



**DR DENNIS JENSEN MP**

**FEDERAL MEMBER FOR TANGNEY**

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### **Uranium to India**

Prime Minister Julia Gillard has decided to pursue sales of uranium to India and spark a major debate within her own party. Congratulations Prime Minister, welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and policy that was introduced by the Howard government years ago only to be rescinded by the Kevin Rudd when he came to be leader of our nation.

Naysayers from the left of the Labor Party and unsurprisingly all of the Greens Party, reject the sales because India is not a signatory of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NNPT). Let me be clear for the benefit of the Left and their Green allies, the current debate isn't about whether Australia sells uranium but to whom we export it to.

Some point out that India is welcome to buy its uranium elsewhere. But as long as Australia refuses to deal with this issue, Australia's relationship with the world's largest democracy, one of the largest economies and a king pin of security in the Asia-Pacific region will remain stagnant.

From an economic and moral perspective there are merits to re-instating John Howard's policy. Continuing to proffer the merits of a Clean Energy Future, Labor and the Greens can not afford to cross the Prime Minister on this issue.

India needs electricity to liberate some 400 million citizens from poverty. If the Greens have the trillions to build solar farms and wind turbines I'm sure Delhi officials will be on the first carbon neutral plane available to meet with Brown and his Brigade.

As it stands, coal is the only other viable energy source for this nation. If we continue to block uranium supplies to India, they will simply pump more of that supposedly climate changing carbon into the atmosphere.

Perhaps it is opportune to examine the history of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and implications that hold for Australia today and into the future.

The NNPT came into effect in 1970 at a simpler time with regards to nuclear diplomacy. Signatories included the nuclear weapon states, the US, USSR- now Russia, China, France and the UK, who also happen to be the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, harking back to the end of the Second World War. Other signatories were non-nuclear weapon states, and there were a few nations who were suspected of having nuclear weapons who were not signatories.

There are three major areas that the NNPT addresses. The first is non-proliferation, which is the part of the treaty most often referred to in the current debate. This provision means signatories agree that the only nations allowed to possess nuclear weapons are the five nuclear weapon states. No other states can procure nuclear weapons capabilities or sell any material to a nation attempting to procure such a capability.

The second and third parts of the NNPT are not as well known and are often conveniently forgotten for the benefit of ideological arguments used to prevent sales to nations such as India.

The second part relates to disarmament, where signatories agree to reduce and eventually eradicate their weapons capability. With China expanding and modernising its nuclear arsenal, one would question the commitment of the nuclear weapon states to their own treaty.

Additionally, Iran, also a signatory is working very closely with another rogue state, North Korea with the development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology. Yet this is a nation that many on Labor's left would apparently be prepared to sell uranium simply because of a nation's signatory of the NNPT without consideration of other factors. China and Iran proliferate despite having signed the non-proliferation treaty, India abides by the treaty but is not a signatory and Australia rewards dishonest states and punishes a democracy that plays by the rules.

The third part relates to the peaceful use of nuclear power, and the sale of nuclear power generation technology to signatory states.

Some of the nuclear weapon states (such as China and Russia) have a highly questionable record when it comes to the sale of nuclear weapon capabilities, or parts of such capabilities to other nations.

This is in stark contrast to India, who, by all accounts, has an exemplary record in this regard, and all other regards associated with the NNPT apart from the acquisition of a nuclear weapons capability for its own defence needs. In addition to this, of all known nuclear weapons capable nations, India stands alone in explicitly ruling out the first use of nuclear weapons.

The left hand of the Labor Party doesn't know what its far left hand is doing. It is irresponsible for the Prime Minister to workshop this foreign affairs decision in the public sphere to see whether it will float or sink with voting Australia.

If the Prime Minister fails to push this policy through Labor's conference she has the legislative get out of jail free card of no nuclear power in Australia

But if uranium is too dangerous for personal consumption, how can we morally sell it to everyone else?