

ANTI-NUCLEAR NETWORK

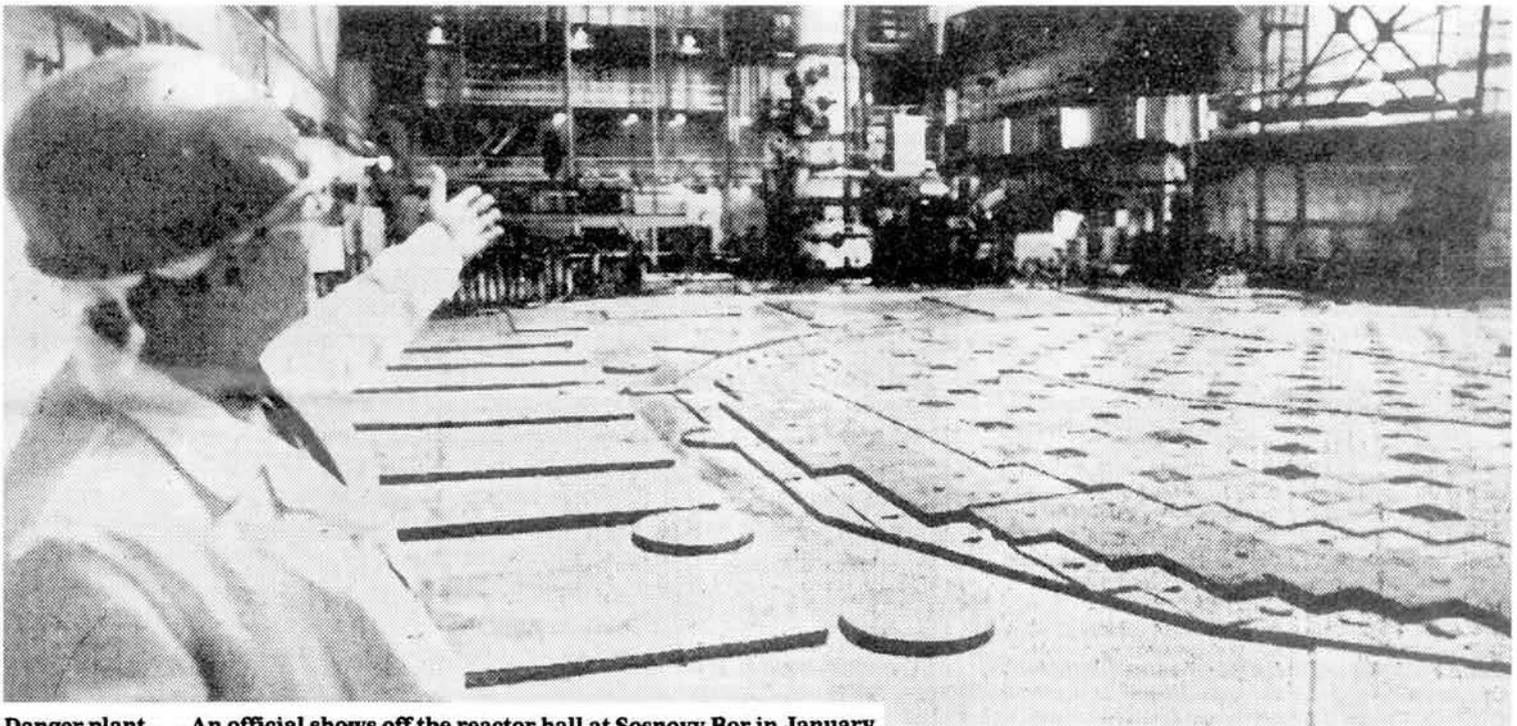
No. 25 - Spring '92.

40p.

Sites of Chernobyl-type reactors



An ACCIDENT Waiting to Happen



Danger plant . . . An official shows off the reactor hall at Sosnovy Bor in January.

