

ANTI-NUCLEAR NETWORK



No. 28 - May/June '93

40p.

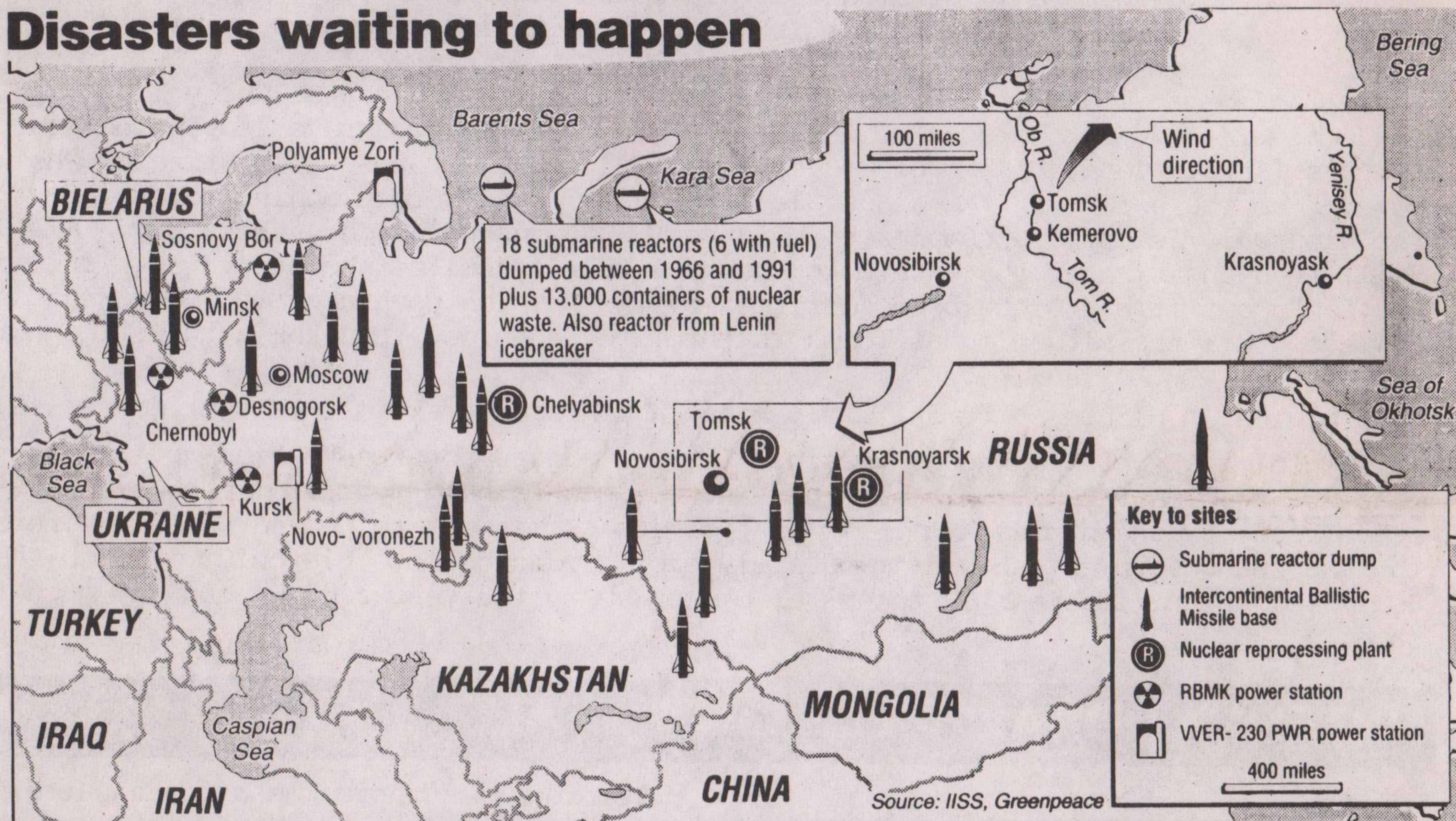
features

Cops called in at BNFL HQ;
Sizewell software risks;
Trawsfynydd finished?

Siberian Sellafield

blows up!

Disasters waiting to happen



The explosion that ripped apart the 'N15' installation of the Russian reprocessing plant at Tomsk 7 on 6th April, apparently dispersed uranium and plutonium into the air and has created an area of contamination beyond the secret facility. The complex, 20km from the city of Tomsk, covers an area the size of Paris.

