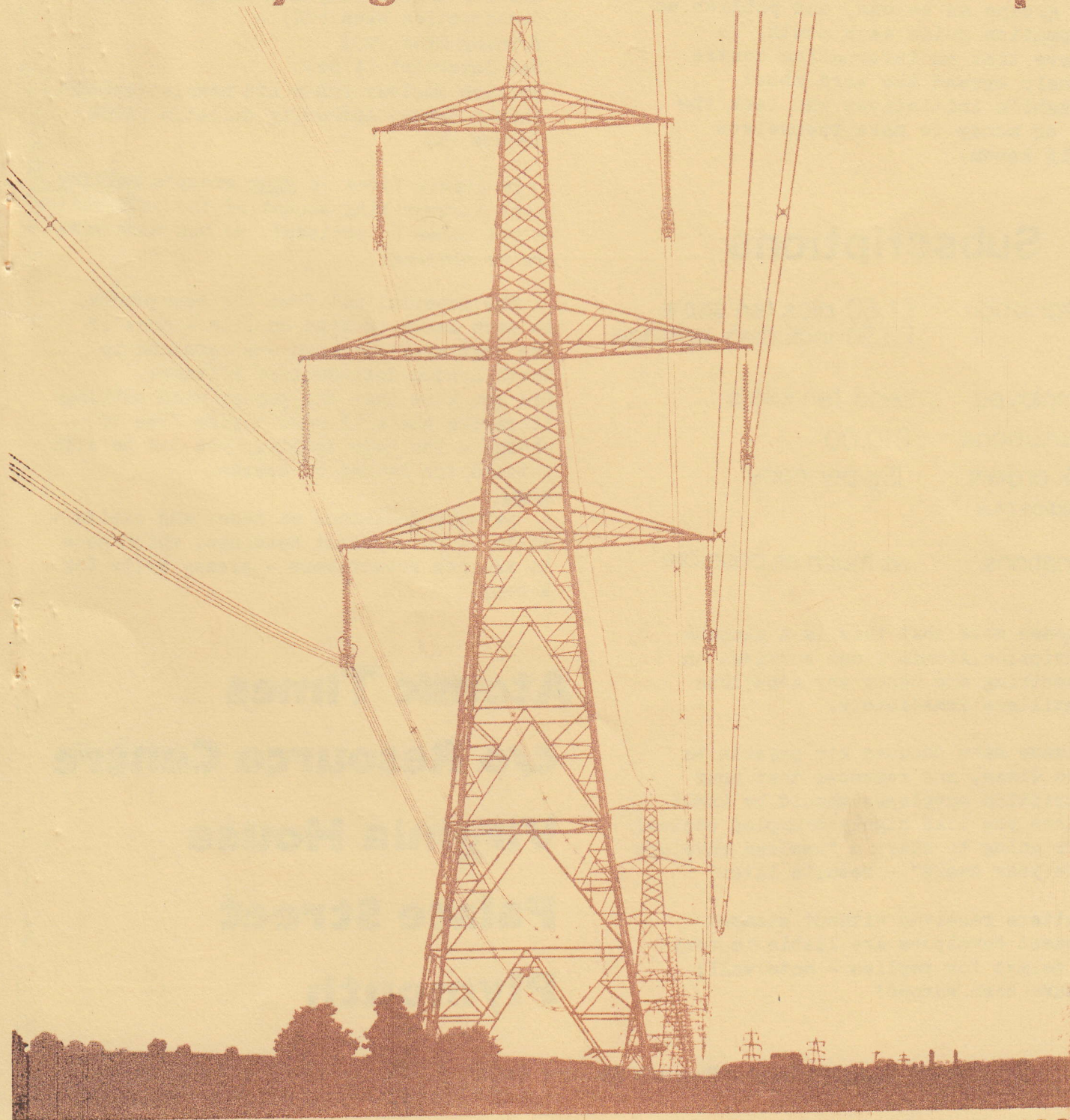


Atomic Times

A Monthly Digest of Nuclear News 20p



No 19 November 1981

Introduction

Atomic Times aims to act as an information source for the anti-nuclear movement and alternative movements. We have two closely related ideas: (1) to regularly scan as wide a range of material as possible, and give a month by month digest of the news and developments in the nuclear war and energy fields, including the alternatives, and (2) to provide as comprehensive a listing as possible of the campaigns, journals and groups active in the opposition to the nuclear state. We will use Atomic Times to publish information about as many groups as we can, and publish an information guide each month. We believe that an information centre can help spread the word about worthwhile initiatives who lack the time or money to make themselves widely known.

Subscriptions

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or	£3.50 including postage
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(5 copies plus)	
donations	as much as possible

Please note that this is a minimum subscription, Atomic Times survives on a shoestring and hence any donations are utilised immediately.

Please make cheques etc payable to Atomic Times, and remember that your subscription envelopes should be LARGE - unless you like highly crumpled copies! We are going to start a "useless envelope of the year award" - results later!

Letters received without stamped addressed envelopes are liable to very long delays for replies - note well; you have been warned!

Material

The following journals are being covered for Atomic Times. The letters in brackets are the abbreviations used in the text.

Times (T)
Guardian (G)
Financial Times (FT)
Daily Telegraph (DT)
SCRAM Energy Bulletin (SEB)
WISE Bulletin (WISE)
Undercurrents (UC)
Peace News (PN)
Observer (Ob)
Daily Mirror (DM)
Scotsman (S)
Electrical Review (ER)
Nuclear Engineering International (NEI)
Construction News (CN)
Morning Star (MS)
New Scientist (N Sc)
British Nuclear Fuels Ltd newsletter (BNFL)
Atomic Energy Authority bulletin (ATOM)
Nature (N)

Is Atomic Times on your group's mailing list? A surprising amount of the information we get comes by accident, so how much more are we missing?

The material not from the newspapers, in each issue is kept on file - most of the newspaper cuttings are returned to South London Anti-Nuclear Alliance. Did you know that the papers keep cuttings libraries and will send copies free of charge - the more specific you can be with details the better of course.

Index

We have published an index and explanation of our subject headings, which goes to all new subscribers - please write for a copy.