The serious reactor accident at the Sosnovy-Bor reactor near St Petersburg on 24th March led to a large release of radioactive iodine. According to Greenpeace, 3,000 curies of radiation were released. If this figure was correct, this would be the third largest release of radiation into the atmosphere from a nuclear power station after Chernobyl (7 million curies) and Windscale (20,000 curies).

Significantly, the Sosnovy-Bor reactor had been retro-fitted to bring it up to international safety standards. Retro-fitting or back-fitting is a process whereby decrepit reactors, such as Sosnovy-Bor and many others in the Eastern Bloc, are refurbished to allow their continued supposedly safe generation.

Apart from an unintelligible press release from the Russian nuclear power organisation Minatom, downgrading the seriousness of the accident to the status of "incident", most of the comment came from the International Atomic Energy Authority and other pro-nuclear organisations. Most were in the dark like everyone else but wanted to give the impression that the accident "Looks good" as one IAEA spokesperson said.

True to form, the British authorities reacted complacently to a major radioactive release. When the ANN tried to contact the National Radiological Protection Board - responsible for monitoring radiation in the UK and informing the public - the evening after the accident there was no reply.

Retro-fitted or not, these Chernobyl-type reactors are an accident waiting to happen.



NEWS ROUND-UP

October

- 1: New Zealand's new Tory PM Bolger is planning to scrap anti-nuclear legislation and allow visits by nuclear armed and nuclear powered ships.
- 1: UN inspectors say that but for the Gulf War Iraq would have been able to produce 2 or 3 nuclear bombs a year by 1995.
- 1: The TGWU has withdrawn a threat to stop repair work on Polaris submarine reactors on the understanding that radiation exposure is reduced.
- 3: The boss of BNFL had a raise of 50% last year, taking his salary to £155,000.
- 4: A report by the Royal College of Radiologists says that around 7 million unnecessary X rays are taken each year, increasing patients risk of cancer.
- 5: Bulgaria is close a reactor at the shambolic Kozlodui plant.
- 7: Polls show that Labour's "Nukiller Jack" Cunningham may lose his seat if he continues to support plans for a massive nuclear waste dump in Cumbria.
- 8: Ian Lang, the Scottish Secretary, has defended plans to reprocess Iraqi nuclear waste at Dounreay.
- 14: The Chernobyl power plant was shutdown when a fire destroyed the roof of the reactor building.
- 15: Phillipine's women's group "Gabriela" demonstrated outside the Senate building in Manila demanding the closure of US bases.
- 19: Massey Ferguson were fined £10,000 for concealing the fact that their combine-harvesters contain a yield meter with a radioactive source.
- 19: British Nuclear Fascists are demanding that seafarers on their nuclear waste ships reveal names of their lovers over the previous 5 years or face the sack.
- 19: South Africa claims to have abandoned its nuclear weapons programme and is seeking to become a competitor in the world's nuclear fuel market.
- 24: Demonstrators against NIREX's plan to dump 1.5 million cubic metres of radioactive waste in the Lake District National Park gave John Wakeham a rough ride when he visited Sellafield's Propaganda Centre.
- 30: The Ukrainian Parliament voted to close the Chernobyl nuclear plant.
- 31: US nuclear experts claim that China is supplying Iran with equipment for its nuclear bomb programme. This is denied by both Iran & China.

November

- 3: The US refused to reprocess Iraqi nuclear waste despite a UN request.
- 8: UN documents claim that Iraq detonated a "partial nuclear bomb" just before the invasion of Kuwait.
- 8: The Russian Chetek corporation is offering to dispose of Western toxic waste with nuclear blasts.
- 11: The US and South Korea say North Korea is close to producing nuclear weapons.
- 13: The author Seymour Hersh claims that Robert Maxwell and Mirror hack Nicholas Davies conspired with MOSSAD to track down and kidnap Mordechai Vanunu.
- 18: BNFL's Springfield plant has contaminated the River Ribble with radioactive waste.
- 24: Scottish Nuclear plan to dump nuclear waste in dry storage plants at Torness & Hunterston.
- 27: The Doomsday Clock, marking the imminence of nuclear war has been turned back to 17 minutes to midnight.
- 27: The Phillipines have taken control of the volcano damaged US Clark airbase, ending 90 years of colonial occupation.
- 29: France has recalled its Ambassador to New Zealand after Gerald Andries was arrested in Switzerland in connection with the bombing of the Rainbow Warrior in 1985.

