

Selling fear and loathing and unsettled science.

On Hiroshima Day, and in the wake of NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell's decision to maintain the ban on uranium mining despite an invitation from a Commonwealth Minister to reconsider, it may be helpful to revisit the successful campaign against uranium mining in Australia.

Since it is increasingly apparent that the science which underpin the demands for immediate and drastic action on carbon emissions is very far from settled, the burning question shifts from the science to the reasons why so much unsettled science and so much outright bollocks has been taken so seriously by so many people. Some clues can be found in a study of the methods which were used to kill nuclear power in Australia. These were documented by the late John Grover in a book called *Struggle For Power* (1980).

The book is a comprehensive survey of the prospects for nuclear power, its potential and its problems, as indicated by the table of contents.

PART ONE – WORLD ENERGY AND ALTERNATIVES

PART TWO – NUCLEAR GENERATION

PART THREE – RADIOACTIVITY AND MUTATIONS

PART FOUR – PERSPECTIVE ON PLUTONIUM

PART FIVE – WASTES AND THEIR DISPOSAL

PART SIX – SAFETY

PART SEVEN – HEALTH AND CANCER

PART EIGHT – PROLIFERATION AND SABOTAGE

PART NINE – THE ANTI-ENERGY MOVEMENT

PART TEN – THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

PART ELEVEN – IN CONCLUSION

Fears about the safety and the health hazards of nuclear power are laid to rest and it emerges as a relatively safe and also a "clean and green" source of power. Despite this, it became the target of a sophisticated, highly organized worldwide scare campaign.

In my opinion this can be seen as a preliminary to the Global Warming scare campaign and it is important to see who are the key players and how they operate. For that reason I am putting put on line a summary of Section Nine on the

anti-nuclear campaign. The task is not quite complete but it seems like a good day to get this out!

THE SUMMARY IS HERE <http://www.the-rathouse.com/2011/Grover-Power.html>

SAMPLES

Two sensationalized books by Barry Commoner, *The Careless Atom* and *Perils of the Peaceful Atom* represented the start of the all-out anti-NP campaign. Dr. John Gofman and a colleague in radiation and human health program at the Atomic Energy Commission created a sensation with the claim that if the U.S. population were exposed to radiation at the levels considered "acceptable" in federal radiation guidance, approximately 16,000 people would die annually from cancers induced by the radiation exposure. On some occasions they used the figure of 32,000. The claims were demolished by other professionals but they barnstormed across the country generating headlines and their predictions kept turning up over the years in the publications of anti-nuclear activists and the reports of journalists who did not do their homework.

The churches

"A division of the American National Council of Churches declared plutonium morally dubious and called for a moratorium on its use. This bizarre intrusion of theology into science was explained on the grounds that scientists were "split down the middle" and therefore the theological community should have the casting vote".

That path was taken on advice from a committee of inquiry of 21 people (selected by the anthropologist Margaret Mead) consisting of 11 who had previously published papers opposing NP and 10 clergymen and lawyers. None of the 21 could claim expertise in the field of nuclear energy or plutonium.

It is claimed that this advice, distributed through the network of churches, impressed a Southern Baptist, President Jimmy Carter and his advisors. The Council of Churches distributed a paper "Ethical Implications of Energy Production and Use" which depicted the threat of nuclear waste in the language that has become familiar in recent times – "the welfare of future generations" and "horrendous" and "catastrophic" dangers despite the fact that wastes had been managed for 30 years without harm to anyone.

The campaign gets to the White House

"Most remarkable of all has been the outcome of a campaign promise by President Carter that he hoped to challenge Ralph Nader for the role of top consumer advocate in the country".

Many sub-cabinet posts went to former public interest lawyers, consumerists and environmental activists. Fourteen key White House assistants including the President's chief speechwriter came from the public interest movement. Speechwriters with a gift for the telling turn of phrase can make a great impact on public perceptions. Carter turned out to be especially susceptible to half-baked ideas,

as demonstrated by Amory Lovins, a leader of the no-growth movement, who worked for *Friends of the Earth* in London. Lovins was well known in some circles for a pamphlet that advocated the 'soft energy path' for the US, using calculations that overstated the cost of NP by a factor of 2 and understated the cost of solar power by a factor of 10.

"Nevertheless, just twenty hours after meeting with Mr Lovins and without the benefit of consulting with any of the many energy experts available to him, President Carter presented Lovins' energy calculations verbatim and uncritically in a speech.

That is far from the end of the story. Former anti-NP activists moved into four Assistant A-Gs in the Dept of Justice, and into the positions of Assistant Secretaries in Health, Education and Welfare; Commerce, Interior, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development. "Naderites" and their follow travelers also scored some plum positions in the chairs of the Civil Aeronautics Board, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Highway Safety Administration, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration, and the Federal Trade Commission.

The NSW Teachers Federation

According to Grover the ultimate in the anti-uranium campaign has been the literature distributed to schools in NSW in July 1978. "Two dozen broadsheets destined for schoolchildren were such that many teachers and secondary students were shocked. Much material that had originated in the US was laid out and made to look like a teaching study. With few exceptions the cartoons were on the political level, some skillfully done."

"Videotapes, sound tapes and other audiovisuals were listed, referring to the overseas 'information'. The emotional speeches of pediatrician Helen Caldicott, and those of plausible Paul Ehrlich (with the magnificent voice) featured prominently, with taped sessions from the ABC's 'Broadband', 'City Extra' and other sessions which contributed prominently to the anti-uranium case. Activities sheets followed explaining how the concepts could be best implanted in children's minds."

Among the materials were powerful and emotional pieces including "Aboriginals" (depicted in chains) and "Heroshima" (easy to depict in a shocking manner). "Teenagers could be deeply affected by the emotional impact. Many teachers appreciated this but the rules of the NSW Teachers Federation and the open support of the Labor Minister for Education ensured the silence of the majority. One must wonder at the Federation statement about 'inundation of pro-uranium propaganda because nobody knew of any.

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Enjoy!

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