



South Australia Citizens Reject International Rad Waste Dump

A Citizen's Jury in South Australia delivered a blow to a plan to construct a radioactive waste dump in their state. Importing 138,000 metric tons of high-level radioactive waste and 390,000 cubic meters of intermediate level nuclear waste had been among government recommendations in a report by the South Australia Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission. Premier Jay Weatherill convened a citizen-led jury to gain public input into the proposal. A majority of the jury members voted that "under no circumstances" would they support importing the waste. "This is a strong decision from a randomly selected and very diverse group of South Australians who have had the benefit of studying the Royal Commission Report ... It was positive to hear the jurors acknowledging the need for [Aboriginal] Traditional Owner's voices to be heard," said the chairperson of Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation, Karina Lester (above left in photo).

Two primary concerns emerged as reasons for opposition to the dump: mistrust of the government, and lack of aboriginal consent. Some of the jury felt as if they were part of a process that was created to manufacture consent for the Royal Commission recommendations. Conflicts of interest were apparent when the government appointed nuclear advocates to head the Royal Commission who, in turn relied solely on a report co-authored by a pro-nuclear lobbying group ARUIS (Association for Regional and International Underground Storage).

Premier Weatherill is expected to decide on whether to respect the Jury's verdict by the end of this year. "There's no doubt that there's a massive issue of trust in government, I could sense that," he said. "That's why we started the whole citizen's jury process, because there is no way forward unless we overcome those issues." His decision will have an impact on whether the mistrust of the government is affirmed.

—Nuclear Monitor, Nov. 9; No Dump Alliance, Nov. 7; *Adelaide Now*, Nov. 6, 2016

"Is it time to reduce the triad to a diad, removing the land-based missiles?" —Gen. James N. Mattis

The general nominated by Donald Trump to be the next Secretary of Defense has questioned the purpose of the long-range missile system, the Air Force's 450 Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

In remarks to the US Senate Armed Services Committee in January 2015, four-star Marine Corps General James N. Mattis asked, "Is it time to reduce the triad to a diad, removing the land-based missiles? This would reduce the false alarm danger."

General Mattis joins an influential group of high-ranking military commanders and civilian experts who have slammed the ICBM system including General James Cartwright, a former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and former Secretaries of Defense William Perry and Chuck Hagel.

Gen. Mattis questioned the need for US land-based nuclear-armed missiles on the grounds that they represent a higher risk than other weapons of being launched on bad information, the same risk that retired Gen. Cartwright raised in 2012 as a reason to eliminate all the Minuteman IIIs.

Gen. Mattis also suggested to the Senate committee that the US should limit the threatened use of the nuclear arsenal to deterring nuclear attack, a change of targeting policy that would repeal Clinton Administration policy that allows for nuclear attacks—even against non-nuclear states—in retaliation for merely conventional or chemical weapons attacks on US forces or its allies. "[F]undamental questions must be asked and answered," Mattis told the Senate armed services committee in January 2015. "We must clearly establish the role of our nuclear weapons: do they serve solely to deter nuclear war?"

—*The Guardian*, Dec. 4; CBS News online, Dec. 1, 2016.

"I await the protestations of those who complain of my attempts to correct the imbalance that now exists in a system that operates in such a manner as to provide one type of justice for the rich and a lesser type for the poor. One standard for the mighty and another for the meek. And a system which finds its humanness and objectivity is sublimated to military madness and the worship of the Bomb."

—US Federal District Judge Miles Lord, 1920 – 2016, speaking Nov. 8, 1984.

Liquid Waste Threat Resources, From Page 1

- * Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, (514) 839 7214
- * Sierra Club Canada Foundation, (647) 338-6363
- * Durham Nuclear Awareness, (647) 207-3208
- * Concerned Citizens of Renfrew County, (613) 735-4876
- * Savannah River Site Watch, (803) 240-7268
- * National Council of Women of Canada, (905) 468-2841



Macrobiotus sapiens, known as tardigrades or water bears, in moss. Photo by Eye of Science/Science Source

Future Resistance to Radiation?

"Tardigrades, eight-legged microscopic animals that resemble obese caterpillars, can survive temperatures close to absolute zero [negative 459.67 degrees F] and live after being baked at 300 degrees.

"They can go without food or water for as long as 30 years, yet live to reproduce again. They have even survived in the vacuum of outer space....

"[N]ow Japanese researchers have found a unique protein in tardigrade cells that confers an ability to tolerate doses of radiation that would kill most other animals.

"They transferred this protein to human cells and found it makes them, too, highly resistant to X-rays. Someday, the researchers believe, the finding may have practical application in protecting humans from the harmful effects of radiation, perhaps even limiting the damaging side effects of radiotherapy."

—Nicholas Bakalar, *New York Times*, Sept. 26, 2016

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Nukewatch Quarterly

submission deadlines: Nov. 1, Feb. 1, May 1 & Aug. 1
Please subscribe. \$25/yr.

~ Printed on 100% recycled paper ~

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ISSN: 1942-6305

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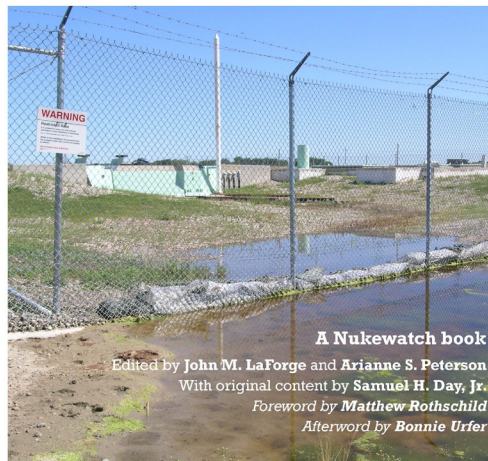
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