Atomic Times
c/o Resource Centre
Virginia House
Palace Street
Plymouth

Information, Resources and Campaigns

Nuclear Calendar T N Philbin is trying to compile a calendar of pro-nuclear events and activities. If you can help with the appropriate information write to him/her 6, Madras Rd, Cambridge.

Proposals for local authorities A workshop has been set up in Huddersfield. 'Nuclear Free Network' have produced 7 pages of proposals for actions by local authorities. A full list of ideas and resolutions passed from: NFNetwork, c/o Mike Wood, 3 Victoria Ave, Cleckheaton, W Yorkshire please enclose sae.

CEGB members should resign West Dorset Safe Energy Campaign has sent a letter to each and every member of CEGB calling for them to tender their resignations - because of the findings of the two recent reports, Select Cttee on Energy and Monopolies Commission. A copy of the letter is available from AT.

Stop Sizewell Benefit concert at St James Church, Picadilly W1 December 12th 7.30 for "The Stop Sizewell B Public Inquiry Fund" with Diane Ambache and The Mozart Chamber Orchestra. Tickets on door £2.50 Afterwards Helen Caldicott film "The Medical Effects of Nuclear Power".

Alternative Energy Strategies The Parliamentary Liaison Group for Alternative Energy Strategies has an interesting programme of lectures and discussions to be held at House of Lords, London. Mondays Nov - July, 6.30 pm Contact D Gordon, 14 Carroun Rd, London SW8 01 587 0194

Nuclear Industry PR Barrow AMG have sent us some conversation extracts from the 'Atoms for Energy' exhibition in Barrow in October. Some examples: "A few thousand deaths is not much of a price to pay for nuclear power" "leave the country if you don't like it" - David Simister BNFL Health Physics. "I feel that the sheer stress of knowing you've had such a dose (radiation) is enough to bring on a heart attack - even before the radiation kills you" Ian Watson UKAEA Public Relations. In answer to a question on the higher cancer incidence in that area and the cause "your life style in this area I don't really know what it is you do wrong it's just an opinion, you know" - Beverly Anderson mathematician BNFL. Contact Jean Emery, 29 Longreins Rd, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria

New peace campaign by churches To be launched at a consultation with secular peace groups in New year. G 23/10/81

PERG publications New titles from Political Ecology Research Group - The Windscale Fire - £3.50, Review of safety assessment for transport between Dounereay and Windscale - £2.00 from PERG 34 Cowley Rd, Oxford plus 10% for p&p

"Poets Against The Bomb" A half hour colour film based on an event organised by Kensington and Chelsea CND last April. Includes performances by Ivor Cutler, Adrian Mitchell, Harold Pinter and many others. Film is colour, optical sound, 16mm, 30 minutes, GB/1981 distributed by Contemporary Films and Concord Films, and can be booked through Barbara Somerville, 34 Drylys Court, Goldings, Northampton. Tel: 0604 48930

BAG v BNFL Barrow Action Group are continuing their appeal for funds as pursuit of legal action against BNFL has not been abandoned.

Trident

British Govt still keen on buying Trident 11 (D5) at estimated cost of £1,000 million more than Trident 1 (C4). At NATO Planning Group meeting of Gleneagles Caspar Weinberger assured Nott that there would be no objection to selling D5 to Britain. D5 would be regarded as a 'first strike' weapon, unlike C4 and present Polaris which are 'soft target' weapons. Maggie keen to push ahead so that it is sufficiently advanced to bind any successive govts.

T 20/10, Obs 25/10

Tory MP Sir Philip Goodhart says postpone Trident and put US cruise missiles on Royal Navy submarines instead. Cost of doing this would be met by deferring Trident programme, he fears that an alternative left wing govt would not use Trident money on bringing frigates back into service but that "it would be sensible to assume that the Trident money would be removed from our defence programme altogether and syphoned off into social programmes." (we can but hope!)

G 30/10/81

An alliance between MOD and Tory backbenchers is likely to prevent Commons defence committee from conducting new inquiry into Trident programme. The defence committee criticised govt failure to provide adequate information about costs of Trident - Whitehall's latest figure for Trident 1 programme is £8,000 million. Bruce George (Lab) says that Trident is much too large for Britain's purposes.

G 2/11/81

There is much local opposition to Trident on the Firth of Clyde where there is an earmarked site for assembly, storage and loading of the Trident system. Scottish Campaign against Trident has been formed, Dumbarton District Council has broken off negotiations with MOD and have circulated thousands of leaflets based on last year's Squareleg exercise, Scottish Labour Party have lodged formal objections with DDC.

G 18/10, 31/10/81

Cruise

Work has started on preparing Greenham Common as a base for cruise missiles, including the release of pictures of the test firing of a Tomahawk cruise missile - the type planned to be based in Britain, 160 in total split between Greenham Common and Molesworth, Cambridge.

T 23/10/81

Europe is keeping quiet and holding back from direct criticism of unilateral disarmament - Belgium, Netherlands and W Germany while Carrington and George Bush (US Vice President) are attempting to halt the swing of opinion in Europe towards peace movement. Latest opinion poll in Belgium shows that more than 65% oppose cruise. Italian Socialist Party still supports cruise in Sicily but is worried about the lack of electoral appeal this has. NATO conceded that disarmament movement may be encouraged by support of dissidents in Poland and Czechoslovakia and by suggestions by Romanian Govt for a nuclear free Balkan zone.

G 29/10/81

SS20 Brezhnev has given official confirmation that SS20 missile can carry up to three nuclear warheads, and that Soviet Union has 975 nuclear medium-range weapons and old SS4s and SS5s are being scrapped.

G 2/11/81

MX

White House plan for siting MX in existing land based silos has had funding refused by Congress sub committee, although they approved plans for building a fleet of 100 B1 manned nuclear bombers.

G 30/10/81

Friend or foe?

US war planes cannot always tell friendly planes from enemies. The 14 North Atlantic forces have different identification systems which have not been coordinated. Same problem affects ships and tanks.

G 14/10/81

Royal Bomber

Prince Andrew is going to learn how to drop nuclear depth charges on enemy submarines.

