

Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN)

IPAN Coordinating Committee and Members' Meeting 13 August 2024

IPAN Webinar: Understanding and resisting the nuclearisation of Australia

'Suboptimal: Understanding and contesting AUKUS and the domestic nuclear power push'

Zoom Recording: <https://ipan.org.au/understanding-and-resisting-the-nuclearisation-of-australia-13-august-2024/>

Presentations by David Noonan and Dave Sweeney

Annette Brownlie: Well, we're now up to 7:30, which is the time that we invited our guest speakers to speak. And we're very, very pleased and thankful to have David Noonan and Dave Sweeney join us tonight.

So, I'm going to introduce David Noonan first and I've put something together very quickly, David. I know that you're a long time anti-nuclear activist, and as do many people here tonight, I'm sure. But when I was looking for some information, I came across the submission that you put into last year's Parliamentary Inquiry into the Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Bill, where you raised the following issues, which I'm sure you will talk about tonight.

- Port Adelaide communities targeted as a designated nuclear zone.
- What will this inquiry have to say on key unresolved questions on nuclear safety?
- Questions that have been raised in the United Kingdom over the safety of nuclear submarines in their ports.
- And the bill sets up designated zones to impose storage and disposal of nuclear submarine waste.
- Indigenous South Australians have a human right to say no to an imposed AUKUS dump.
- The AUKUS military, high level nuclear waste storage facility is of great concern.

So, thank you again, over to you, David.

David Noonan Presentation:

David Noonan B.Sc., M.Env.St, an Independent Campaigner with 30-years' experience protecting environment public interests and contesting nuclear impositions, including at ACF (1996-2011) and TWS SA (2013-15).

David Noonan: Thanks for that. We. We really need to see AUKUS as a Labor, an Australian Labor Party imposition on society, not just Federal Labor, but significantly South Australian and Western Australian Labor.

And just as right-wing culture wars are, you know, a sabotage of societal interests, this imposition of military and nuclear risks and impacts is both undemocratic and corrupting of society, and it very much gives, plays into the right-wing Dutton agenda on a range of issues, particularly his proposal for nuclear power reactors in Australia.

But it also plays into, it's a gift essentially, for those international supporters of nuclear waste dumping in Australia. You know, Australia has long acted as the quarry for uranium. We provided the uranium for the Fukushima nuclear disaster, for instance, and it's long been intended by a range of players that Australia should become the end place for a dump for international high level nuclear waste.

So Labor is not just normalising nuclear submarine reactor accident risks and impacts. But they're imposing those risks and impacts. And the focus that I'll go on to in the talk is to give you a look at what a nuclear submarine reactor accident would actually look like in a port in Australia.

The second key imposition by Labor is the imposition of high-level nuclear waste. You know, this is essentially a flag swap operation where Australia will take over, buy, second hand US Virginia Class submarines early in the 2030s. We

will then retain forever, the attractable, US origin high level, nuclear waste and the nuclear weapons usable fissile material, highly enriched uranium (HEU) and the plutonium that's produced in those reactors. And those reactors will have been operating in the US Navy for 10 or 12 years before we take over those subs. They'll already be loaded.

Essentially that becomes an AUKUS target of Australian civil society for every future generation of Australians, Traditional Owners included, to have to manage and isolate those high-level nuclear wastes and those weapons usable fissile materials.

And if we come to compare the Labor imposition of military and nuclear risks and impacts in reactor accidents and the high-level waste with Dutton's proposed reactor plan, they're both clearly uneconomic.

They both rely on imposition. Federal Labor have a bill to go through Parliament shortly, which declares Osborne at Port Adelaide, and Sterling, on Garden Island, off Fremantle, as designated nuclear zones. The bill takes powers to override State laws, to be simply done by decree, thorough regulation, so a delegate of the minister can write a decree which will override any State or Territory law that they see as interfering with the AUKUS rollout, that's set out in the bill.

