

# **NO to nuclear weapons, NO to nuclear reactors and NO to uranium mining**



*Felicity Hill, WILPF International Vice President, gave this speech saying NO to nuclear weapons, NO to nuclear reactors and NO to uranium mining at a recent protest organised by the Anti Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia.*

Thank you to ANAWA – the Anti Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia for organising this peaceful protest!

And thank you for coming out to be part of this presence outside this tragic conference, thank you for standing for a nuclear free WA, thank you for getting up early in the Nuclear Free City of Fremantle, and thank you for caring enough about future generations to work for a nuclear free future.

I am here representing the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, an organisation that just celebrated its 94<sup>th</sup> birthday last week.

Since they were invented, WILPF women have said NO to nuclear weapons and NO to nuclear reactors because they were invented in order to create nuclear weapons. And we have said NO TO URANIUM MINING because that's where the whole dirty, dangerous business begins.

We also say no to conferences where for two whole days only one woman speaks, and if you look at the programme that's what's going on in there. For the next two days you will find panel after panel of men, hallucinating about uranium mining occurring in this state.

They call us the hippies, but they are the ones hallucinating because uranium is too much of a risk, for our health, for our environment, that's obvious, that's science – every one knows, the IAEA, the ICRP, everyone admits that there is no safe level of radiation.

Uranium mining is very risky for people who live along the transportation routes, it's very risky for workers, and they try to hide that, for decades Australia has had very shoddy protection for uranium miners in the NT and SA, no register, no record keeping. But uranium mining is also very risky on their own terms, by the very terms of these profiteering mining corporations, uranium mining is extremely economically risky, it takes long term and large capital investments when these projects will not stand up.

WILPF women have said no to the whole nuclear fool cycle because from uranium to weapons, it's all waste, it's suicidal, it's genocidal and it's ecocidal, and we also say the nuclear fool cycle is econocidal, considering the trillions that have been on nuclear weapons from the Manhattan project to today, and considering the trillions spent on subsidising nuclear power – because it has NEVER been able to compete on the open market EVER, it has ALWAYS needed massive taxpayer subsidies and governments absorbing the liabilities, giving absurd insurance deals to these bozos.

The uranium mines might make money for a few years, but they are toxic for 10,000 years, the tailings need to be isolated for 10,000 years AT LEAST, and who pays? Indigenous people pay because its on their land that the vast majority of uranium mines are, just as it was indigenous people's land where nuclear weapons were tested. The financial benefits of these mines, if they ever make a profit, are fleeting, but the problems are long term,

time frames we can't even imagine. We have had language on this planet for 5000 years, but plutonium lasts for 250,000 years. That is, in 250,000 years it will become lead. It's a fool's game and we are not fooled.

The creation, the maintenance and the possession of nuclear weapons contaminate our planet, the water, our air. The radiation spewed out in their creation affects our gene pool – and this is an experiment that cannot be reversed.

Yes, they are very scary indeed, but mostly they are just bloody stupid. You can't call the capacity to blow up the world 6 times rational or realism, it's actually psychotic. The nuclear age is an embarrassing era, we blush for you, nuclear weapon states are the rouge states and they are the rogue states.

Talk about embarrassing...the first nuclear weapons were called Little Boy and Fat Man. When the Indian's tested their nuclear weapons in 1998 the Prime Minister said, "We have proven that we are not eunuchs". These names and these ideas do not come out of thin air, nuclear weapons have become symbols of strength, power and a hyper masculinity. And if you watch them, the Nuclear Warheads Sarkozy, Brown, and company, these people are very anxious about their masculinity and strut around wielding these weapons like some kind of military drag.

The nuclear age has brought horrific means to militarily dominate and control. Within this security paradigm, weapons are necessary because security can only come through the ability to obliterate the other, and to command control of any relationship through the threat or use of force. In personal interactions, this sort of fearful controlling is called abuse and a crime, but from a realist geopolitical perspective, it is called "hard security" and wise policy. Well, it's embarrassing.

It's embarrassing that the Security Council is radioactively contaminated. And it's embarrassing that our own government is radioactively contaminated too.

Why do I say this – because Australia participates in the US nuclear weapons umbrella, by linking our sense of security and our security policy to US nuclear weapons – we are valuing nuclear weapons, we are using nuclear weapons, and we are giving credence to the idea that these things bring security. We are also lending our bases, our ports and our security infrastructure to the US nuclear war fighting machine, globally and in our region. We are responsible. Nuclear weapons are here, among us, within our political institutions. We are part of this death machine.

And I'm very embarrassed and ashamed, and I am very angry that this week Kevin Rudd reaffirmed all this in the Defence White Paper. He didn't take this opportunity being handed to him by Obama who is talking about abolition – abolition, Obama is talking about lets get rid of these atrocity exhibitions of criminal imbecility, and instead of helping that dialogue along by saying, Yeah about that Obama we would like to take nuclear weapons out of this alliance of ours, Kev talks about how much Australia relies on them for our security.

For a while I was proud of Kev Chev on this issue. I was proud that Australia's Prime Minister was the first serving western leader to ever go to Hiroshima. That's a big deal. I was very happy that when he was there he announced that Australia was going to try to use some of its diplomatic effort to get the conversation going about disarmament. That's a big deal too. We have in the past, and Kev was saying lets get this party started again. When he was in opposition Kev Chev was strongly for a Nuclear Weapons Convention – we thought progress was coming. But we have seen the government backslide on this just this week.

In fact, Kev Chev has made Australia an accessory to criminal activity.

Nuclear weapons are indiscriminate weapons and therefore illegal – we in WILPF said this fifty years before the International Court of Justice – but we were glad the Court finally caught on in 1996 when they handed down their advisory opinion that said these things are illegal and there is an obligation to get rid of them.

Right now, at this moment the governments of the world are meeting in New York to discuss how the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is going. This is the only treaty where there is a legally binding obligation on the US, and Russia who have 95 % of the worlds nukes, as well as the UK, France and China to get rid of their nuclear weapons.

And there is hope in this NPT meeting, Obama gave a message yesterday that was saying Lets Get On With it, there is hope because the Russians and the US are talking about taking the first step of a large reduction in their stockpiles.

There are currently 35,000 nuclear weapons in existence, enough to destroy our planet in an afternoon. What is growing is the call for a Nuclear Weapons Convention. We have a Chemical Weapons Convention that deals with getting rid of Chemical weapons. We have a Landmines Convention that bans landmines. Now we have a cluster bombs convention that bans cluster bombs. What we now need is a nuclear weapons convention. The majority of states in the UN have voted to start negotiating one immediately. Even our government has said that we need a NWC.

Once those nuclear weapons start to be taken apart, the bottom is going to fall out of the uranium market, because there will be so much fissile material made available. The uranium market died last time a wave of disarmament happened, and it will happen again.

So stop hallucinating boys, nuclear weapons and nuclear reactors are 20<sup>th</sup> century mistakes, and we know better now.

Thank you.