December

- 1: North Uist, in the Western Isles has been found to be contaminated with plutonium and americium from Sellafield.
- 1: Fifty Israelis demonstrated outside the Dimona reactor in protest at the continuing imprisonment of Mordechai Vanunu.

Going Critical

As we near an election with less to choose between the candidates than ever before, it is time to ask ourselves where the real opposition to exploitation, oppression and environmental destruction is to be found and how those seeds of a better society can be helped to grow.

Recently in the "Network News" collective we've been discussing the dismal state of the anti-nuclear movement and what our role should be, if we want to avoid bashing out a newsletter until we're all old and grey (some of us are there already). It is clear that some healthy criticism and debate are needed.

There is a cosy consensus in the peace and "green" movement. Nobody disagrees (in public anyway), nobody says what their real politics are, and everyone pretends that a host of "single issues" are not related. It is time to challenge this consensus which only defends the status quo.

Here are a few recent examples of how the consensus is policed.

- a CND steward trying to physically remove some of us from Nelson's column during an anti-Gulf War demonstration for carrying a banner which read "No war but the class war" when the Committee to Stop War in the Gulf contained groups which supported the Iraqi war effort. Noticing also that we were physically and successfully defended by other demonstrators.
- Friends of the Earth sending strict instructions to local groups not to issue statements about the Gulf War.
- Another anti-nuclear group intervening to stop our leaflet for the "No fresh start" picket of a pro-nuclear conference from being circulated because it called the nuclear bosses "members of the ruling class".

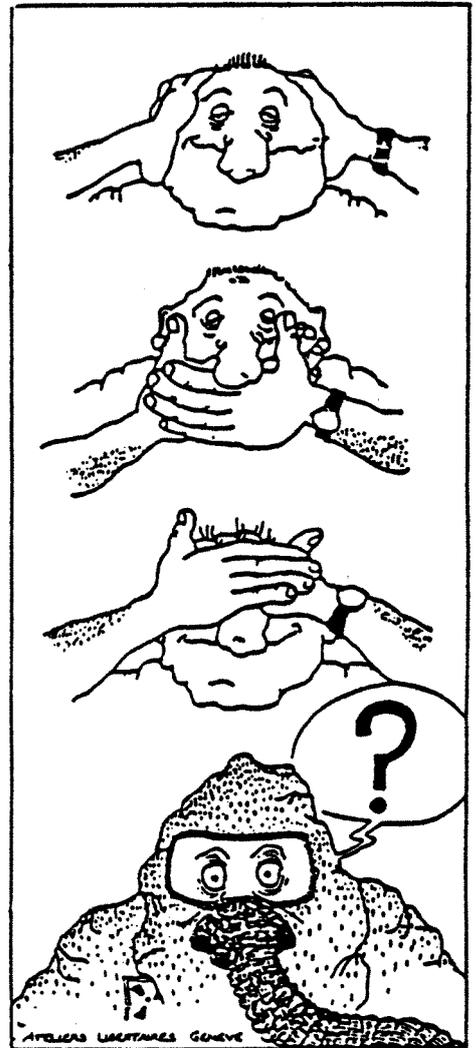
There are other, more personal ways in which critical voices are suppressed as Barbara Körner explains in her article on non-violence.

