



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Ligue internationale des femmes pour la paix et la liberté

Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad

Internationale Frauenliga für Frieden und Freiheit

Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO

Special Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO and UNICEF

International Headquarters Geneva Switzerland

Australian Section (founded 1915)

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26 October 2006

The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600.

Dear Chairperson

AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPANTS IN BRITISH NUCLEAR TESTS (TREATMENT) BILL 2006

Thank you for the opportunity to make a written submission to the above Committee and for granting WILPF an extension of time.

WILPF believes that the time is well overdue to redress the current unfair situation for Australian Nuclear Veterans and their widows who have been denied full benefits and entitlements under the Veterans Entitlement Act (VEA).

To offer only minimal health care, such as no-liability treatment of cancers, is insufficient recompense for the trauma received through participating in these British nuclear tests on Australian soil. The Australian government has a high duty of care to protect employees and provide adequate safeguards to ensure good future health outcomes. Where exposure to atomic tests/fallout have occurred, then full compensation must be made for ensuing health problems.

The long period of VEA disqualification for Australian Defence Force personnel involved in the British atomic tests warrant that their situation be rectified with full compensation now in order to redress the inequity of their treatment by all Australian governments since the 1950s. We support their call for full entitlement under the VEA.

WILPF also supports full VEA entitlement for both military and civilian personnel, who are on the Government nominated rolls as either bona fide British Nuclear Weapons Test participants or civilians who were employed by the Federal government and present during the tests or involved in the cleanup afterward.

The current Bill is inadequate. We seek the immediate full implementation of the Clark Committee's recommendations in order to restore justice to those Australians who were involved during the British atomic tests.

Thank you for the opportunity to make our submission.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Picone and Ruth Russell
Joint National Coordinators.