T 17/10/81

Aldermaston on TV BBC have made programme at Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston, Berkshire. Govt so worried about us finding out things we're not supposed to that they wouldn't let BBC develop film but insisted that it was done by Govt technicians. T 2/10/81

British plutonium for US bombs Reagan's plans for increasing his armoury have run into a shortage of plutonium. US have requested British Pu to tide them over. Supplies from BNFL are destined for civil programme but it looks as if they may be diverted. Pu from British Magnox reactors is not weapons grade but has a higher percentage of the isotope Pu 239 than that from US civil reactors, only military problem with this is that it introduces uncertainties into weapon behaviour. G 13/10/81

Letter in C from Howard Clark points out that Windscale has so far reprocessed 12,000 tonnes of spent fuel from 'civil' reactors and this should have yielded more than 40 tonnes of Pu. Yet DoE can account for less than half of this - remaining Pu sufficient to make more than 2,500 nuclear weapons. G 15/10

Nuclear accidents

There is a comprehensive list of accidents involving US and Russian n weapons between 1950 -80 in Sanity oct/nov issue.

Bombs for Breakfast

this is a report published to coincide with North-South summit conference. It says that growth of arms trade is significant cause of poverty in Third World, Britain should undertake a reappraisal of its role as arms supplier to Third World. G 21/10/81

Anthrax packages

Anthrax spores were found in a package of soil left at the Biological Research Centre at Porton Down, Wiltshire. Another soil package was left in the Blackpool Tower on the first day of the Tory conference. A group called the Dark Harvest Commandos claim to have taken 300lb of soil from the Isle of Gruinard, Scotland - the scene of wartime germ warfare experiments. Daily Record 16,17/10, G 14/10, DM 15/10/81

Third World War News

Reagan launches \$1,500,000 defence plan

Pentagon has produced glossy 64 page report entitled 'Soviet Military Strength'. Russians have dismissed this as propaganda aimed at lulling suspicions that US more interested in an arms race than in negotiations with Russians. T 1/10/81

Reagan announced increased weapons drive to favourable response from senators and congressmen, although some doubts have been expressed on the dropping of the 'race-track' system for MX. Michael Foot alleged that there are those in US admin that do not want negotiations with Russians on Theatre Nuclear Weapons to succeed. T 5/10/81

Ornington has backed US statement, and Russians have condemned Reagan's decision to build 100 MX and B1 bombers and accused US of struggling for world domination. T 5,6/10/81

EEC want more say

European commission want to relieve US of feeling that they are the most dominant member of NATO, and is worried about war plans excluding European opinion. T 21/10/81

US Senate votes to cut off aid

from any country detonating an atomic device.

T 23/10/81

NATO News

Sec Gen Joseph Luns has told off European and American allies for squabbling - splits in the alliance would be difficult to mend he said. He said Europeans seem to want to spend more on butter than on guns. Also accused new US admin in being too lax in arms control. T 1/10/81

Spain looks all set to join NATO, but Spanish govt will not accept n weapons on Spanish soil, although there is a provision for revising this ban. T 10/10/81
George Bush concerned about European support for peace says that NATO govts should not listen to disarmament "alarmists" and Carrington described calls for a European NFZ as "a delusion" and said that NATO's deterrent needed modernising. G 28/10/81

Special consultative group in Brussels agreed that dismantling and destruction of all Soviet SS20s would be essential to NATO giving up the modernization of its own theatre weapons - this is called the "zero option". T 27/10/81

Gleneagles

NATO's Nuclear Planning Group met at Gleneagles Hotel, Scotland.

PM 19/10, Obs 18/10.

They endorsed their two year old plan of stationing 572 new American weapons in Europe. Arms talks are about to start so they all had a harmonious meeting (!)

G & T 22/10/81

Schmidt v Brandt

They are having trouble with their party SPD, Schmidt worried that peace demo being supported by SPD youth movement, Brandt refused to appeal to SPD members not to join demo. T 2,9/10/81

250,000 people at anti-nuclear missile demo in Bonn and SPD declared that it had been encouraged to pursue peace policy. T 10,12/10/81

Schmidt had showdown with Free Democrat coalition partners and went into hospital to have a pacemaker fitted. End of coalition seems near and likely that SPD will desert S on key policy issues like deployment of n missiles in Europe. Obs 18/10/81

Schmidt and Mitterand

agreed on the need to restore nuclear balance in Europe before any talks on arms limitation between superpowers. T 10/10/81

Weinberger and Mitterand satisfied with talks and agreed on the "dangerous idea of unilateral disarmament" and the importance of strengthening theatre n weapons. T 16/10/81

Peace Corps for E Germany?

Increased resistance to serving in armed forces amongst E German Christians has led to call for 'Peace Corps' as an alternative to national service. G 25/10/81

Haig and Gromyko no 80

After two meetings no progress in the reduction of tension. T 1/10/81

British and Soviet talks more hopeful

British and Russian academics have met at Edinburgh University. They agreed that limited nuclear war was impossible and condemned Reagan for lowering the "nuclear threshold" with the neutron bomb. They have agreed to meet next year in Russia. (pre-supposing that there is a next year)
Daily Record 9/10/81 and T 9/10

Commonwealth concern

Commonwealth summit at Melbourne expressed concern at mounting tension between super powers and the build up of arms. T 8/10/81

Defence choices for eighties Extensive report in Times 27, 28, 29/10/81:
'How Mr Nott's plan can survive the cuts', 'Nuclear but not Trident',
'Nuclear-free but no pushover', 'How Britain could cope without NATO'

Conference for Healey against Labour Party voted for unilateral disarmament,
but also voted to stay committed to NATO. Healey and Brynmor John said that
they would fight for multilateral disarmament. T 1/10/81

Party political broadcast causes anger A Scotland only programme, this Labour
pp broadcast on dangers of nuclear war highlighted installations in Scotland
which could be targets and called for unilateral disarmament. Tory MP Russell
Folkestone said it was a disgraceful broadcast. Daily Record 18/9/81

Tanks go home An Observer/NOP opinion poll shows that 53% of British people
think that American bases should be removed from Britain. 57% thought that
Reagan's defence policy was making a war more likely. 32% thought that Russia
was most likely to start a war and 29% that America would start it. Only 5%
would like to see Americans go home, Britain abandon her nuclear deterrent and
leave NATO. 8% think that they would be certain not to survive a nuclear war.
Obs 8/11/81

Civil Service union backtracks Biggest CS union has decided to backtrack on
conference decision to affiliate to CND to allay protests from its MOD member-
ship, and to tell branches that they can affiliate locally if they wish. T 23/10

EP Thompson 'alternative Reith lecturer' E P T has agreed to give the first of
six alternative Reith lectures - on The politics of European Nuclear Disarm-
ament - at Newcastle Univ three days before first Reith lecture is broadcast on
BBC radio. Alternative lectures will be published in New Society. G 29/10/81

War games 10,000 people were involved in exercises with notional nuclear bombs
going off throughout the country. G 2/11/81

Europe on the march London, Rome, Paris, Brussels, had big marches against
the bomb on weekend 24/25 Oct. So too did East Germany when 50,000 protested
about NATO bombs.