The bill will set up a military nuclear Safety Regulator, so-called Safety Regulator, to report directly to the Minister for Defence. That will then take the place of, and override, the current civilian, nuclear regulator in Australia, ARPANSA [Australian Radiation-Protection And Nuclear Safety Agency].

So, Australia is far into the game of facing Labor in Government imposing nuclear risks and impacts, and Dutton in the Liberal opposition, planning a further array of nuclear power reactor risks and impacts.

Dutton is saying that you know, it would be a federal decision, that he would take precedence over State laws and that he would look to compulsorily acquire, if necessary, proposed sites for reactors. He would say simply that the high-level waste from his reactors can go to Albanese's AUKUS high level, nuclear waste dump. That's not for him to have to answer, because Labor are in government.

We are facing this degree of imposition, spreading from government to opposition and across internationally to those who aspire for Australia to become that high, level nuclear dump.

Essentially Labor has given up on the issues of, in contesting Dutton, they've essentially given up, through their own proposals, given up on the issues of nuclear safety, nuclear waste.

And essentially given up on community consent, social licence and traditional owners' right to free prior and informed consent in terms of the multi-generation, essentially, eternal, high level nuclear waste imposition that will come with these submarines; assuming that we ever do go on and buy US Virginias in the early 2030s, which is not that far away, when you look at the longevity of the proposals that they have in mind, to merge Australia in with the US in terms of military potential conflict with China; and to leave Australian ports and coastal waters facing potential nuclear accidents through the subs, those coastal, those port communities; and leaving all future generations with the high level nuclear waste burden that was known to the ALP for some 18 months after Morrison's declaration of AUKUS, but that the ALP chose not to tell the Australian public until their announcement back in March last year.

So they were willing to hold that in government from the community, such a fundamental issue without considering the democratic rights and interests involved in the population and the voters.

The primary issue that I'd actually like to talk about tonight is, what does a nuclear submarine nuclear reactor accident actually look like in a port in Australia.

On the one hand, you have communities' right to know, to know the extent of health and safety impacts that they face, to know the potential well-being impacts and the socioeconomic impacts that would accrue to them and to their society from a potential reactor accident.

On the other hand we have, it's quite informative to look at how the authorities actually see their planning and rollout of response and emergency measures to do with a potential reactor accident. They fully accept that there could be a US, UK or future Australian nuclear submarine accident in a port in Australia. They fully accept obligations to do health impact studies around that and they fully accept obligations to do state emergency plans around that. They tell the public very little of what's involved and required through those measures.

Even before a first nuclear sub visit, the Commonwealth through the civilian nuclear regulator of ARPANSA is required to assess the port as to its suitability for a nuclear submarine visit in terms of the potential accident risks and impacts that could accrue to the port community.

They run a scenario called a reference accident, which projects a limited release of radioactive gaseous material to environments that would spread on the wind as a radioactive pollution plume.

They set out through the studies, they set out an expected cumulative health impact, a cumulative health exposure to ionising radiation through the accident, through the radiation, radioactive pollution plume. They don't make that cumulative health impact public.

For instance, the State emergency plan in WA for Stirling on Garden Island off Fremantle, doesn't give the public [hardly] any indication of what potential impacts of the health and safety and welfare would be from an accident. They leave that information to the State agencies, and they deny that information to the public and it will be a significant contest for both Port Adelaide and Port Kembla, port communities that have never had a nuclear submarine visit, that are now being targeted to have nuclear submarines, as to whether we can make the Commonwealth make those health impact studies public in the full degree in which they're done by the commonwealth agencies?

It's interesting to look at the zones that those commonwealth agencies, both defence and ARPANSA, set around the potential response measures that are required around a potential nuclear accident. And we really do need to see nuclear subs as nuclear reactors. They all come with nuclear accident risks. All these nuclear, potential nuclear accidents require health and safety impact studies. They all require emergency response plans. That's largely done at the state level in Australia.

They're all targeting port communities around the country where workers and local communities face potentially serious health and safety impact issues and potentially very significant socioeconomic impacts.