We want the newsletter to reflect hard debate about the way forward as well as hard news about what is going on. We've been involved long enough to know that there are no simple solutions - all of them have been tried and found wanting. But we want to be part of the process of building resistance - away from the **passivity** of much of the peace movement and the **vague liberalism** of much of the green movement. We need to turn the idea of a decentralised, libertarian direct action movement into a reality.

But we need your help. We need your news, your opinions, your letters, your support and your cash.

Away from the stinking hot air of the election let's help resistance grow.

**"Protest is if I say: I don't like this or that!
Resistance is when I make sure, that the things
I don't like will no longer happen!"**



Non-Violent Direct Action has for a long time been the dominant philosophy in the activist part of the peace and anti-nuclear movement. Here Barbara Körner offers some reflections on her experience as an NVDA activist.

"After 10 years of "activism" for peace, anti-apartheid, anti-nuclear and "green" causes, I have come to a point where I have pulled away from the peace movement to a certain extent, and I want to talk about the reasons for this retreat. I imagine that fundamental doubts about the peace and other "alternative" movements are shared by many people at the moment. I believe these feelings of doubt are significant and can be turned into something constructive if they are listened to and discussed.

Organising political protest with others in the spirit of "non-violent resistance" has meant a lot to me. To "do something" to challenge the way things are felt like my survival strategy in the nuclear age.

After my initial idealism had worn away a bit, the displayed atmosphere of sunshine and harmony at rallies began to irritate me. It felt like the edge of my protest was taken away. I became aware of the commercialism in the peace culture, and the consumer-attitude that comes with it. Today, I experience CND, Greenpeace etc, mostly as corporations that organise our protest for us and sell us - through junkmail, Christmas catalogues and bazaars - their conscience-clearing services and politically correct merchandise.

I also felt alienated when the peace movement celebrated the signing of the INF treaty in 1987. My concern about



The Cult of Non-Violence



social change did not relate in any way to a treaty worked out by the military about a certain number of missiles and sealed with a Reagan-Gorbachev handshake. I feel that when we let ourselves be pacified this way, our campaigns and demonstrations only serve to enhance the "democratic", "peaceful" or "green" image of the system of militarism we were meant to oppose. The peace movement ironically turns out to be a (supportive) "parallel action" to the war movement.

My response to feelings of futility was to get more "seriously" involved in the peace movement, which meant engaging in non-violent action politics. It felt good to get together with likeminded people and build a "radical" support network; to do unusual actions to challenge the existing power structures; to break conventions and the law. But while we were always busy reacting to something, I did not feel that things were really beginning to change - the emergence of a "non-violent alternative" seemed less and less realistic.

Looking back I realize there was no allowance for self-critical questioning in this activism. Since we were trying to change the world we didn't have to change ourselves or even look at ourselves. We "acted" as if we had changed already, as if we were "non-

violent and "non-racist" and "non-sexist", when we were just people (mostly middle class) looking for a purpose and somewhere to belong where we could feel important, loved and powerful.

There is nothing wrong with having personal needs fulfilled. The problem is when we deny these and pretend altruistic motives. (At least with an overtly sexist/racist bastard you know what you're dealing with.) So mostly male "charismatic" leaders in non-violent action groups could assume power over others just because they professed to believe in non-hierarchical forms of organising; could abuse their power over others (often younger people) sexually because they professed to be anti-sexist. "Non-violence" in this sense was a smokescreen for our power trips, and getting arrested at an action/going to court or prison was a prestige gainer.

These hierarchical power dynamics can develop when personal agendas remain hidden and the value of non-violent action is not fundamentally questioned. "Non-violence" then becomes a moralist

We hope to continue the debate on tactics for the anti-nuclear movement in future issues. Please send your contributions (articles, graphics, letters etc) to the address on page 8.