Coverage of London CND rally in British papers was predictable - protesters
were like lemmings heading to destruction (Nott in T 31/10), both S Telegraph
and News of the World quoted figure of 100,000 and spoke of traffic chaos and
it being an extra problem for police. S T'graph spoke of protesters travelling
free to London! Sundays 25/10/81

Weinberger said "Anything that gets 150,000 on the march has to be taken
seriously, but it doesn't change the policies of the government." DM 26/10/81
TV coverage of marches in US has amazed Americans and initial view of US admin
was to dismiss the protests as being unrepresentative of the view of West
Europeans. T 28/10/81

Nuclear Free Zones

Southern Regional RND have compiled sheet of official
European initiatives for creation of NFZs. 1956 - 1981
Balkan NFZ proposed by Greeks and supported by Bulgaria. T 12, 20/10/81
Local authorities against nukes - summing up of council NFZ situation in NS 30/10

Reagansaid --

Angry reactions from Europe to Reagan's remarks on possibility of a limited nuclear war in Europe as he said "I could see where you could have the exchange of tactical (nuclear) weapons against troops in the field without it bringing either one of the major powers to pushing the button." ie Europe devastated, US unscathed. Weinberger said there had been no change in NATO strategy and that what Reagan said was entirely consistent with present strategy.

DM 21/10

T 21/10/81

Following day Reagan tried to appease by saying "we regard any military threat to Europe as a threat to the United States itself."

G 22/10

Reagan said that Soviet Union was trying to drive a wedge between US and its closest allies in Europe -- W Germany where reaction to his remarks was greatest.

T 22/10/81

Uncontrollable Nuclear War Strategic Studies says so.

Study published by International Institute for

Obs 1/11/81

For those who think that nuclear weapons have kept the peace for the last 36 years:

At this time of year millions of turkeys are enjoying peace, security and prosperity. By Christmas they will have discovered the futility of basing their prospects for survival on their memories of recent experience.

Dennis Fox in letter to G 2/11/81

The State, The Bunkers, And You

bunkers

Devon Council bunker has wives and children too

Plans for the wives and children of top Devon County Council officials to accompany them into the nuclear shelter in the basement of County Hall, Exeter have caused much local controversy because it was arranged without councillors knowing about it. Later reports said that the shelter is neither bomb nor radiation proof.

DM 28/9/81 Western Evening Herald 30/9/81

Cornwall claim that a) wives and children will not be going into their 'emergency control centres' and b) the shelter under County Hall, Truro is neither blast nor fire proof.

Somerst councillors and officials would operate from command HQ under County Hall, Taunton without their wives and children.

Sunday Independent 4/10

Devon County Council are involving 100 local govt officers in a civil defence exercise "Transit 81" next month. It has attracted criticism from NALGO because of the cost.

Western Evening Herald

23/10/81

Bankers in Welsh hillside

Labour MP Frank Allaun says that the honeycomb of tunnels in the disused slate mine in Mynydd Mawr, Ffestiniog contains two new concrete bunkers and that recently unloaded computer parts at Cardigan Bay were destined for the mine.

G 25/10/81

Borders Bunker

Controversy has arisen over Borders Regional Council's bunker at Newtown St Boswells. Debate arose when councillors were asked to approve £30,000 for the installation of a ventilation system in the underground bunker.

Kelso Chronicle 2/10/81

Orders for shelters drop in recession

Builders who manufacture nuclear shelters at a price range of £5,000 to £20,000 are not selling many, despite offers of mortgages. The business has become respectable since the publication of the official Home Office Guide.

CN 5/11/81

Civil Defence

Secret documents found on rubbish tip Documents labelled 'restricted - not to be communicated to the Press' were found on a rubbish tip in Tavistock, Devon. The papers appear to have been part of Okshampton Rural District council records which ceased to exist in 1974. The papers range from contracts in 1937 civil defence in 50s and 60s to war and civil emergency plans in 1971. Details are revealed of control posts in Devon, emergency feeding plan, etc. Councillors say that such documents should have been shredded. Tavistock Times 30/10/81

Swiss Survival Food Nestle has developed a survival food intended solely for Switzerland's bomb shelters. It is said to be a glutinous and foul tasting substance. G 3/9/81

Nuclear suits A Lincolnshire company are making lots of money selling suits to protect from gas, bacteria, and radioactive dust. Prices range from £15 to £207. Sunday Independent 25/10/81

Improving the quality of death A recent conference on nuclear shelters and civil defence highlighted the way to make money out of people's fears about nuclear war. Recommendations included stocking your bunker with a shot gun - for vermin control, laying down a wine cellar for immediate consumption, and improving the quality of death. Sanity Oct/Nov 1981

Parish war plan

Parishes in Sussex have been given £99 each for drawing up survival plans. IM 30/9/81
Newton and Moss Parish Council (South Devon) avoided the issue when questioned by Dr Huggett of Plymouth Poly about the efficiency of the Parish War Emergency Plan and instead quibbled about the note paper Dr Huggett had used. Dr Huggett has written to all the parish councils in the South Hams of Devon. Plymouth Star 30/10/81

Discussion of the Tavistock emergency plan livened up the town council finance and general purposes cttee. Cllr John Philpott, chairman of the emergency cttee, turned down a request to make it public and said that he'd refused a public meeting on the subject last July. He assured the cttee "No way will a nuclear weapon be dropped in the South West." Tavistock Times 30/10/81

Civil liberties

Death penalty without jury Govt instructions, dated Feb 18 1976, relating to a post - bomb Britain say that there would be no appeals against emergency court decisions, and offences carrying capital penalties could be tried without a jury. T 2/10/81

Another circular dated July 15 1975 and which still remains policy at present, states that the telephone service will be confined to preference subscribers only in wartime conditions and peacetime emergencies. T 9/10/81

Reagan wants more spying

US admin proposal to allow CIA to conduct clandestine domestic surveillance and to infiltrate domestic political groups. The Senate Intelligence Cttee have requested that they drop the proposal. G 29/10/81

War Game banned in govt offices

The Export Credits Guarantee Dept, a govt body, refused permission for departmental trade unions to screen The War Game at its offices in the City of London. G 18/10/81

Radiation and Health

50,000 children Soviet bomb tests of 1962 were estimated as causing the deaths of 50,000 children in the USSR. This of course leads onto other points regarding the rest of the world.