So, we really should be looking at both, what the Commonwealth tell us could be required in response to those accidents, and what further degree of informed consent, right to know, that communities want to exercise as campaigns, in response to the Federal Government imposing these accident risks, nuclear accident risks around our ports.

The first zone is called a preventative action zone. And it's a small area of some 600 metres radius set out from the site of the nuclear submarine reactor accident. And in that area, it's for the workers to evacuate and to take stable iodine tablets to limit the potential risk for thyroid cancer.

The more significant zones are set out up to 2.8 kilometres radius from the nuclear submarine. These matters are set out in a brief that I've put in the chat, so, you don't need to take all the notes on any particulars; They should be in the brief for you.

In that 2.8 kilometre radiation radius zone, it's an expectation that, not just workers on, whether its the Osborne proposed shipyard and submarine maintenance and building facility; it's not just for workers at the Stirling Naval Base; It's for local communities who live over the fence, that they should either be required to shelter in place and prepare to evacuate; they can be required to evacuate by the Commonwealth government, because Federal emergency provisions apply in the States.

And in the terms of a military accident, Federal emergency provisions apply to civilian workers and civilian populations in the States around Australia, in the ports where these nuclear submarine accidents could occur.

So, you can be in, for instance, at Osborne or Port Adelaide; you can be the community on the Peninsula there, around the Port River, who lives over the fence from the Osborne shipbuilding yard, and you could be required to evacuate; your children could be required to take stable iodine tablets. You'll have very little idea how you get, how you get to find those tablets. It's really difficult for people in WA to find out that information when they've had US nuclear submarines visiting for decades already.

You could be required to be taken to a decontamination centre, given your exposure to the radioactive pollution plume during the nuclear emergency and during your evacuation.

Some of you may require medical treatment which would be limited in extent, in that it's near impossible to undo ionising radiation exposure to health. And that that somewhat arbitrary zone, given that the wind doesn't stop blowing and the reaction pollution plume doesn't stop moving at 2.8 kilometres, from the reactor accident site, the authorities recognise that they may require evacuation measures further out than 2.8 k's. That's explicit in the WA Response plan for instance.

They like to take a 30 degree arc and look at the pollution plume moving within that arc, and when it moves, then out past the 2.8 kilometre radius, they have a third zone that they put in place, and it's called, concerningly called an extended distance zone. And there are two key quotes on that. They say that it could be of several kilometres, and it's the area in which the population may face hazards, radioactive hazards.

There are examples in the UK where that analogous zone is up to 5 kilometres from the site of the nuclear submarine accident.

And it's informative that in Australia, ARPANSA, the civilian regulator, require public health impact studies from 5 to 15 kilometres out from the site of a nuclear submarine mooring and berth. So they're looking at the population dynamics. They're looking at the potential health impacts up to 15 kilometres out from a submarine, potential submarine accident in an Australian port.

And because Federal emergency measures apply, you as a civilian audience, the authorities try and limit your ionising radiation exposure for instance, through medical procedures to what's called one millisievert per year. Millisievert is a

measure of ionising radiation exposure. So, keep one millisievert a year in mind as the recommended maximum civilian dose exposure to ionising radiation.

In these emergency provisions, it's not just workers at the shipyard or the emergency response workers, the first responders, but it's the local population who are within those zones and evacuation areas, they can be legally exposed to up to 50 millisieverts in a single event. That's far, far higher than the annual occupational exposure for uranium mine, workers, for instance, or reactor workers - they might receive on average 3 to 6 millisieverts; some might receive up to 12, in what's an outdated allowance of a maximum of 20 millisieverts a year.

But as workers, civilian workers in a military nuclear accident and as a civilian population over the fence from a nuclear submarine mooring, those population, those workers, civilians, that population can be exposed to up to 50 millisieverts in a single event.

And it goes far out on from there. In the situation of a more severe accident, the Federal civilian nuclear regulator, ARPANSA sets out required actions to prevent the development, and this is a quote from them, to prevent the development of catastrophic conditions.

