



WAKE UP!!! IT'S YER GLOW-IN-THE-DARK

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 25th November 2005

Free/Donation Issue 522

If the Romans used nuclear power...



We'd still be minding their waste



OVER-REACTING

Just when you thought it could get no worse, Neo Labour goes nuclear. The whispering campaign around the push for nuclear power has been gaining momentum since last year. Until then Britain's nuclear programme seemed to have been largely written off as the costly and dangerous failure it was. Nobody even knows how to safely decommission the power stations already built or store the radioactive waste already produced. Britain's nuclear power programme was historically dogged with safety issues, radioactive contamination and, of course, massive overspend. And yet now we're supposed to sit back and swallow the construction of a few more of these toxic dumps. How're they going to sell this to the British public?

You have to stand back and admire the propaganda. In the face of a potentially very cold winter, Neo Labour is using their own incompetence in not securing sufficient energy supplies or efficiency to go round saying, "Do you want Granny to shiver alone at Christmas? Do you want to have to rely on gas pumped thousands of miles across steppes haunted only by bearded jihadists every time you want a cup of tea? So come on! What's a little radioactive waste between friends?"

This glowing bombshell is being slipped in under the umbrella of a "wide ranging review of all Britain's energy needs". But Tony's think-tanks have come to the conclusion that wind turbines in marginal countryside constituencies are big vote losers and it's the intoxicating power of glowing uranium rather than hippy wind and wave power that the Confederation of British Industry wants, so it's likely that's what they'll get. Even Johnny Ball, CBBC's "Mr Science", was seen weighing in on the side of radioactive waste dumps on Channel 4 news. So far the need for nuclear power is being pushed on energy shortages, national security issues and the need to cut carbon emissions. The first two have an element of truth - but only if we want to carry on in the same energy wasteful, consumerist way as before. If that's the case then we need more energy. The problems currently being encountered in Iraq have signalled that we may not be able to just help ourselves to world's hydrocarbon reserves without a backlash anymore. Or in other words, if we want the shopping malls then we've got to put up with a perpetual state of war.

Seizing the initiative the nuclear lobby came crawling back into the debate claiming to have the solution to energy shortage and Britain's security. They reckon their magic solution, hedging Britain's energy bets by including nuclear in the power re-mix, will cut UK carbon emissions. These claims fail

to impress on closer inspection leaving you wondering why precisely the government is floating this idea now. Is it anything to do with UK plc's need to hang on to an independent nuclear deterrent and a source of weapons grade plutonium? BNFL, which will be administering the PFI contracts for reactors, is also the major shareholder in Britain's militarised reactor at Aldermaston.

HEDGE OF DARKNESS

Britain's 12 nuclear power stations provide a quarter of our electricity now, but unless they are replaced with new ones as they reach retirement, then there will only be three nuclear stations left in operation by 2020 producing less than 10% of our current consumption. The plan was to replace nuclear power with wind and solar energy so that by 2020, green energy would account for a fifth of our total leccy consumption. The National Audit Office reported back in February that electricity bills would need to rise by over 10% per cent if we are to meet these targets. With an inability to meet even these modest targets over the next 15 years, there is no hope of achieving Britain's longer-term goal of cutting carbon emissions by 60% while sustaining continual growth by 2050 unless nuclear is somewhere in the energy mix. Therefore, unbelievably, the biggest nuke programme since the 1960s is being sold as the cornerstone of our environmental protection policy! - of course the idea that we cut down on our levels of carbon emissions by cutting down on consumption of fuels and products is politically unthinkable.

So put memories of the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl disasters to one side. Forget about British Nuclear Fuel's poor health and safety record for just one moment. Try not to recall the evidence of increased cancer risk for people living near the power stations. Try not to think about how safe having a new load of nuclear reactors is likely to make us. Forget the scattered depleted uranium. This is a carbon neutral way of meeting our emissions targets, is it not? Er, no, not when you take into account the preparation of uranium for the reactor which involves mining and milling the ore, fuel enrichment and fuel-rod fabrication. Then there's the construction of the power station itself. At the other end there's reactor decommissioning and the treatment, storage,

transport and disposal of nuclear waste. All in all, Greenpeace reckon that Co2 emissions from nuclear power are at least a third of those from traditional fossil fuels.