Jacques Cousteau from the book 'Atom's Eve' an anthology edited by Mark Reader and published by McGraw-Hill.

Benevolent BNFL BNFL's legal dept boss writes a reassuring article in BNFL News explaining why they like to settle out of court for claims involving alleged radiation induced diseases - it's fairer for the claimant who may not be able to prove his case in court. But BNFL will not accept any liability.
BNFL Oct

Harwell drains OK An internal Board of Enquiry has found that only negligible amounts of radioactivity, comparable to natural background levels, escaped from the damaged drains at Harwell. Board has recommended increased maintenance, a review of procedures for handling liquid laboratory wastes, and tightening up internal reporting procedures.
UKAEA Press Release 22/10/81

Radiation by CBA NRPB strongly endorse the cost benefit analysis approach to radiological protection. In a recent publication NRPB has adopted a non-linear, weighted system for costing collective doses to the public. This assigns much bigger costs to collective doses made up of a small number of people with high individual doses than collective doses made up of a large number of people with low individual doses. This approach would lead to less spending on radiological protection.
NEI September 1981

Safety Standards The International Labour Organisation, World Health Organisation, Nuclear Energy Agency of OECD and IAEA have undertaken jointly to provide standards for radiation protection on a worldwide basis.
Atom November

Conservation more dangerous than nukes Recent research suggests that risks associated with energy conservation may exceed those associated with nuclear power production. The improved sealing of homes to retain heat leads to a build up of radon and its decay products, there is thus an increased risk of lung cancer.
NEI October

Radiation and nuclear power This month's Atom devotes 11 pages to radiation - the history of its discovery, lots of tables and graphs, emphasis on the three-quarters of the total radiation reaching the public being 'natural' background radiation, and emphasis that Britain is at no risk from radiation.
Atom November

Half life, half truth Radiation makes people age faster than normal says Dr Bertell, AN American radiation researcher. She was studying under-weight births, since these have difficulty surviving anyway and are therefore more sensitive-
"I started looking in '63 (when above ground weapons testing ended) and carried on till '78. It was a large study with several million births each year. Death rate was high in '63 ... came down rapidly as fission products dispersed.... reached a low in '72. The new nuclear power plants came on line in '71, and the three districts affected (by power stations) started to go up again.... Whenever there is a startling rise in the gases released, then downwind there is a corresponding rise in immature infant mortality rates."

She had checked coal stations, other industry, German measles- no correlation.
The Leveller Oct 30-Nov 12 1981

Atom strikes back A long piece attacking Dr Ernest Sternglass's conclusion that the Three Mile Island incident might lead to as many as 4000 to 8000 extra cancer deaths in the years to come.
Atom Oct 81

Nuclear Plant

Calder Hall - what you knew already

A UKAEA published book on Calder Hall gives you the truth you always knew: "the plant has been designed as a dual-purpose plant, to produce plutonium for military purposes as well as electric power" (our emphasis) Later, this piece says "However,.... gas cooled reactors built primarily to produce power.... will not cost more than 0.6d per unit." (Our emphasis) Of course, once you've built yourself a reprocessing centre, you need a lot of reactors to keep it supplied with the raw material for warhead manufacture. The book is 'Calder Hall- the story of Britain's first Atomic Power station' pub 1956

Heysham B

Dennis Lower, CEBG board member, told a press conference that Heysham B will be finished on time to produce "substantial megawatts" by mid-1987. The station is now expected to cost £1,450 million at March 1981 prices. CN, 22/10/81, ER 23/10/81

Berkeley

The Berkeley II reactor has been closed after the discover of.... cracks in the cooling system, similar to those which closed the No I reactor in April 1980. The plant has been closed, and could be closed a long time: No I may be open by next spring. Until then, one dead power station. Dursley Gazette, 7/11/81

Windscale

At 10.45 am, Sunday Oct 4th 1981, the monitor in the magnox fuel separation plant's chimney recorded very high levels of activity. The plant was shut down, and it was found that some fuel rods had been reprocessed too soon in error. Fuel rods are stored at reactor sites specifically to reduce the activity of iodine-131- these particular ones were sent from Oldbury. The soviet meltdown in 1957 was for the same reasons, on a slightly different scale. The release is given at 6 curies, but it is not known whether that figure is the total release, as it may be the activity recorded on the excess was noted. (BNFL allow for 200 false alarms a year on these monitors.)

T. 20/10/81, 9/10/81, and Barrow Action Group Information.

"On Wednesday, 23rd October BNFL released a statement to the local press saying that several of the 5,000 workforce had fallen sick, but that they believed that contamination was not to blame. On Thursday 22nd, they said that their health officer and the local Environmental Health Officer had investigated the cause of the sickness. It seems that the cooling water for the cooling ponds, drawn from West water via the River Irt had instead gone into the drinking water. The same thing happened again last June/july when about 400 men had gastroenteritis from drinking untreated river water"

Barrow Action Group Information

In June 1980 a worker at Windscale got up in the morning, and in the course of getting ready to leave his house was "struck" by serious diarrhoea and vomiting. He asked his wife to phone BNFL and say he was sick. As the morning wore on, he became so ill that she was convinced he would die: the only reason she didn't get an ambulance was that he insisted she didn't. BNFL phoned around noon, and asked which part of the plant he had been working in the day before- their reply was, "oh yes, the water in that part is contaminated. Tell him not to come in to work and there's no need for a sick note"

Barrow Action Group Information

Luxulyan

The occupation at Luxulyan is over. The appeal court judges ruled that the demonstrators were in breach of the peace simply by sitting around, and could be lawfully removed. In the eyes of the occupiers, the judgement was carte blanche for the CEBG to use any force they wished to remove demonstrators- they decided to leave. If anyone wants a really clear picture of the official mind at work, ask the Times for page 8 of 21/10/81. Frightening stuff.