So nuclear submarines introduced to Australia by the Labor party can bring a result of potential catastrophic conditions in a nuclear submarine reactor accident, as a direct understanding, a formal understanding in the studies, by our current civilian, Federal nuclear safety regulator.

And in that circumstance, they can authorise vastly increased radiation exposure to workers. In those circumstances of facing catastrophic conditions, they call on workers to volunteer. They call on emergency workers to volunteer, to take, to potentially risk their own health, in response to trying to undertake response measures that may limit the overall exposure to others.

So they're asking workers to volunteer to risk their own health and safety, to take measures that may limit the health impacts, potentially up to, health impacts involving death, for others, in an unfolding catastrophic conditions from a nuclear accident. And those volunteers are limited to be male emergency worker volunteers.

They exclude female workers because of the significant additional health risks that women may face in terms of ionising radiation exposure. So you know, Australia's Labor Party's introduction of nuclear reactors around ports around Australia can, as is formally understood by a Federal civilian nuclear regulator, a regulator that's soon to be replaced by a military regulator who may be far less willing to be informative to the community.

But we could face catastrophic conditions in an Australian port in a nuclear submarine accident, and the only way to deal with that in the minds of the regulators is to call on workers to volunteer, to risk their own health, to take potential ionising radiation exposures up to 500 millisieverts in a single event, 500 times the annual recommended maximum dose for civilians.

They're pretty severe potential consequences that workers and community could face to be evacuated, for their kids to have to take stable iodine tablets to try and reduce the risk of thyroid cancer, for their house values to probably go very close to zero, and you can't get insurance for nuclear accident impacts in Australia. That's long been the case.

The government would have to have to underwrite costs and impacts, and they will not be able to undo the health impacts and the socioeconomic and the reputational impacts that would accrue to a port that might face one of these accidents.

I might leave you with some of that, and let my colleague go on with the related topics. And there is a [brief in the chat](#), and I'd welcome questions related to what a nuclear reactor accident actually looks like in an Australian port.

Thanks

Annette Brownlie: Yeah, absolutely. Thanks so much, David. And I've clicked on those links, and we'll keep those. We'll certainly send them out with the recording of tonight's talks. Thank you.

Links:

[Brief by David Noonan, Independent Environment Campaigner, 29 July 2024.](#)

“Labor imposes AUKUS nuclear submarines while *failing to inform* the affected SA community of the health risks they face in a potential reactor accident.”

Sub-Heading: **Emergency workers may face “*catastrophic conditions*” at a N-Sub accident**

Top entry at <https://nuclear.foe.org.au/nuclear-subs/> Direct url: <https://nuclear.foe.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Noonan-Health-Risks-in-an-AUKUS-N-Sub-Reactor-Accident-Briefer-29-July-2024.pdf>

For info on some AUKUS nuclear risks see [David Noonan Submission No.8](#) (Jan 2024, 12 pages) to Senate [Inquiry](#) on current AUKUS Bill, input Title: *“Re: Public Safety and Community Consent are compromised as Port Adelaide is targeted for N-Sub nuclear reactor risks and SA is targeted for an imposed AUKUS High-Level Nuclear Waste Storage.”*

For instance, the [Senate AUKUS Report](#) at **“Overrides other laws”** (13 May 2024, p.66-67) says: This issue has been noted by local communities and environmental groups including David J Noonan who stated in his submission (p.9): *“The Bill is undemocratic and disrespectful to the people of SA in a proposed power under Section 135 “Operation of State and Territory laws” to over-ride any SA Laws or provisions of our Laws effectively by decree, a fiat of unaccountable federal agents to annul our Laws by naming them in Regulations.”*

This applies to the threat of federal imposition of an AUKUS High-Level Nuclear Waste Storage in SA, by override of our *Nuclear Waste Storage (Prohibition) Act 2000*.

Annette Brownlie: Well, Dave Sweeney, thank you very much for making the time to be here today, too. Both of you are busy people, and we really do appreciate your time here tonight.

