



Newsletter

March 1999

STOP HINKLEY? - OUR PLANS FOR THE NEXT CENTURY

At the AGM on 10th March we discussed our role in the anti-nuclear movement, and where to go from here. At present we just produce the newsletter and keep an eye on what is happening at Hinkley Point. We can give information on anti-nuclear issues and talk to schools if requested, but none of us have time to do more. We have enough money to pay someone to take on a more active role doing educational work, PR or anything else that our readers wish to suggest - please help!

Let us have your views on our options for the future - see questionnaire with AGM report.

NUCLEAR NEW BUILD IN THE NEXT CENTURY?

The Chief Executive of British Energy is putting forward the argument that we need "tradeable carbon permits which would have the effect of stimulating sources of electricity which do not release carbon dioxide - ie nuclear and renewables". In this way, he suggests, nuclear build would "rapidly become economic". The Trade and Industry Select Committee has confirmed that commercial prospects for new nuclear build are not very attractive now, but may be required in the course of the next two decades; as it may be difficult to keep up the carbon dioxide reduction levels after 2010. At present our nuclear power stations are expected to keep

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Next Meeting 12th May, at Jo's
all welcome

going and contribute to these reduction levels, but alternatives must be found before the time comes for them to stop.

SIZEWELL A TO RESTART

The Magnox power station is to start up following a three year temporary closure and a £30 million repair bill, and is expected to run for up to 15 more years.

PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO TRAWSFYNYDD 'SAFESTORE'

British Nuclear Fuels plans to delay final dismantling of this reactor for 135 years. This will be the first inquiry which will address the issues relating to decommissioning of nuclear stations, and WANA is pressing for the terms of reference to include risk assessments of alternative decommissioning strategies. We are all likely to end up with long-term nuclear waste storage in our neighbourhoods.

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OSPAR - EDM No 50

The Radioactive Discharges Working Group is introducing this Early Day Motion to Parliament, proposing that "all spent nuclear fuel should be stored instead of reprocessed, as the way to substantially reduce discharge levels to the marine environment by the year 2000, as agreed at the OSPAR talks." It notes that reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel is the largest source of radioactivity into the north-east Atlantic, and calls on the Government to draft a plan of action. We are due to achieve 'close to zero' concentrations of radioactivity by the year 2020.

How many of our MPs know about or understand this issue?

SELLAFIELD - SAVED FOR NOW

Germany's anti-nuclear legislation has been postponed while they study their legal agreements with British Nuclear Fuels and think about what to do next. Their Government was threatened with dozens of nuclear waste transports from France and Britain if they cancelled the £5 billion deal from the end of this year. At Sellafield there are hundreds of tonnes of spent nuclear fuel rods from Germany, waiting in the deep storage pools, and the 19 German nuclear power stations do not have adequate storage facilities for untreated waste if it returns to them. Reprocessing is still due to stop, but only 'as soon as it is possible'; and the question of whether our Government can sue theirs has yet to be resolved.

CHERNOBYL MUST STAY NUCLEAR

The Ukrainian Government would prefer gas power stations, but the Group of Seven Western leaders are

insisting on nuclear power plants to replace the sub-standard Chernobyl reactors. They will spend £360 million on them, at a time when other countries are not building any new nuclear reactors because they are so expensive and unpopular. The official reason for the decision to complete these two stations is that it will enable the dangerous reactors operating there to close by 2000. It is the first time that EU taxpayers money has funded such a development in another country, and may be just to help our nuclear industry. The money is technically a loan but the European Investment Bank does not expect it to be repaid, as few people in the Ukraine can afford to pay for electricity.

BRITISH HELP PROMISED WITH RUSSIA'S NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE

Murmansk, north west Russia, is one of the most contaminated places on earth. The £3 million pledged by Robin Cook will play just a small part in clearing up 100 decaying nuclear submarines and other radioactive waste left by the cold war. People in Murmansk get a daily radiation count instead of a weather forecast, as waste has just been dumped in fields, thrown in the sea and put away out of sight. An old ship which is moored in the harbour contains more than 600 spent fuel rods.