PWR and so on

The CEGB has accepted the new National Nuclear Corporation design for the Sizewell PWR as a 'suitable basis for going ahead with more detailed work'. It was pushed together following the establishment of a PWR task force until the AEA's Walter Marshall, and just made the Sept 30th deadline for completion. Fears have been expressed as to whether the design, based on a plant in the US, can be modified to meet British safety standards. ER 30/10/81

The first integral pressure vessel for a PWR has been completed in Belgium. This structure basically means that the whole reactor pressure vessel can be made in one, hence fewer welds, a stronger and safer unit. The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate are known to favour this system. NEI Oct

Pressure is growing on the Suffolk local authorities to start querying the govt's assumptions on energy needs, leading to a need for Sizewell B. An increasing number of councillors are expressing concern over the council's decision to instruct its officers not to conduct any research into whether the plant's output is needed. G 28/10

Mini-nukes

Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd plan to develop small, unattended water heating reactors designed "for heating large industrial, commercial and institutional buildings." House of Commons, perhaps? SEB, Oct/Nov

US

Three Mile Island

An NRC survey says that nuke managers are spending so much time acting on NRC directives following from the TMI incident that day-to-day work is suffering. One utility reported 450 procedural changes in one year. NEI Oct

An Atomic Safety and Licensing Board has found that the "managerial capability and technical resources" exist to restart the undamaged TMI-1 unit. The board must now address the remaining issues, hardware/design and emergency planning(!) before allowing a start-up. NEI Oct

Tennessee

Construction schedules for three plants will be stretched from 2 to 4 years and a fourth postponed indefinitely. NEI Oct

North Indiana

The first plant under construction in the US to be cancelled is the Bailly BWR, North Indiana. Well done, lady. NEI Oct

Diablo Canyon shuts

Two weeks after prolonged protest outside and around the plant, design faults at Diablo Canyon due to using the wrong blueprints for pipe hangers in at least one area. These will now be checked and corrected. ER 23/10/81

Critical Mass Energy Project

We now have a copy of CMEP's publication for July 1981, telling us of 3,804 nuclear incidents in the US in 1980. Pretty hot stuff! You can have your very own copy for 25p photocopying plus postage. Will tell you all about every American reactor, with incidents classified into sections.

Thermal shock data sought

The US NRC has asked 8 reactor operators for information regarding the toughness of the reactor pressure vessels. Continuous irradiation of the vessels weakens their resistance to sudden changes in temperature, such as sudden influx of emergency core cooling water, and means that older reactors may be unable to contain such a thermal shock. The NRC thinks that there is plenty of time to research the problem: they were asking for responses from utilities by the end of October. ER 2/10/81

Quarterly statement on Nuclear Incidents

The Health and Safety Executives report is available from Public Enquiry Point, H&SE, Baynards House, 1 Chepstow Place, London W2.

Cap de la Hague fires

On 15 April 1980, the la Hague plant suffered a fire in the main electricity distribution centre, cutting off both the main supply and the main standby generators: mobile generators, held in reserve, were used. The second fire was in a storage space for bits of contaminated magnox plant: some new material dumped there caught fire. Atom, Oct.

Switzerland

Approval to construct the controversial Kaiseraugst reactor has been given- it was abandoned in 1977. The scheme has yet to get go-ahead from the Swiss parliament; the builders will seek compensation if the lobbying fails. CN 5/11/81

Yugoslavia

The country's first nuclear reactor has gone on stream- built by Westinghouse for the Slovene state. The federal govt is very keen on nukes, but other interests are less happy- design rating will not be achieved until next spring while controversies over waste storage, damage to the River Sava, and the unique design are settled. ER 2/10

Bulgaria

The second station is due to be built near Belene on the Danube- four 1000 MW PWR's. NEI Oct

Austria- the govt is expected to re-open very heated debate for the Tullnerfeld BWR, mothballed after a referendum in 1978. The socialist government will try to revoke legislation against nukes, but this will require a two-thirds majority. NEI Oct

Sweden

The Swedish nukes, doomed to closure by 2010, are now giving good performances - opposition to waste dumping schemes is causing problems. NEI Oct

India

The Madras CANDU reactor was described as "hopelessly behind" by an Indian MP- there are problems with technological developments and 'indigenization' which were being rectified. NEI Oct.

The Indian govt has decided on larger reactors in future- 2000 MW-ish. NEI Oct

Indonesia

Germany's Kraftwerk Union has won the order for a 25MW research reactor, making it favourite for the first commercial plant contract in the 1990's. The two countries have made agreements for close co-operation. NEI Oct

Nuclear Programme

CEGB Morale low

Sir Kelvin Spencer has drawn angry denial from the CEGB by suggesting that many staff are very disillusioned with the PWR, but felt too much involved or feared for their jobs too much to speak out. Long report in the East Anglian Daily Times, 14/10/81

BNFL Blues

Con Allday, managing director BNFL, was bemoaning high costs faced by BNFL- the static home market, tough export competition "and in addition, we have to put more money to reserves to provide for decommissioning of old plant and treatment of radioactive wastes." The heart bleeds... BNFL News, Oct

Licensing ruins nukes

A head of nuclear industry from Germany talks about the difficulties of getting a reactor licensed in Germany, and says that all this concern for environment is a bit much, really, and what about the poor builders. NEI Oct

France compromises

The high hopes of us all now dashed, the socialist govt has cancelled only three of Giscard's nine plants- and done so without the great energy debate that it promised. The splits in the party would have been too apparent- so out it went. ER 23/10

Israel stays

The International Atomic Energy Agency has decided to decide later whether to ban Israel or not- but has agreed on an immediate halt on all technical assistance. 1/10/81

Pakistan

Dr IM Osman, UN energy adviser, wants Pakistans nuclear programme re-appraised in the light of the experience of the nuclear community in the 70's. He says Pakistan has hydro-electric potential of 21 000MW, of which only 2000MW had been tapped so far. NEI Oct

Iraqis press on

The Iraqis will build "2.5, 10 reactors, according to its needs" says president Hussain. He thanked the Saudis for their offer to rebuild the Osirak reactor- but didn't say yes please. ER 2/10/81

Reagan pulls out stops

"Reagan rides to rescue of nuclear industry" says ER- he has called for a greatly streamlined licensing process, reducing waiting time from 10-14 down to 7-8 years; ordered the Dept of Energy to proceed with the Clinch River Fast Reactor; rescinded a 1977 ban on commercial reprocessing; and called for a study on the feasibility of allowing private firms to compete with his government in building plant to produce weapon- and reactor-grade plutonium and uranium. ER 23/10/81

But is it too late?