So, Dave for you. I put together a little sort of blurb. I'm sure everybody knows you, anyway. But just to introduce you, as Dave is a prominent Australian anti-nuclear campaigner. I can vouch for that because I watched just recently rewatched the documentary David Bradbury made a hard rain in which you feature as looking much younger, like all of us. But it's a great little film. And I think we need to be looking at getting that film circulating around the country. It goes into much of what we're being presented with today.

So I'm not going to say anymore over to you, Dave.

Dave Sweeney Presentation:

***Bio: Dave Sweeney** has been active in mining, resource and nuclear issues for three decades through his work with the media, trade unions and environment groups. He has been active in some of Australia's major community campaigns including against uranium mining in Kakadu and radioactive waste dumping in the arid zone. Dave is a co-founder of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017. Dave leads the Australian Conservation Foundation's nuclear free campaign and holds a vision of an Australia that is thoughtful about its future and honest about its past.*

Dave Sweeney: Thanks, thanks very much, Annette, and thanks to all the crew. Good to join you tonight. I'm joining you from the lands of the Ngannawal and the Ngambri people in Canberra.

And I was involved in, and one of the co-founders of ICAN, International Campaign to Abolish nuclear weapons, but also my main focus, and a long-term job has been with ACF, the Australian Conservation Foundation on their nuclear free campaign. Now, ACF has really significant concerns about nuclearisation in Australia at the moment, very deep concerns that align with what David Noonan just said about the impacts of AUKUS; and also very significant concerns around the Coalition push for domestic nuclear power. And you know, there's very real nuclear costs, risks and wastes

And we very much view this as a gateway or mission creep for the full nuclearisation of Australia, elevated uranium mining, uranium enrichment and fuel fabrication and global waste management, and particularly in the context of AUKUS.

Now there's a lot of things, starting with the Coalition's nuclear plan that was unveiled, at least in part, in middle of June, that are really deeply concerning for ACF and others about this plan. There's lots that we don't know about the plan. And it's some fundamental and really basic stuff. We just don't know.

We don't know what sort of reactor technology is proposed or how many reactors are planned for each of the seven sites of recently retired or soon to be retired coal generating plants that the Coalition have targeted in WA, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales.

We don't know the proportion of proposed future nuclear energy in the national energy grid. We don't know about water usage and supply, and many on this call have long history in this issue and know just how critical water and continual access to water is, to ensure that there's not a meltdown in a case of an incident or accident at a reactor. We don't know anything about insurance or the regulatory framework, or who would build or operate any future reactors.

And possibly, you know, most disturbing, given Australia's history, we don't know anything about waste management plans and the waste of civil nuclear reactor, commercial nuclear reactor is orders of magnitude more serious than what

we currently have in Australia and what we currently have is serious. We have intermediate level waste which needs to be isolated from people on the planet for 10,000 years and for commercial nuclear power waste, that high level waste needs to be isolated from people on the planet for up to 100,000 years.

Now, if you look at Australia's track record of 30 years of top down, imposed, heavy handed, divisive, and ultimately non-productive attempts by both major parties to set up radioactive waste dumps in different sites around the country. And we've seen multiple fights in multiple sites, particularly in South Australia and the Territory, and I'd like to give a shout out to David Noonan and to others on this call, who are playing really important roles in standing up for community rights and stopping those plans. You know, that gives no confidence that increasing radioactive waste, and particularly in the form of AUKUS, and highly enriched military waste, is, it's a it's a deeply disturbing situation.

There are things, though, however, that we do know about the Coalition plan. We know that it's an ad hoc, chaotic, contradictory political fix. And it seeks to unite a disparate coalition from technical techno enthusiast Liberals to renewable phobic nationals under one policy umbrella. It seeks to cover up a decade of climate denial and inaction from the Coalition when they were in government. When they had the hands on the wheel for a decade they did nothing to address climate, and they did nothing actually or very little, to advance nuclear, but they've found they've had their road to Damascus moment in opposition.