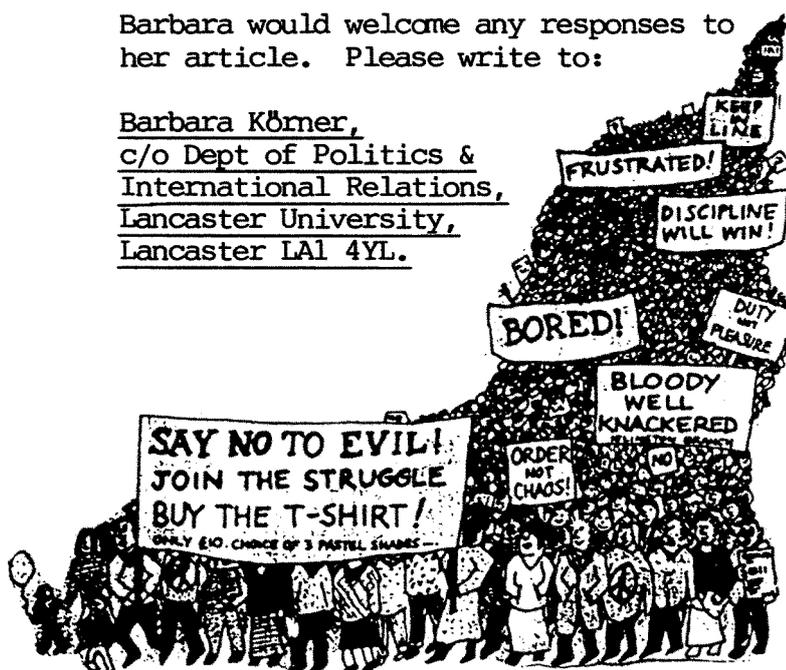
dogma that we use to put pressure on each other to think, talk, eat and act in a "politically correct" way. We set ourselves apart from the rest of society - as more "active", "aware" or "consciencious". But we perpetuate hierarchical power relations just as in the rest of the dominant (patriarchal) society.

My break from the dogma of non-violent action was made easier through my developing feminist consciousness and also through discovering the strength of lesbian relationships and friendships. Being more in touch with myself as a woman, I can now clearly recognize the part I played in propping up the "peace" gurus by striving for their acceptance. I can now name the interpersonal processes in the groups as patriarchal sexual politics; ie politics centring around a male-defined concept of power.

I believe that only when we face the issues of power between us, across our differences, will there be hope for social change. When we hide our feelings for the sake of the Cause, we weaken our sense of self - that personal strength that can resist power hierarchies. Only when we risk being ourselves can we take risks with others; to say what we think and feel, to break the group code and pressures of expectations, to face conflict and be critical of one another. I believe these interpersonal challenges are the basis of all politics."

Barbara would welcome any responses to her article. Please write to:

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Back to a renewable future.

The same natural forces that shaped the geography and geology of the world could prove to be the most widely used energy sources of the future. Solar, wind, wave, and geothermal energy offer an alternative to the plundering of finite mineral and fossil fuel resources.

With nuclear power in the UK in its longwinded death throes, fusion is the last chance for the high-tech hopefuls at the Department of Energy. But it is hopelessly expensive - forty years of research has yet to produce a prototype that can work for more than a few moments - AND it still produces nuclear waste.

Meanwhile in the United States of America major companies such as Amoco, Edison and Texas Instruments, as well as the US Department of Energy are showing increasing interest in solar power.

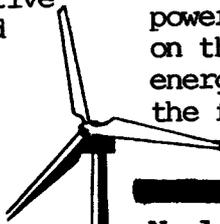
Exciting developments are being made in the field of photovoltaics, where sunlight is converted directly into electricity. With a 1000 watts of solar energy falling on every square metre of the earth's surface on a clear day the potential is enormous.

US interest had been centring on a type of photovoltaic cell made with circular slices of silicon about 4" in diameter cut from an ingot of processed silicon.

But a new type of cell uses cheaper metallurgical grade silicon which is formed into tiny spheres. These are then embedded in an aluminium mesh to form a small square that looks like blue sandpaper. These new cells have the same electricity producing potential as conventional cells but are considerably cheaper. The resultant material is also flexible and could be used as a cladding material in the construction of buildings, also producing electricity for home use. "The reality is that it can generate tremendous amounts of electricity" says a Senior Research Engineer at Edison.

