

ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES WITHIN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Statement

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [8.29 pm]: I acknowledge two people from our side of the traps who have done an immense amount of work, particularly in Kalgoorlie, to support the abolition of nuclear activities within this State. They are Shyama Peebles, a former member of the town, and Andrew Corbin, an engineer who taught mining at the Western Australian School of Mines. Unfortunately, Andrew passed away a couple of years ago while teaching mining in New Guinea.

Part of my reason for rising this evening, given that this is the town in which mining occurs, is to identify that Western Australia is still clearly opposed to the prospect of mining uranium. I turn to page 16 of the Australian Labor Party's environment policy, which states that part of its policy is to prohibit the mining and export of uranium.

Hon Ken Travers: We have not permitted any, have we?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Whilst I acknowledge the comment by Hon Ken Travers that the Labor Party has not permitted the mining or the export of uranium within its term of government, many in the community believed that it would seek to introduce legislation to ensure that was the case. Unfortunately the Government has not done that.

Currently within Western Australia we have 15 potential uranium provinces: Angelo River, Cogla Downs, Gascoyne, Lake Way, Mulga Rock, Myroodah, Ponton, Centipede-Millipede, Kintyre, Lake Maitland, Manyingee, Nowthanna, Oobagooma, Thatcher Soak and Yeelirrie. Those areas contain some 300 tenements. Most of them are now inactive, but they remain. I urge the Government to continue with its desire to keep Western Australia nuclear free and uranium free by introducing the promised legislation.

I recently asked a question of Hon Ken Travers as parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for State Development and I found the answer somewhat of an affront. I asked -

When does the minister intend to introduce such legislation?

The answer was -

As soon as the Bill is finalised.

I then asked -

What, if anything, is delaying the introduction of such legislation?

The parliamentary secretary replied -

Yes, the finalisation of the Bill.

There really is a bit of a nonsense going on. Clearly the Mining Amendment Bill is the ideal opportunity for the State Government to introduce the legislation that so many in Western Australia have been seeking for such a long time. For the sake of those original people who campaigned against nuclear energy and established themselves in Kalgoorlie through the efforts of Shyama and Andrew, I hope that the Government will get on and do the job that it promised to do in 2001 on page 16 of its environment policy.

The PRESIDENT: Hon Barry House.