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Why?

If the citizens of Redondo Beach weren't frightened of a potential lawsuit, would they want to have a power plant in their backyard? What person in their right mind would actually prefer to have a massive, point-source pollutant nestled in the confines of the most densely populated region in the county?

This entire debate is comical to me. The plant itself does not run, even with San Onofre offline. In the fractional amount of time that it does run, it manages to be the largest stationary source of particulate pollution in this region. The plant has been here for nearly a century- not AES. They purchased the plant and the property from So Cal Edison. They bought it as a business venture, and they knew the risk going in. If I buy a factory in Redondo Beach to build typewriters, and suddenly the technology that I'm selling becomes hopelessly outdated and demand plummets, that's the risk that I take in purchasing the factory. Is the city that I bought the factory in then legally obligated to prop up my failing business? Just because my typewriter factory has been in the city for decades?

Here's a more apt analogy: my typewriter factory, in addition to selling a device that no one actually needs, ends up being the largest stationary source of pollution in the city, due to the mid-century technology I employ to cut my overhead costs. To save even more money, I exempt myself from paying the city's gas usage tax, even though my typewriter factory uses the most gas in the city. It's much cheaper for me to produce my typewriters if I don't have to pay that tax, and instead have my neighbors subsidize me. The neighbors constantly complain about the noise and the massive storefront that blocks ocean views. I have a huge rail system installed along 190th to deliver my typewriters to potential customers, but that railway system is both outdated and essentially unused; last year, my factory operated at around 5% capacity because there is NO DEMAND for typewriters anymore. Smart consumers have found better alternatives.

However, in Los Angeles, we are forced to buy typewriters. In fact, the county has created a mind-boggling monopoly that will pay me to make typewriters even if people don't buy them. So it's in my best interest to keep my investment going, even if no one uses a typewriter anymore. There are already typewriter factories in El Segundo and Huntington Beach. When the giant typewriter factory in San Onofre was shuttered, my factory was still barely used, even with the city of Los Angeles essentially forcing people to buy my typewriters.

Pesky government regulations force me to change the way I cool my factory. Instead of just siphoning free ocean water through my filthy factory and dumping it back in the bay, I now have to actually pay to upgrade my relic of a factory to comply with 21st century manufacturing standards. This will cost me millions and millions of dollars, but it will still be worth it, because the city will buy my typewriters regardless of demand (or lack thereof). I'll cajole my neighbors with talk of hiring local workers to upgrade my factory, knowing full well that I'll simply hire the cheapest labor (and it's certainly not them).

When my neighbors finally have a chance to legally eliminate my unwanted, unnecessary factory, I threaten them with lawsuits. I can do this because I don't live in the city of Redondo Beach, and don't care one iota what my "neighbors" think. I actually live in Virginia, and operate typewriter factories around the world.

If I weren't a deep-pocketed, out-of-town business owner, would my neighbors in Redondo Beach put up with this? Or would they simply say that my factory, while once necessary, is no longer needed? That my factory is a health risk for the citizens of Redondo Beach, and that they would rather not have it as an environmental, acoustic, and aesthetic blight on the community?

I resent the fact that that as a citizen of Redondo Beach, I seem to have no say in the ultimate decision of whether to permit AES to continue polluting my city, while being subsidized by my tax dollars.