"Everyone who intends to be a major player in this technology is working on one or more research avenues" says Chris

Eberspacher, Senior Director of R&D at the German firm Siemens Solar. By comparison the UK Department of Energy's recent £250,000 programme to "reassess" photovoltaics looks like a token effort. It is time for British scientists to abandon high-tech, high-cost nuclear power and fusion research and concentrate on the more promising area of renewable energy; a power source of the past and the future.



Nuclear power - the danger signs every parent should know.

If your teenager comes home spouting strange ideas such as that nuclear power is safe, economic and somehow helps stop the greenhouse effect you should be aware that she or he could be suffering the effects of **pro-nuclear propaganda**. Your child may have picked these ideas from figures of authority such as so-called "science teachers" using packs provided by pushers called **Nuclear Electric**. Already this dangerous cult has been at work in schools in Essex and Suffolk. If youngsters take these people at face value then they could end up fading their genes and letting all their hair fall out.

Luckily the pushers can easily be beaten by the provision of a few facts. With proper parental support no child should have to abandon a successful career of monkeywrenching.



Sizewell land grab.

Nuclear Electric are trying to clear the obstacles to expansion of the Sizewell nuclear plant if the Government review in 1994 goes in their favour. They recently bought up 550 acres of the Sizewell hall estate adjoining the power station. The site which contains an area of Special Scientific Interest could be used as a contractors working area for their planned Sizewell C reactor.

They are trying to bribe Suffolk County Council not to oppose planning permission for the C reactor by offering to recreate 180 acres of wildlife-rich

...continued on next page.

NEWS ROUND-UP

December continued...

- 2: A UN report says that depletion of the ozone layer will increase cancers by 300,000 every year and eye cataracts by 1,750,000.
- 3: CND has called for an end to nuclear weapon convoys after a transporter broke down on the M25 and the bomb had to be transferred to another vehicle.
- 3: Hunterston A in Ayrshire is to remain shut because Nukiller Electric can't sell the electricity.
- 13: Former officials of the Bularian government have been jailed for failing to protect the population after Chernobyl.
- 15: Five years after Chernobyl 288,000 sheep on 407 Welsh farms are still affected by radiation level more than twice the safety limit.
- 16: The nuclear industry lapdog the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate has allowed Britain's five oldest and most clapped out Magnox reactors to continue operation for a further ten years past their design lifetime.
- 17: Stella Rimington, new boss of MI5, was actively involved in the surveillance of trade unionists and the anti-nuclear movement.
- 19: China's first 'civil' nuclear power station, the Qinshan PWR, went on stream.
- 24: The French Army have promoted the murderer Jean Claude Lesquer to Brigadier General in recognition of his heroic role in the blowing up the Rainbow Warrior.
- 30: The Government has decided to ignore an EC directive aimed improving boiler efficiency to save energy and prevent global warming.

January

- 5: The NRPB is to reduce exposure limits for nuclear workers and people living near nuclear plants. Despite the TGWU's demand for a 10MSv limit for nuclear workers the new limit is 20MSv per year, or a 15MSv average over 5 years.
- 7: Dr Strangeloves in the Pentagon have recommended that the US should target nuclear weapons at every potential adversary, whether or not the states concerned have nuclear arms.
- 11: Water pumps that failed when fire broke out at Hinkley Point nuclear plant on New Year's Day are to be replaced.
- 19: President Roh of South Korea says all US nuclear weapons have been removed from his country.
- 24: Analysis of the NRPB's national registry of radiation workers going back to 1976 has confirmed the link between leukemia and radiation. The study show that the risk of leukemia rises gradually as doses increase.
- 24: The German Bundestag has introduced tough export controls including heavy fines and possible 15 year jail sentences to stop hi-tech smuggling after revelations that German firms supplied equipment for Iraq's chemical & nuclear weapons programmes.
- 28: According to the designer of the Soviet 'black box' (containing the nuclear button) control over the old empire's nuclear arsenal is near collapse.
- 29: Boris Gorbachev (no relation), a former top Soviet nuclear technician gave a chilling account of the dodgy state of the nuclear arsenal. He says that older weapons are so unsafe that the former Soviet Union could face 200 new Chernobyls. Soviet nuclear technicians are all leaving to get jobs with other nukiller states.
- 31: Despite massive cuts in the US and Russian nuclear arsenals and the commitment of Yeltsin to redirect his missiles away from British cities all British political parties can be relied on to expand the British nuclear 'deterrent' by continuing with the Trident nuclear submarine programme.