It's a plan that also seeks to wedge Labor and Labor are making that very easy, as David said in relation to AUKUS, as there's a bill before Parliament at the moment drafted and promoted by Defence Minister Richard Marles which opens the door, actually opens the door to Australia potentially hosting high level radioactive waste from the militaries, from the navies of our AUKUS partners in the US and the UK.

Now they've had nuclear reactors for 60 years, nuclear submarines and nuclear reactors for 60 years. Not one has been decommissioned. Not one has been, had the waste disposed, and in laws before our Parliament there is the potential, accepted by Department of Defence, accepted by the principal legal counsel of BAE systems who are pivotal in the UK nuclear submarines program, accepted by all members of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, that there is a credible possibility and a potential for this new piece of legislation to open the door to radioactive waste storage of our AUKUS partners. And despite that, Minister Marles has to date, not amended that legislation.

The other thing about the Coalition plan is, we know that it's an attempt to harness a Trumpian style cost of living disaffection on, and couple that with site specific, renewable concerns and turn that into a Voice, style, resentment, vote with no or limited connection to reality, evidence or truth. And probably the most overriding thing that we do know about the Coalition's plan is that it aims to cement fossil fuels in Australia's future energy mix. The plan is promoted by the Minerals Council of Australia, and the big winner is gas.

We also know that the coalition, the self-proclaimed champion of small government, free market states' rights is jettisoning all of these formerly foundation principles in its push to advance nuclear power. Announcing the nuclear plan the Coalition gave little detail, but they were very quick to point out that they were prepared to use, and had sought legal advice on, the ability to use commonwealth, override powers to overcome State opposition. That they were setting up a national authority to do the nuclear rollout, because the existing generators, transmitters, and funders of energy in this country won't touch nuclear. That they would override community opposition in the national, or should that be nationals' interest, and that they would use compulsory acquisition powers to purchase those seven sites.

The first time those energy utilities at those sites heard about this was when Peter Dutton announced it in the national media. So you wonder how serious they are and how committed they are, if they haven't even had the courtesy or the

common sense to pick up the phone and speak to those utilities anyway. So these are all the hallmarks of a command economy, with Peter Dutton as commander in chief.

Now, nuclear is not only demonstrably the slowest and most expensive energy option for Australia, it also has unique, related safety and security impacts. And it's also, and this is a deep concern for ACF and many others, it's an act of distraction to credible and effective climate action. And don't just take my word for it.

Paul Kelly, editor at large at The Australian, spoke of the intended consequence of this policy, and said that the intended consequence of this policy is to derail the renewable energy transition, to inject uncertainty into renewable energy.

Now we all know coal is on the way out. Most will be gone in 10 years. All in 15. Coal has been essential in our power. It's been a, the sort of heavy lift of Australia's electricity system for a very long time. But it's on the way out and something's got to replace it.

Now, renewables are the clear and obvious choice. They're currently 35% of our national power. All the power, all the electricity in Australia across the nation every day, one third of it is generated by renewable energy sources. It's proven. It's deployable. It's vastly safer and cheaper.

In ACT, where I am tonight, talking tonight, 100% of the power is renewable.

In Tasmania, 100% of the power.

In South Australia, where David Noonan is, 75% of the power, en route looking at 100% of the power by the end of this decade.

But these things are not starting at the same place. Nuclear is illegal. It has massive legal policy, economic and social license constraints. It has been said repeatedly by independent analysis, including the Australian energy market operator and the CSIRO, that it is simply the slowest and the most expensive energy option and at the same time renewables, is 35% of the power, growing every day. Now to interrupt the renewable rollout, really, it's nothing short of economic and environmental sabotage.

And I think it's really critical to reinforce it. It's not just the usual suspects who are concerned or opposed to the Coalition's nuclear plan. The energy utilities, AGL or Alinta, Energy Australia, Origin. They've all dismissed the nuclear option.

Investors the IFM which manages over \$200 billion in Australian super funds, has said no nuclear investment, stating that there was no social license and the waste problems were too severe.