Although Russian officials and Western pro-nuclear organisations were keen to play down the accident, it is certainly the worst since Chernobyl. Greenpeace in Moscow said that the explosion took place in a stainless steel tank which was buried in the earth and covered with concrete. A rapid increase in temperature occurred when nitric acid was added to solution containing high level nuclear waste, blowing the roof off the tank. The blast sent up a mist of uranium and plutonium aerosols and started a fire. Initial reports spoke of radiation levels twenty times normal and of snow and topsoil being removed for burial. Over a hundred people, including firefighters have been contaminated and "radiation has been scattered over the surrounding countryside" according to Russian officials.

Operations at the Tomsk 7 plant have been carefully guarded since the 1950's when it was constructed to produce plutonium for the Soviet nuclear arsenal. Since that time, Tomsk alone has produced over 50 tonnes of plutonium. Russia currently has the world's largest stockpile of plutonium - an estimated 180 tonnes. Control of this massive stockpile has led to international concern about the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation. Because it is a military facility the International Atomic Energy Agency have no powers these type of plants. David Kidd, the ...continued overleaf.

SIBERIAN SELLAFIELD BLOWS UP continued from page 1...

Agency's Director of Public Information admitted they had "no knowledge" of safety systems at the Tomsk 7 plant.

In spite of the recent thaw in the Cold War, Russia has continued to separate plutonium in factories at Tomsk and Chelyabinsk, although for the past year Tomsk is said to have switched to 'civilian' work. It is also believed that plutonium separation continues at Krasnoyarsk in Siberia, where a major new reprocessing plant called RT-2 is being built.

In 1990 two nuclear reactors at the Tomsk 7 plant were closed down as a result of public pressure after seven people were admitted to hospital with radiation poisoning. Doctors also identified 38 other people who registered high levels of radioactivity after they had eaten game caught in the forest near the plant. Rivers nearby, including the River Tom that runs through Tomsk, are dangerously contaminated with nuclear wastes. Recently Oleg Kotkov, chair of the Tomsk Parliamentary Environment Commission said that "a large amount of plutonium from dismantled weapons has been delivered to Tomsk 7 and the way it is being kept is bordering on a crime."

A similar chemical accident at a nuclear waste plant took place at Chelyabinsk in 1957, and contaminated a large area of the Urals. The accident was revealed in the West by the Russian dissident Dr Zhores Medvedev in 1973. Nuclear bosses in Britain, who had covered up the extent of the Windscale fire in 1957 and were planning to expand the Windscale/Sellafield complex by building THORP, rushed to deny the story. Sir John Hill, then-chairman of the UK atomic Energy Authority called the story "pure science fiction", but it has since been confirmed by the Russian government. Today Medvedev believes that the situation at Tomsk is far more dangerous than the authorities admit.

"The plutonium plants at Tomsk, Chelyabinsk and Krasnoyarsk must be shut down", says Dmitry Tolmatsky of Greenpeace Russia. "it is madness for the Russian government to continue to separate plutonium in these secret plants held over from the Cold War. We are already awash in plutonium. As part of its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation the Russian government should immediately stop producing more plutonium." With the Sellafield plant storing 100 tonnes of plutonium by the year 2000 we can say much the same.

Source: WISE Amsterdam.

INTERNATIONAL

Germany

-19.1.93: Around 500 demonstrators tried to block a transport of low/medium level radioactive waste. The transport was coming from Mol in Belgium to the so-called "Interim" storage site near the little village of Gorleben. The content of the casks was unknown and the strong local anti-nuke groups were outraged. However, police broke up the demonstration with tear-gas and batons, because both the federal & state-government gave their go-ahead, even though the state government (Lower Saxony) is publically against nuclear power. The environmental secretary is the former head of Greenpeace-Germany.

-Jan 93: More successful was a protest which didn't even reach the streets. The site in Gorleben is also earmarked for "interim"-storage of spent reactor fuel. But for 10 years the resistance has been so strong that the complex is still empty.

Towards Xmas there was a fourth attempt to send the first spent fuel to Gorleben. But groups throughout the region made it perfectly clear that they wouldn't shy away from militant actions to stop the transport ever reaching the site. In due course the spent fuel stayed where it was!