Sizewell Land Grab continued...

heath at another site they own at Dun wich. The plan would only go ahead if the C station was approved.

Nuclear bosses have been talking up the need for a third cancer factory in the local area. Jim McFarlane, construction manager of the Sizewell B site told a press conference that when Sizewell C was built "Electricity would be too cheap to meter". The assembled hacks fell about laughing. Red-faced Jim hurriedly told them not to quote him.



PWR Threat to Scots

A new PWR reactor is planned at Chapelcross in Scotland despite Department of Energy assurances that there would be no work done on new nuclear reactors until the nuclear case is reviewed in 1994.

In September, BNFL published a report on the siting of a PWR to replace the ageing existing Magnox reactors on the Solway Firth at Chapelcross. A more detailed investigation is now under way with the object of producing an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to submit to a planning inquiry.

The project was presented at an Environmental and Leisure Services meeting of Annandale and Eskdale district council in November but we are told that no minutes or written plans were given to the public either before or after the meeting.

BNFL predict a huge rise in demand for electricity in Northern England and argue that they have the expertise to provide it. In 1989 a feasibility study was commissioned which concluded that siting new reactors at Sellafield and at Chapelcross would be viable if a PWR with a power of 1300 - 1500 megawatts was built on either of these sites. Chapelcross was chosen because of factors such as water supply, space and links with the National Grid.

The present timetable means that the new PWR could be up and running between 1996 and 2002. The new reactor would cause a huge destructive environmental impact, partly because it would need 56 million gallons of water a day which could not be supplied without damage and disruption to nearby rivers, and also because radioactive discharges into the Solway would be increased. New railway lines would also be built to carry spent fuel to Sellafield via Carlisle.

It has been reported that over £33 million has already been committed to this project and a further £100 million allocated for licensing and inquiry costs. BNFL is looking for partners in a consortium to fund construction to a tune of £2,500 million.

Because Public Inquiry rules were changed in 1990 to limit the range of objections, it is now impossible to use this channel for effective opposition. Indeed, as we know from experience, public inquiries into new nuclear installations are a waste of time from the objectors point of view because the Government and BNFL have always been committed to expanding the nuclear power programme regardless.

Local people are already objecting effectively however and have had a small victory in holding up the drilling of bore holes. Jackie Beswick of the Chapelcross Watchdog and Action Group says the plans have already been extended far beyond their original remit: "This project is dangerous and un-necessary and local people will resist it. It will have a destructive effect on the whole area including several nature reserves."

Anyone interested in knowing more about the campaign should contact the Chapelcross Watchdog and Action Group at Bankhead Cottage, Canonbie, Dumfriesshire, DG14 0RU. The matter is soon to come up at the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Regional Council which may provide possibilities for protest.

The Anti-Nuclear Network

The ANN is a federation of autonomous local groups opposed to nuclear power. We support effective direct action.

Thanks are due to Rowena, Wrexham (£20); Roger, Stroud (£10); Kev, Aberdeen (£2); Rhona, Newham CND (£5); Joan, Merseyside CND (£5); Richard, Leeds (countless thousands), for this issue.

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