A major study by analysts at Harvard University says commercial operation on nuclear may have "reached a dead end." And objection is strong among those sectors keen on less government to remove even more subsidy from the nuclear business, letting it slide even further. ER 23/10/81

Market surveys

The good news is a very gloomy article, ER 30/10/81, reviewing the state of the nuclear art in Europe and seeing the very worst all around (except France, of course) NEI does its best to put a brave face on it, talks at length about the opportunities of selling material to the industrialising third world, and gives us a run-around of a series of countries to illustrate these points. NEI Oct

Last Nuclex?

The international nuclear trade fair, Nuclex, was much smaller this year- down from 467 to 287 stalls- ER thinks that maybe it was the last one. ER 23/10/81

Energy Trends, Costs and Alternatives

nuclear provides 40%

of Frances electricity- 20,700MW installed capacity. NEI Oct

Decommissioning- who pays

A very interesting article about the financial and regulatory jungle over decommissioning costs appears in NEI for September: "on the one hand the NRC argues that the cost of decommissioning is so high as to threaten the financial integrity of the utility, while on the other hand they assure us that the cost, to the customer, of decommissioning is minimal."

Scottish Hydro in trouble

Because the North of Scotland Hydro Board received a capital contribution to the costs of Hunterston B from British Aluminium, Invergordon, it has been forced to provide power at reduced rate to BA since the nuke has never achieved its expected efficiency, what with sea water floods and so on- and the NSHB's deficit could be £500 million by the year 2000, when its agreement with BA runs out. ER 11/9/81

Orkney to get submarine Cable

The link, 44km of 33kV cable, should end Orkney's long isolation by early 1983. The cable will cost £7.2 million, but save some £1-2million a year due to the cost of oil-fired generation. ER 16/10/81

Magnetohydrodynamic: a new watchword?

MHD, or electricity from hot gas jets, could be the big new thing. If a jet of coal gas is hot enough, it will act as an electrical conductor, if a magnetic field is applied. The gas jet would then replace the complex, rotary turbine systems, or else augment them, pushing thermal efficiency up to 45% and 55% later. The system also uses less cooling water and reduces pollution. ER 30/10/81

Edmonton settles down

After years of teething troubles, the refuse incinerator at Edmonton, London is generating 11 kW for external use as well as all its own power needs- it reduces the volume of refuse to a compact 10%, used for landfill, and burns crude rubbish direct, without treatment. Used with combined heat systems, it could be even more attractive. Good long piece in ER, 2/10/81

Uranium Cycle

The typist of this section would like Atomic Times readers to know that he considers it possible to try and copy out the whole of Routing Out. This excellent document is already almost as condensed as it possibly can be, and this is 9 sides! It doesn't even cost you anything more than stamped addressed envelopes- please will all AT readers send some to Routing Out, 61a, Strathleven Rd, London SW2, forthwith. Thank you.

Mining

Enrichment

The Australian Federal Govt is expected to approve development of the Jabiluka deposits by the end of the year. An agreement drawn up between the Northern Land Council and the mining company will be shown to the 'traditional owners' (aborigines) later.

NEI Oct

The Uranium Corp of India is planning an ambitious expansion programme to meet India's needs for the next 20 years. NEI Oct

and the Indian Minister has ruled out any possibility of India going elsewhere for enriched uranium until the disputed Tarapur agreement with the US ends. India was offered uranium by the USSR in 1979. NEI Oct

USSR uranium (enriched) has started entering the US in sizeable quantity FT 18/8/81, and that country is enriching British-bought Uranium from Namibia- ie, the USSR is breaking the UN sanction too. A BNFL spokesperson says they have elected to use Soviet enrichment "to give a more competitive edge" to its commercial dealings at Capenhurst. The USSR has always denounced S African rule in Namibia, and supports the UN sanctions.

Ob 25/10/81

Australia is in the process of choosing a partner for "preferred technology" - to be found by the end of the year. Japan is favourite, Europe is also being considered

NEI Oct

There is controversy in Japan as to who should build their planned enrichment facility - a report has just gone in to the Japanese Atomic Energy Authority. NEI Oct

BNFL have announced redundancies of nearly 500 from a workforce of 2,700 at Capenhurst over the next 18 months. They say the reason is the govt's defence cuts- if anyone has heard of these, please let us know. T, 28/10/81

Reprocessing

M Pierre Mauroy is determined that foreign reprocessing will continue at La Hague, and that the plant will be extended to cope. The contracts are worth a lot of money: 3,000 million French francs a year. ER 2/10/81.

controversy in France as the Minister's assurances of a moratorium on foreign waste into La Hague was seen to apply only to sea shipments- protesters blocked trains of the stuff and got an agreement that the ban would be made total. The chair of the reprocessing company, Cogema, warned about the severe financial problems of reneging on reprocessing agreements. NEI Oct

information sources

This listing is our second attempt to produce a short guide to information sources and contacts. If you consider that your group should be represented, or know of another that should be here, PLEASE let us know.

We are trying to make this section up-to-date and reasonably comprehensive, and usually don't have time or don't remember to check these things ourselves: please help!

Almost everyone should have a subscription to Peace News, Atomic Times(!) Routing Out; nuclear power fiends need SCRAM Energy Bulletin and WISE, nuclear weapons people need ADIU, Campaign and Mediawatch. We could go on but these are the journals with more material than we can cover in our issues.

Alternative Times 35 Wedmore St, London NI9, covers alternative energy happenings and more- £3 per year inc. post.