There was a recent survey by the investor group on climate change, and it asked major institutional investors who have 37 trillion dollars under management, which climate and energy solutions have the best long term prospects of success and return. And they provided 14 options, and though that came back, renewables first and nuclear last. And that was explained, not because of ideology, not because of fear mongering, not because of Chicken Little, it was explained, because nuclear's very high cost. The lack of maturity and deployment in next generation technology and superior alternatives. So the crew who toss coal around Parliament now want to cap and scrap our renewable energy future.

And from the perspective of a group, an environment organisation like ACF, the, that just simply can't happen. It simply can't happen. We are in a time coming to a T-Junction in Australian energy. We are exiting coal. We can either replace it with nuclear and fossil fuels or we can replace it with renewables.

Now on our side of the fence, those who are saying, *“Let's be serious about this. We're a third of the way there; don't change course to go for something that is easily weaponisable creates a lasting, if effectively forever waste burden; is expensive and slow”*.

Like we only had the choice between nuclear and coal, it'd be a difficult decision. But we are blessed with massive, renewable resources here, and we've got lots of good supporters who see this. We've got Federal prohibitions. It's important to remember that what is being proposed by the Coalition is unlawful in Australian law, a law that they introduced, last century A law that they did not challenge or seek to repeal when they had control of the country for a decade.

There's also state laws and policy bans. There is opposition from the market who are not convinced or are opposed.

And it is very clear that on every objective analysis it is simply not fit for purpose in this country. It is the slowest, the most expensive, and it delays effective climate action. Everyone from Alan Finkel to a range of commentators, have said this.

Now, if we lived in reasonable, rational times, we'd say, *‘Well, you put all those things together, superior alternatives, high cost, slow - game over’*. But we don't live in those times

And we've seen that, and we've seen one thing that the Coalition and Peter Dutton can do extremely well is harness discontent. And we're living in times where there's discontent, where there's fear, where there's uncertainty. And you don't try and maturely tease that out. You turn that into a slogan, that it's someone else's fault, and we're the solution; in this case nuclear's a solution. So we will face an elevated social media push, much of it unhinged or untethered, and all of it unhelpful.

Some explicitly misinformation, like misinformation going around that you know, renewables kills whales. Misinformation going around that nuclear is zero carbon. That radioactive waste is sorted. It's an asset, not a threat. And on it rolls.

So we need to, all of us, as part of our work to build a peaceful Australia, is to ensure that our advocacy for a nuclear free Australia articulates a clear and consistent critique and also identifies a pathway that is not only possible, but it's happening. And we're 35% there. And that is for renewables. Our energy future is renewable, not radioactive. And, as has been said, all of us need to become nuclear free advocates, at least up to the next election.

Now, I could talk a lot about the technology, a lot about the strategies and all that sort of stuff, but I won't. We can do that...I want to leave some time for question and answer.

I want to say, though, that we as an environment group share deep concerns about the increased nuclear militarisation, the increased nuclearisation in general and the active demonisation and attempts to undermine much more sustainable and possible energy futures.

I've popped in the chat, a website. There's so much stuff around but one website that I'd really draw people's attention to and say, have a look, at your time, and you know, in your leisure is a new initiative called **‘Don't nuke the Climate’**.

and it is aiming to be credible, contemporary, pretty comprehensive to link communities in those seven sites that are under focus from the Coalition, and to provide pretty clear and compelling and accessible information about the problems with nuclear energy and the multiple benefits and options provided by renewable energy.

<https://dont-nuke-the-climate.org.au/>

So look, I'll finish there, just to say that this is a high cost, high risk, not fit for purpose option. It is linked to a whole range of increasingly disturbing and non-declared agendas about wider nuclearisation, including militarisation and international waste storage.

And we actually have far superior alternatives, and we need to actively engage in this debate and push this ahead of the next election, which both Chris Bowen and Ted O'Brien have described as a referendum on nuclear power.

So my sort of feeling and my mantra to myself is we have to work hard over the next one year to stop a mistake that we and our inheritors and our successors will rue for thousands. So thanks very much for the efforts in what you do.

Dave Sweeney: Yeah, very, very much. Appreciated. Lots of information there.