” (at FERC Headquarters in Washington D.C. on September 20th, 2017) but before I arrived, my fellow protesters had been forcefully expelled from the hearings for having attempted to express their concerns about ACP and MVP. This really did happen to me and I ask you, do you think that these projects are being appropriately regulated for the public interest?**

 **Sincerely, Philip Khnopp, Virginia resident, Activist.**