

CONFERENCE OF LEADERS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

CLRI (NSW)

ABN: 52 476 362 010

Member of the Catholic Church Religious Group

Mr John Howard
Prime Minister
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600

Dear Mr Howard,

The Justice Committee of the Congregational Leaders of Religious Institutes of NSW (CLRI NSW) represents over 3000 religious across the State of NSW.

In recent days we have been greatly concerned by your government's interest in selling uranium to India and China. This concern is engendered by political and environmental factors.

The members of CLRI NSW are of the opinion that we should, under no circumstances, sell uranium to any country which has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. To do so would be to negate the underlying principles of the treaty and set a precedent for countries to ignore any aspects of treaties that may have social or economic costs.

In regard to selling uranium to China we do not believe that there could be any effective mechanisms for monitoring China's use of uranium. Even if there were what is stop China using Australian uranium for energy and other sources of uranium for the expansion of their nuclear weapons programme?

Despite our urgent need for non-fossil fuel sources of energy nuclear energy is not the answer. Nuclear energy is an extraordinarily dangerous and potentially destructive source of energy. There is the constant threat of accidents and the on-going problem of nuclear waste. If, in a politically stable, sparsely populated and geologically stable country such as Australia, we cannot reach agreement as to where nuclear waste will be stored how is India, with its vast population and proclivity to natural disasters, to store nuclear waste? The same question could be asked of China.

Rather than exporting uranium to China and India we should be encouraging them to use renewable sources of energy and giving them every support to develop wind, solar and biomass sources of energy. It is also in Australia's interests for government, science and industry to expend much more time, study and money on the development of alternative sources of energy.

Yours sincerely,
Libby Rogerson ibvm
for CLRI NSW
7 April 2006

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

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