

Subject: Submission for senate inquiry: Radioactive Waste Management Bill
Date: Thursday, 11 March 2010 10:23:56 AM

I tried to think of the words to say
To make this undemocratic dump go away
You could say how unfair and unwanted it is
But Peter Garretts already said all this.

"We can say that this has been a sorry and a sordid business driven by a licensing imperative for nuclear processes that no-one has consented to. This government continues to make a mockery of the principle of informed consent, of community participation and of respect for the wishes and interests of Aboriginal people in this country."

"This government has trampled Aboriginal people's rights underfoot, unaware, it seems, that this is people's country where these proposed radioactive waste sites would be—country that connects intimately and in a long and continuing strain to their culture. It is country that they have only recently been able to have access to or be around"

"I reject completely the assertion by the member for Tangney that there has been the opportunity for consultation in this process and that people have been listened to. Consultation perhaps; listened to, definitely not."

"...Aboriginal people in Central Australia, where these sites reside, are opposed to the siting of a radioactive nuclear dump in their country."

"Are there any alternatives?' the answer is yes, there are alternatives for Australia to meet its needs for radioactive medicines. But, more importantly, is there an alternative to the process that is being pursued by the federal government and the minister?"

"The answer again is yes, by including a principal and thorough examination of the nuclear cycle itself in its entirety and to devise a site management process which has proper, informed community and state consent in its implementation."

"...these communities are the ones that will have to face the consequence of the siting of this dump on their land. I refer to a letter I received earlier in the week from William Brown Jampijinpa from the Central Land Council...The letter reads:

A primary concern is the need to keep their country safe and healthy for present and future generations and to be able to continue to use their country for hunting and getting bush tucker. Traditional owners in Central Australia are asking the federal Labor Party to pursue all avenues to support their fight against the imposition of a nuclear waste facility on their country. The Central Land Council is extremely concerned by the intent and implications of the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005. Pushing this legislation, which limits traditional landowner rights, overrides territory government laws and pushes aside Commonwealth environment and heritage legislation at the site selection stage, is a deeply disturbing development."

"It is important to stress that, under formal consultation, the people in Central Australia have said 'no'."

"The fact is that this bill overrides existing legislation. It overrides the Native Title Act and the Lands Acquisition Act and really allows the Commonwealth to do whatever it likes to establish a nuclear waste dump"

"We were reminded...that the Minister for the Environment and Heritage said previously that the Commonwealth was not pursuing any options anywhere on the mainland.... The environment minister clearly misled the people of the Northern Territory when he said that, because the Northern Territory is on the mainland."

"The fact is that there was a deliberate misleading of citizens of the Northern Territory."

"But this government is clearly deaf to the people of the Top End."

"This government is unable to listen to the voices of those who speak."

"All it can do now is impose its wishes upon people who do not have the capacity to challenge, the capacity to oppose"

"The minister refers to politically motivated obstruction of the Commonwealth's activities. For 'politically motivated obstruction' read 'the will of the people, as expressed by their elected representatives in the state parliament'. The minister labels this as political motivation, but we prefer to call it democracy. I guess that explains why we are over here and he is over there."

"Most importantly, I refer to the people whose country this is. These people have borne to some extent the burden of activities and actions of the past. They are people who struggle very much with the situation that they find themselves in. They have exercised and do exercise a

capacity not only to build communities and sustainable livelihoods for themselves but also to maintain connections to country and culture. The land is crucial to their way of life. They must protect their stories and their dreaming, and their opportunity to do that with this federal government imposing a nuclear waste dump upon them has been severely reduced."

- Peter Garrett, 2nd November 2005

Sincerely
James Hitchcock