Source: WIGA, c/o Umweltzentrum, Scharnhorststr 57, 4400 Munster, Germany.

Czech republic

Opposition to nuclear power is growing in the Czech republic, particularly in the region around the planned Temelin nuclear plant. There have been several demonstrations in Prague and civil disobedience and blockades are planned at the reactor site.

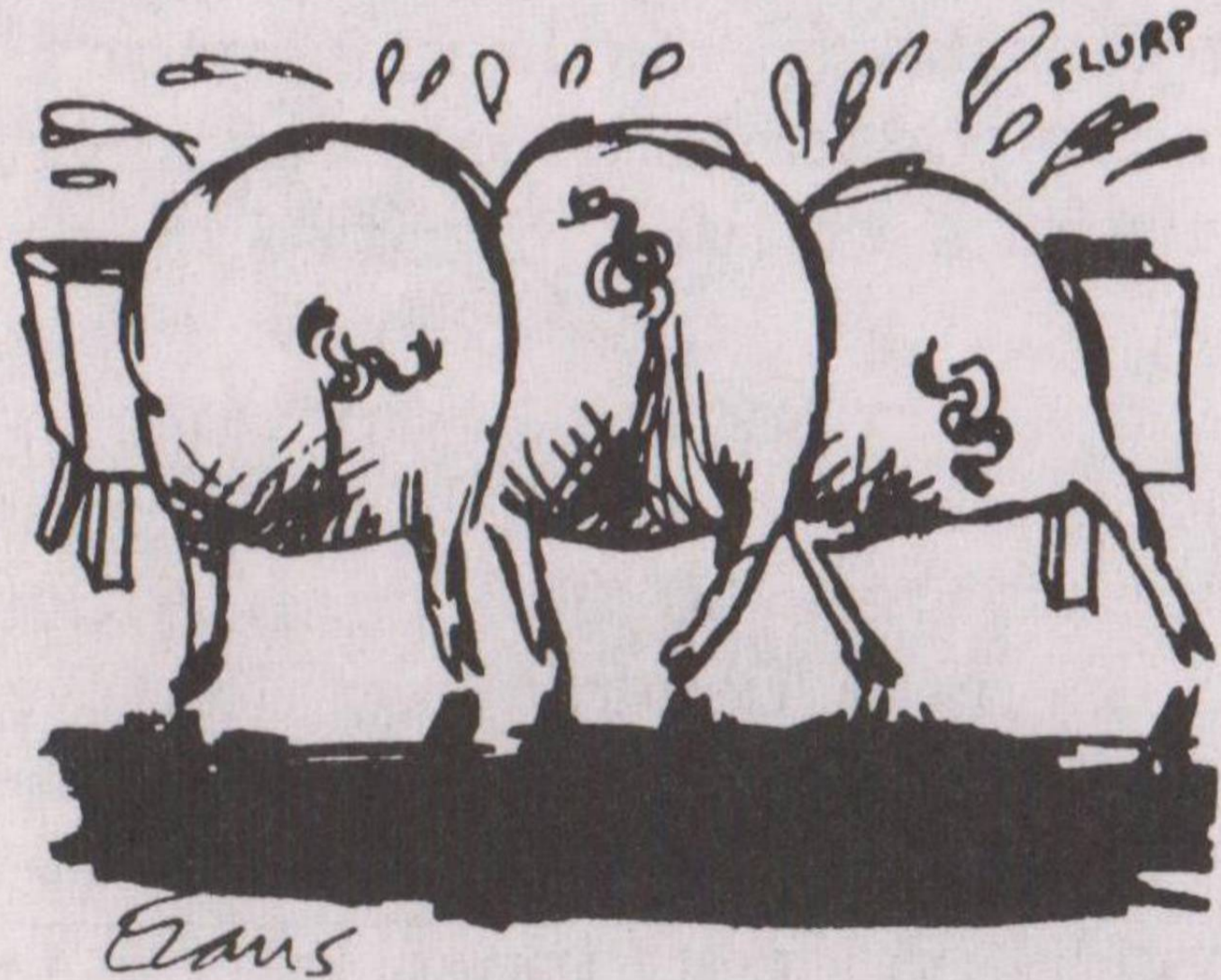
In February the Czech government signed an agreement with the US company Westinghouse to complete the plant. The original design of the plant is the Soviet VVER 1000/320 model which has a number of design flaws.

