

Jurjevic, Dijana (SEN)

From: jessica canning [jessica.canning@latis.net.au]
Sent: Friday, 18 November 2005 1:06 AM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Nuclear Waste Dump in the Katherine region

To: eet.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr. Carter

RE: Nuclear Waste Dump in the Katherine region

My name is Jessica Canning. I am writing to you opposing the nuclear waste plant that the Federal Government has proposed building in the Northern Territory. Sites include Fishers Ridge, a location in the Katherine region. Throughout this e-mail I will discuss the location of the plant; the opinions of the Northern Territory residents; and the considerations taken from the Federal Government when making the choice in regards to the location of the nuclear plant.

The Federal Government has been made aware of the suitable locations throughout Australia. Scientists have confirmed this in the article "Nuclear hot potato - Feds insist sites list for outside NT is obsolete." (Sunday Territorian, 14 August 2005) They have said that the Territory isn't a suitable place because of extreme temperatures variations and high rainfall. Katherine reaches temperatures, in excess, of forty degrees during the wet season. The Federal Government believe that they are our puppet masters and we, the people of the Territory, are just their puppets; that metaphorically means that we are mindless and need their guidance. What a joke! They may be our upper house but we do have opinions worth listening to. The Federal Government is considering this fate for us, but should we allow it? No I don't believe we should. That is why you will be receiving so many e-mails, Mr. Carter.

The location of the proposed site, just forty-two kilometers out of the township of Katherine, is directly in the middle of someone's property.

That someone is Mr. Utley. He owns a cattle property and wasn't even aware of the dump until it was announced in the media. The Government is able to do this is because the land in the middle of Mr. Utley's property is Crown Land - Government Land - and the owners rights are over-ridden by the Governments rights. They have no choice. An article in the Katherine Times, 27th July, titled "Tell the owner before the media" outlines the issue of the nuclear dump in Mr. Utley's property. Surely in a democratic society, they should have been informed first.

Several Aboriginal communities, surrounding the proposed site, in the Katherine region rely on the groundwater supply that is located in the vicinity of the site. The wet season in the Territory has a great average rainfall and flooding is known to occur. The impact that this will have on the environment and the people occupying the surrounding land is inescapable should a leak occur. What will happen when the "low level" waste flows into our water system?

An article from "Green Left Weekly" (3 August 2005) was written by Jim Green and outlines reasons against the Katherine region site. "Jolly noted that the Fishers Ridge area sometimes gets rainfall of more than two meters in two months and that water falling on the area forms many springs on Aboriginal land and flows onto sites used for ecotourism. "If there were any leaks from the facility at this site it would be one of the worst sites in Australia in terms of having an impact on ecosystems and an impact on an aquifer that is used for drinking and for other water uses",

Jolly said.' Dr. Peter Jolly is a hydrogeologist with the Northern Territory environment department.

The people of the Katherine region deserve consultation. We shouldn't be left unaware of the dangers of the plant and then forced into accepting the nuclear waste dump. Katherine residents have created petitions; these petitions are opposing the dump. Has the Federal Government even had time to see the opposition? Or aren't they interested?

I think that you have to ask yourself something, Mr. Carter - How would you like a nuclear waste dump in your backyard?

Yours Faithfully
Jessica Canning
Katherine High School, grade 11
17 November 2005