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Standing Committee On Foreign Affairs, Defence And Trade  
Inquiry into the Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Bill 2006  
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I am writing in support of the veterans who participated in the British Nuclear Tests fifty years ago, and in support of the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association.

The Australian Student Environment Network believes, in support of the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association, the provisions of the Australian Participants in British Nuclear Weapons Tests (Treatment) Bill 2006 do not go far enough in extending adequate compensation coverage and support to Australian Tests Participants (Nuclear Veterans) of the British Nuclear weapons Tests in Australia.

We believe full coverage (and more!) under the Veterans Entitlement Act should be extended to all of those military personnel who are bona fide British Nuclear Weapons Tests participants and whose names appear in the Government's nominal roll, and to those civilians who were fully employed by the Federal Government and were present during the actual tests or may have been involved in the cleanup period after the actual tests.

It is known the general difference between Military and Civilian participants is that civilian participants were only involved if they wanted to be and earned extremely high wages and bonuses, they could leave at any time that conditions were not to their liking. Military personnel on the other hand were there because they were ordered to be there and had no say in the matter; they were all forced to sign the Secrecy Act. They came under military law as well as civilian law. Most of the civilians whose names appear on the nominal roll had left the test site before any tests were carried out and were put on the nominal roll purely to water down any tests or studies that would follow.

It is our opinion that military nuclear tests participants (Nuclear Veterans) should be allowed full qualifying service under the Veterans entitlement Act. or at the very least, immediate full implementation of the Clarke Committee's Recommendations.

Regards,

Holly Creenaune

National Convenor, Australian Student Environment Network