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# Town fears limits on mining

The people of Coober Pedy say their livelihood is threatened by the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Bill.

A committee member of the Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association, Mr. B. Coker, believes the Bill would stem future exploration out from Coober Pedy.

"I can't see why the Government is doing this — the people here are almost 100 p.c. against the Bill," he says.

"Mining and mineral exploration is the town's livelihood."

In a letter to the Premier, Mr. Coreoran, on behalf of the association, Mr. Coker says the people of Coober Pedy completely reject the Bill, and hope it will be abandoned or heavily amended.

It says the "nucleus lands" of the proposed Pitjantjatjara tribal

lands alone are 9 p.c. of SA, while the total area of potential Aboriginal control is about 20 p.c. of SA.

Future exploration and development of the Officer Basin in SA's far central western region will effectively end with the passage of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Bill.

"This is an area of enormous hydrocarbon and evaporate potential," the letter says.

"The SA Government is attempting to hand total control, including full mineral rights of a huge area of well over 70,000 square kilometres to the Pitjantjatjara people.

"If this policy of racial segregation and discrimination is enforced, the biggest loser, apart from the Aboriginal, is going to

be the average worker and taxpayer in SA."

A spokesman for the Minister of Planning, Mr. Payne, said a submission from the Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association had been taken into account by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Pitjantjatjara Land Rights.

The committee has completed a report on its investigation.

The Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Bill 1978 was introduced by former Premier Mr. Dunstan in November last year.

The Bill, if unamended, will give Aboriginals the right to veto mining and to control access to their lands.

All mining royalties otherwise payable to the State would go to the Pitjantjatjara people for minerals taken with their consent.