Not only that, but all this ignores the relatively small role played by nuclear power in the overall energy economy. The UK fleet of 23 operating nuclear reactors generates just 22% of the UK's electricity. Electricity generation currently accounts for 37% of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions, with transport and heating the other major sources. Even if all 23 nuclear reactors were closed and electricity generation was replaced by a mix of coal, gas and renewables, UK carbon dioxide emissions would only rise by about 10%. In contrast, clean, renewable power sources, hand-in-hand with reduced consumption and energy efficiency measures, offer the best hope for preventing global climate catastrophe.

POWER TRIP

In any case the UK is currently pissing energy up the wall like a binge drinker. The Government's own Performance and Innovation Unit found that up to one third of our energy is wasted due to poorly insulated homes and energy hungry appliances. Improving the way we use our energy could save around 40 million tonnes of carbon emissions a year. Our current centralised energy system is highly inefficient; two thirds of primary energy may be lost up the UK's chimneys and transmission lines alone.

In Denmark, decentralised energy systems account for half of electricity production; ten times the rate here in the UK. In decentralised energy systems, electricity is generated locally to use with a distributed grid system. Buildings, instead of being passive consumers of energy, are parts of local energy networks using small scale renewable technologies. Combined with renewables like wind, wave, tidal, solar and biomass, even according to the Department of Trade and Industry, clean energies could provide a quarter of our needs by 2025.

But much easier just to sell our children's (and the next few generations) future down the river with the solution best geared for keeping shareholder meetings and boardrooms glowing green with happiness - here's to the nuclear family!

*This is the state of play as Britain heads for the **international climate conference in Montreal** (Nov 28th to Dec 9th), the first meeting since the Kyoto Protocol was 'agreed'. Another great chance for world leaders to agree to do little but continue profiteering: look out for our forthcoming review in your ever energetic SchNEWS. For more about climate change campaigning in Britain see www.londonrisingtide.org.uk

REBEL ALLIANCE

"Crackdown - The Shape of Things to Come"
Special meeting of **Rebel Alliance** - Brighton's irregular get-together of groups fighting for social change. November 30, Cowley Club, 12 London Road, Brighton. 7.30pm.

CASTOR BLASTER

GERMANS GET RADIO-ACTIVE

Anti-nuclear actions have mushroomed in Germany this week, directed at the highly radioactive nuclear waste train that travels from the nuclear storage facility in La Hague, France to Gorleben in Germany. Germany has no facility to deal with its nuclear waste so ships it off to France to be processed and 'temporarily' stored (it takes 40 years for it to cool!) before then being brought back to Germany in the infamous CASTOR trains. Worryingly it's the nuclear power companies who are then left the responsibility for storing all this atomic waste, which can lead to it being dumped at sites where it could cause serious accidents and be vulnerable to terrorist exploitation. Protesters argue that the long-term storage of this waste would lead to radioactive material seeping into the water supply in the region, and Thomas Breuer, a nuclear expert with environmental group Greenpeace said, "The radioactivity of these 12 containers is two and a half times higher than that of Chernobyl."

Actions took place at different places along the route and included sit-ins on the tracks, blockades by 160 tractors, and kids who went on a mass egg throwing mission. Fallout with the German authorities certainly wasn't depleted as the coalition of activists were met by some 15,000 police, mobilized to secure the passage of the train. This is the ninth shipment since 1996, and last year's protests resulted in the death of a 23-year-old French environmental activist, Sebastien Briat, who had his leg severed by the train whilst he was chained to the track, and he died before reaching hospital (See SchNEWS 473).

