

## Shame, Peter, Shame

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PND is saddened to see federal Minister for the Environment Peter Garret open a new uranium mine in South Australia, close to the Beverley mine, which is to be of the worlds worst practice In-Situ-leach technology.

We remember Peter from the days of French nuclear testing in the pacific in 1995, when he addressed a crowd of over 30,000 in front of the French consulate. We now sell uranium to France and French nuclear fuel - cycle combine Areva owns Australian uranium mines.

Peter says that the new uranium mine is 'worlds best practice', but the facts are that in- situ leaching is worlds worst practice not worlds best. In situ - leaching is a mining technique that renders ground-water, Australia's most precious resource, permanently unusable. It is banned in many places.

Nuclear power is far from being the technological wave of the future, or a solution of any kind to climate change. It is bedevilled by exactly the same problems of cost and safety as it has always been and so - called 'new' reactor technologies actually offer nothing new at all. Nuclear power will soak up resources that could be used on real solutions, worsening the problem.

Atoms of Australian uranium will certainly end up in nuclear warheads if it has not already found its way into French, British, Chinese and Russian warheads. And even if by some improbable miracle actual atoms of our uranium did not do so, our uranium frees up other uranium for nuclear weapons use.

Worse still, nuclear power will inevitably lead to the creation of 'virtual' nuclear weapons capabilities in country after country. Already, over 40 countries could acquire a nuclear weapons capability within months or a year or so via 'civil' nuclear technologies. This is the single greatest hurdle to a nuclear - weapons - free world.

By choosing to export uranium at all, we are inevitably making our contribution to global nuclear weapons proliferation. That eventually means more fingers on more buttons, and inevitably the eventual use by madness, miscalculation, malfunction or malice, of nuclear weapons.

We may then be faced with the 'ultimate' answer to global warming - nuclear winter.