The British money will pay to extract this spent nuclear fuel from the corroding containers and store it in special casks. Although all this waste is as dangerous as Chernobyl, little Western money has been offered to help deal with the problem, partly because of Russian reluctance to admit the details. British Nuclear Fuels is working with Norway on a project to make safe the Russian navy's main

spent fuel storage site, but they are not allowed to go there.

UK CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME

There is increasing pressure on the Governments for Britain, Wales and Scotland to develop legislation to bring about our climate change commitments. We are due to reduce 1990 carbon dioxide emission levels by 20% by 2010, which will require energy efficiency, development of renewable sources such as wind, initiatives by local authorities and electricity suppliers to make this happen. We have a long way to go. Although the UK has the largest offshore wind resource in Europe, which could generate more than our total electricity needs, the Government is not doing much to get this industry going. In Denmark where the Government supports the wind industry they control 60% of the global market and employ many people.

LOCAL COUNCIL INITIATIVES TO SAVE ENERGY IN SOMERSET

The Bust Your Boiler Bills Campaign is being launched by the Somerset councils, funded by a grant from the Energy Saving Trust. Families can get a £300 discount to replace their old boilers with a new gas-condensing type which produces less carbon dioxide.

Log Fires are proposed as a revolutionary new method for keeping children warm in Dulverton school, if Euro funding can be obtained to pay for it. MAFF have been asked to support the scheme to change to wood-fuelled boilers as it should create rural employment and reduce carbon dioxide.

STOP HINKLEY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 10.3.99

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

ACCOUNT Jan - Dec 1998

INCOME

membership and standing orders	£3923
donation	15
Baywind Dividend	201.41
Misc	37.57
bank interest	478.53
Total	£4655.51

EXPENDITURE

Fees	£511
admin expenses	534.50
post/stationery/phone/fax	138.28
travel	151
newsletter and misc costs	62.72
accountancy	620
Total	2617.50

BALANCES

Bank accounts	£14691.74
Baywind shares	£5000

Last year we made a profit because we did not spend anything on campaigns or awareness raising. In the past we have given financial support for research (Chris Busby), the Low Level Radiation and Health Conference, and bought Baywind shares.

SUPPORTERS

The current supporters list amounts to 218 names - of which 45 are gratis (other anti-nuclear organisations, for example). So far this year 37 have renewed their subscriptions.

OFFICERS and ACTIVITIES

Judith has decided she no longer wants to do the bookkeeping - and we thank her very much for all her work over the years. Val is willing to take over the books, and will find out what it would cost to have the newsletter copied and

sent out by a commercial firm. Unless anyone wants to do this?

Hester can continue to do the newsletter, but would welcome help with information gathering and dispensing - because it is hard to do much on top of an almost full time job, plus family.

In the past year the major issues have been Euratom, Waste disposal, authorisations for emissions at Sellafield and elsewhere, and inefficiency of the nuclear industry.

The same issues apply to Hinkley Point - they also have to ask for authorisations and their current application can be obtained from the County Council, West Somerset District Council or the Environment Agency in Bridgwater. Unlike the Ministry of Defence, they seem to acknowledge the need to start reducing emissions, and we could encourage this by putting pressure on them.

The Environment Agency processes applications in Bedford - contact Dave Willcock, ext. 2042 - 01234 277042.

Campaigning - is something we do not do - apart from occasional petitions and requests for letter writing which go out with the newsletter. Thank you for signing the petition against the shipments of Trawsfynydd waste to Hinkley for incineration.

QUESTIONNAIRE - WHAT NEXT?

Please give us your views

1. Should Stop Hinkley continue as now?
 2. Should we give financial support to other campaigns?
 3. Which? - Anti - nuclear
- Renewable energy
 4. Should we support local initiatives eg a Sun Day event?
 5. If we offer money to other organisations should it be as grants or interest free loans?
 6. Would you like to work half a day per week doing - awareness raising
- responding to consultations such as applications for emission authorisations
- anything else
- Please let us know what you would like to do?
7. Do you know of an organisation eg school that would like us to provide information on nuclear v alternative energy sources?
 8. Any other suggestions or comments