Some good news, however, is that Germany has been steering towards the utilisation of renewable resources and the abolishment of nuclear plants as part of the Nuclear Exit programme it signed with the power industry in 2005. This will see 19 of Germany's atomic power stations being closed by 2020, in a drive to encourage a transition to renewable-fuel production. The production of wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, and biomass energy has doubled in the last 5 years thanks to this piece of legislation

* Reports of actions: www.indymedia.org.uk

* More on nuclear phase-out in Europe: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_energy_phase-out#Germany

PLANE STUPID

Wanna help clip the wings of air travel, a major contributor to climate change through excessive greenhouse gas emissions, and also responsible for the perpetual suffering of local airport residents? Well, a coalition of eco-activists and local airport residents request the pleasure of your company to challenge the aviation industry's ever increasing airport expansion plans. A demo is planned for Tuesday 29th November, heading to meet over 300 delegates from the aviation industry including CEOs and Senior Executives from 25 countries and representatives from all the major airlines. They will be touching down at the Institute of Economic Affairs, so if you want to let them know how you feel and join others in saying "No to airport expansion!", then meet on Tower Bridge at 6pm next Tuesday (29th). There will also be a special Critical Mass, cycling to the conference from Southwark Needle (by London Bridge station) leaving at 5.45pm (sharp). Dress formally to blend with the delegates. Following the demo, there will be a public meeting. Details to be confirmed. For more information/to order leaflets email info@planestupid.com - also see www.roadalert.org.uk or www.earthfirst.org.uk

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SchNEWS in briefs

Friday 24th is another **Brighton Critical Mass** cycle ride. Meet 6pm at The Level ** **No Sweat Conference** Sweatshops, workers and international solidarity conference this weekend (26-27th) School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Thornhaugh Street, London WC1. £8/£4 www.nosweat.org.uk ** **Voices from Occupied Iraq International** teach-in this Saturday (26) 10.30am-5pm, University of London Union, Malet Street London WC1, www.iraqoccupat ionfocus.org.uk ** Did you know that **public libraries** are under threat thanks to new global trade rules? To find out more there's a conference at Swansea University next Friday 2nd December. To book a place e-mail n.t.smyth@swan.ac.uk ** Benefit for **Guantanamo Hunger Striker** - Nov 26th Concorde, Brighton 6-9pm ** **Eyewitness Fallujah Rahul Mahajan** speaks Brixthelm Centre Monday Nov 28th 7.30pm ** Fundraisers for **Brighton Peace and Environment Centre**: Thursday Dec 8th a night of folk, blues and soul. Grand Central Pub (opposite the train station) Tickets £2.50 from BPEC, BPEC stalls and 'Resident' shop in the Laines; and Dec 12th BPEC have a **PUB QUIZ** at the Robin Hood 'charidee' pub, 3 Norfolk Place 8-10pm with booze prizes... good fun for a good cause

COM-BAT STATIONS

Help is needed urgently from now until the end of November to save 700 trees and hibernating bats at the Dalkeith Country Park near Edinburgh. Conservation laws prevent trees being cut after the end of November if they have bats in them, as this enters their hibernating season - making this week critical. The protest camp at the site was issued court papers this Tuesday for an eviction hearing today (Nov 25th), but either way if enough people are down there over the next week to prevent the three camps being evicted, the area will get a reprieve. People and equipment (locks, ropes, tarps, etc.) are needed NOW. The proposed Dalkeith Northern Bypass will cut in two the 850 acre park that serves as a valuable wildlife habitat and is visited by 50,000 people annually.

Contact: Dalkeith Protest Site

Phone: 07783904369.

More info: www.save-dalkeith-park.org.uk

KILT STATUS

Earlier this month Colin Macleod, founder of the M77 protest camp Pollock Free State and Gal Gael, died last week of a heart attack. He was aged 39. Colin MacLeod, was a dreadlocked anti-motorway protestor who inspired a kilted clan of eco-warriors from their tree-top protest houses into establishing a Gaelic-based movement for cultural renewal in inner-city Glasgow. His cult status in the city meant that the police had to close the streets in Govan to allow 600 mourners to follow his homemade coffin and attend his funeral.