Alternative Research Bulletin lists research projects and ideas looking for workers, who's written what etc. c/o Energy Workshop, Dept. of Physical Sciences, Sunderland Poly, Chester Rd, Sunderland SRY 35D

Anti-Nuclear Campaign has a campaign bulletin for groups, a contacts list and library. Details from ANC, PO Box 216, Sheffield S1.

Armament & Disarmament Information Unit, SPRU, Mantell Building, Sussex University, Brighton, do a bi-monthly bulletin. Its primary function is the collection, collation and dissemination of information relating to defence, disarmament and arms control. The report is free (I think)

Atom is the FREE monthly from the Atomic Energy Authority. Its mostly a propaganda sheet, but has some useful material and lovely glossy pictures. Every home should have one: Atom, Information Services Branch, UKAEA, 11 Charles II St, London SW1.

The BBC Send complaints about no War Game showing, etc, to Head of Programme Correspondence, BBC, Broadcasting House, London W1A 1AA.

British Nuclear Fuels do a very dull newspaper which has the odd useful piece. Its free from BNFL News, Risley, Warrington, England.

British Society for Social Responsibility in Science 9 Poland St, London W1

Barrow Action Group probably know more about Windscale than BNFL: Jean Emery, 29 Longrains Rd, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumb

Campaign Against the Arms Trade has a filing system full of useful things about our militarists. 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1. 01-278-1976.

Campaign Against the Namibian Uranium Contract CANUC c/o 188 North Gower St, London NW1.

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is at 11 Goodwin St, London N4. 01-263-4954. Writing recommended above phoning, they get an awful lot of phone calls!

Campaign! is the new CND groups journal. It is the maximum amount of information possible for its size, free to CND groups, 15p each bulk order- write for details. 11 Goodwin St, London N4.

Concord Film Council 201 Felixstowe Rd, Ipswich, IP3 9BJ. 0473 76012, have huge range of films- send sàe for free pamphlets on power, peace, and/or weapons.

Conservation Society 12 London St, Chertsey, Surrey

Dept of Energy, for all those little nagging worries you might have: Electricity Division, Thames House South Millbank, London SW1 4QJ

Energy Trends comes free from the dept of Energy- pure statistics on energy use and distribution. DP (Direct Mail) Ltd, Unit 4, Mitcham Industrial Estate, Streatham Rd, Mitcham, Surrey.

European Nuclear Disarmament 6 Endsleigh St, London WC1. 01-360-0532

Friends of the Earth have produced a PWR news, and have a lot of useful material: FOE, 9 Poland St, London W1.

Mediawatch aims to co-ordinate a really effective campaign against media bias on the issue of nuclear disarmament. Our particular aim is to help local peace groups to counter-act wilful distortions/smears and inaccuracy due to ignorance, in both local and national media. If you wish to be on our mailing list, please send £2: see for more details. c/o END, 6 Endsleigh St, London WC1

Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons
c/o 120 Edith Rd, London W14

NATTA Network for Alternative Technology and Technological Assessment, does a bi-monthly bulletin of AT news and ideas, and has a lot of useful contacts: NATTA, ATG, Open University, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

Nuclear Incidents The Health and Safety Executive publish a quarterly report on nuclear incidents in Britain, free from H&SE, Public Enquiry Point, Baynards House, 1 Chepstow Place, London W2

PARTIZANS People Against Rio Tinto Zinc and its Subsidiaries do a newsletter and have extensive contacts: 219 Liverpool Rd, London N1.

Peace News for non-violent revolution is a fortnightly, lots of anti-nuke material, events listing, useful articles. 30p, £1.50 for 5-issue trial, £10.80 per year. Peace News, 8 Elm Ave, Nottingham.

Peace Pledge Union, 6 Endsleigh St, London WC1. 01-387-5501.

Peace Tax Campaign Working to end compulsory contributions to death via military spending from taxation. 26 Thurlow Rd, Leicester LE2 1YE

Peace Advertising Campaign co-ordinates the placing of hoarding size adverts on peace around the country- a month of poster space for £33. PAC, PO Box 24 Oxford. Stonefield 686

People Against Dumping on rural areas (PANDORA) Rhiswport Hall, Berriew, Powys WALES. Perhaps the most active and well informed of the waste dumping groups?

Political Ecology Research Group do full-scale scientific reports of interest to our movement: most recently a report on the 1957 Windscale fire. PERG, 34 Cowley Rd, Oxford. 0865 725354

Radiation Hazards Campaign 25 Kestrel Ave Herne Hill, London SE 24

Renewable Energy News is free from the Dept of Energy, and can be useful: from ETSU, RE News, Building 156, AERE Harwell, Didcot, Oxon OX11 0RA

Routing Out Information sheet on waste transportation, information centre and contact point. 61a Strathleven Rd, London SW2.

The Safe Energy Petition c/o 19 Cheyne Walk, London SW3

Schools Against the Bomb King Alfred's school, North End Rd, London NW11.

Scientists Against Nuclear Arms 11 Chapel St, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, Bucks

SCRAM Energy Bulletin is a bi-monthly journal for the anti-nuclear movement. Packed full of material. 30p per issue, £4 per year from SCRAM, 30 Frederick St Edinburgh EH2.

SERA Socialist Environment Resources Association are at 9 Poland St, London W1- quarterly journal, local groups working on aspects of environmental action.

Sizewell Campaign: Either the East Anglian Alliance, Old Post Office, Colchester, Higham, Suffolk, or Stop Sizewell B Assoc, PO Box 9, Leiston, Suffolk.

Students Against Nuclear Energy 9 Poland St, London W1 will direct you to their contacts in colleges, and help with any information.

Undercurrents The magazine of radical alternatives and Community Technology, is about to go monthly: full of useful articles on technological change, reviews etc. 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1. 60p- ask for sub details.

United Nations Association 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A. 01-930-2931

War Resisters International 55 Dawes St, London SE17. 01-703-7189

World Disarmament Campaign 21 Little Russell St, London WC1. 01-660-4712

WISE World Information Service on Energy, 34 Cowley Rd, Oxford OX4, publish a bi-monthly guide to anti-nuclear and alternative energy doings worldwide, distribute Keep It In the Ground (Uranium Mining) and have a news communiques service.