INSIDE SCHNEWS

* **Antti Rautiainen** is in an anarchist in prison in Finland till January 6th because of unpaid fines that he's received for refusing military service. Send letters of support to Antti Rautiainen, 1208/05, Siltaniitynkujja 2PL 160, 01260 Vantaa, Finland

* **Gabriel Alejandro Roser**, an activist from the piqueteros movement in Argentina, has been in detention since April 2004 on falsified charges of armed robbery. He has been targeted as he is active in the Movimiento de Unidad Popular (Movement for People's Unity). Please send letters to demand the release of Gabriel Roser to: Tribunal Penal n2 de La Plata., Calle 7, entre 56 y 57., La Plata (1900) Buenos Aires, Argentina. More info: libertadgabriel@yahoo.com.ar

POSITIVE SchNEWS

The Advisory Service For Squatters is now 30 years old (SchNEWS are wee snappers at a mere 11 years old). ASS was born in 1975 arising out of the Family Squatters Advisory Service (FSAS) which supported squatting groups and individuals. Shelter had previously helped support the FSAS and only withdrew its funding when threatened with a loss of charitable income for supporting dirty squatters. ASS was (and still is) entirely run by voluntary unpaid effort with running costs raised through benefits and donations; they also survived having the office burnt out from a fascist firebomb attack in the 1980s. ASS started producing **The Squatters Handbook** in 1976 and does to this day (at only £2 inc.P&P) with advice on everything from resisting bailiffs to amateur plumbing.

Recently they have moved to a new office above Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley, 84b, Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX, and is open Monday to Friday 2-6pm. Any enquiries about squatting contact ASS tel. 020-3216-0099 or 0845-644-5814.

They've got a training day for people who want to volunteer in the office on Sunday 11th December. The website www.squatter.org.uk has revamped and has info on squatting, events calendar and the all important 'Section 6' Legal Warnings to print off.

FINGERS IN THE PYE

A property development company could be paid millions of pounds of compensation by the taxpayer, because they, or didn't develop a bit of land! The European Court in Strasbourg ruled that the "Human Rights" of JA Pye (Oxford) Ltd were breached as they have lost 23 hectares of land to farmer Caroline Graham who had been grazing animals on the land since 1984 when an agreement with the company expired. Under squatting laws if land is occupied for over 12 years, the land becomes property of the squatters under "adverse possession".

The European Court has ruled that the company's right to enjoyment of its property was breached by Britain's failure to change the law to protect landowners. The government will now have to pay compensation; they had argued that public funds should not be used "to indemnify a corporate property developer against the consequences of its own incompetence".

Concert For Justice For Omar Deghays Guantanamo Bay hunger striker. Sat. 26th Nov, 6-9pm, Concorde2, Madeira Drive, Brighton, £8.50 / £6 concessions. tel 07796 478421 or visit www.concorde2.co.uk With music from Unseen Hierarchy, They, Roadhouse, Matt Kemp www.save-omar.org.uk

...and finally...

Tired of celebrity trivia? Crap at spot the intro? Know nothing of existence outside your provincial backwater? Reckon you're brighter than Otis Ferry? Then why not try a pub quiz with a difference: **"The Big Countryside Quiz"** has been organised by the Countryside Alliance in an effort to crown a Bumpkin Brain of Britain. In order not to stump local yokels more used to highbrow tractor pull events, they'll be ploughing familiar ground and furrowing rural brows by asking posers like "What is yellow rust?" and "What are larsen traps used for?" "What's a chilver?" * Questions that the self styled 'Guardians of the Land' probably won't be asked include "Exactly how much subsidy did you pocket this year for not growing anything?" or "Is that red diesel in your Range Rover?" or "How many pound-an-hour asylum seekers do you have picking your potatoes this year?"

* We know but we're not telling

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers to prepare a lead lined shelter for the nuclear industry's next PR meltdown... Honest!