COPS CALLED IN AT BNFL HQ.

Cheshire police are investigating allegations of corruption at British Nuclear Fuels headquarters at Risley. BNFL Company Secretary and Director, Corporate Affairs, Harold Bolter, not content with his £85,000 salary, resigned after admitting that he allowed the company to pay for £10,000 worth of repairs to his house. Brian Kerr, a senior manager in employee communication, was sacked after taking advantage of a similar home improvement plan. A third employee, who was under investigation topped himself. Bolter is also a Director of NIREX.

New captain of the ship of fools John Guinness, looks set to continue the cosy relationship with the Tory government. He used to be a Permanent Secretary at the Department of Energy before becoming Chairman of BNFL.

His predecessor, Sir Christopher Harding, has other fish to gobble up as a Director of Hanson. Hanson are known to be after any rich pickings from the privatisation of British Coal. Last year, as Chairman of BNFL he took £191,675 in salary, a cool £30,000 up on the previous year.



Neville Chamberlain, Chief Executive of BNFL, appeased the taxpayer by only taking £180,000 in pay last year. Dr William Wilkinson, the Deputy Chief Executive has cleanly shaven off £170,000 before retiring. He also took an interest free loan of £2000 from the company for "housing assistance to staff who have been relocated". From his retirement home 'Dun-Radiating' he still has some half life left as a Non-Executive Director.

Non-Executive Director, Baroness Denton of Wakefield goes off to be a Government Whip in the House of Lords, and a junior minister at the Department of Trade and Industry. She claims to be the chair of an organisation called Women on the Move against Cancer - cancer on the move being a speciality of BNFL's Sellafield plant.

Sizewell software risk

Concern is growing over the safety of Sizewell B's software based Reactor Protection System (RPS). The RPS is a computer system which will be the nuclear plant's main defence against a catastrophic accident.

Computer experts, including the British Computer Society believe that the RPS is too complex: It is made up of over 300 microprocessors and includes in excess of 100,000 lines of computer code. It is generally acknowledged that when programmers write software there will be between 30-100 faults for every thousand lines of code, after testing this can be reduced to 10. Some of these faults can be errors in the functions of the software - so that the wrong thing may happen in a hazard situation. So, even after testing there may be over 1,000 faults in the RPS.

Unfortunately, that is not the end of the story. With so many input signals coming into the computer from the reactor the number of possible combinations of inputs cannot be fully tested. It has been estimated that to test all the possible permutations would take longer than the life of the universe!

These concerns led to a seminar three months ago organised by the British Computer Society for management of Nuclear Electric. They concluded that:

- 1: The computer system is too complex and could result in a major error.
- 2: The second, 'hard wired', protection system should be strengthened.
- 3: Safety compliance systems should be the latest design.
- 4: The testing procedure should be extended.

Since that time the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate decided to ignore the BCS recommendations and say the Reactor Protection System is safe. In the words of the scientific philosopher Francis Bacon "A man who begins with certainties shall end in doubts". Trust Nuclear Electric to disregard 300 years of scientific method.

Nick.

Contact: Shut Down Sizewell Campaign, Tudor House, Dunwich, Suffolk IP17 3DU.

Source: New Scientist.

ANTI-NUCLEAR NETWORK national meeting - 8th May: Reportback

The meeting, in Leeds, was attended by activists from London, Manchester, Otley, and Liverpool. Although not well attended a useful discussion was held.

Networking

Everyone agreed on the importance of spreading information and ideas, and co-operating for successful direct action. Everyone at the meeting was involved in general anarchist, libertarian socialist and direct action environmental groups. Graham from Liverpool described how Merseywatch was formed to campaign against nuclear and toxic waste pollution of the Irish Sea. Groups from Wales, the North West and Ireland are involved and the campaign now has an office with a fax & a phone and produces a regular bulletin. Recently they had taken part in an action against ICI's Castner Keller plant against CFC production. The company got an injunction against Earth First! and three named activists - but the protest went ahead anyway.

There was a general feeling that people were going beyond single issue campaigns and getting involved in general ecological campaigns like Merseywatch and Earth First! or more class struggle orientated groups like local Solidarity Groups. What then is the Anti-Nuclear Network's role - given these positive developments in the environmental movement?

The importance of Networking was stressed. None of us felt that nuclear power was an issue separate from other ecological issues, but part of a pattern of environmental destruction in a capitalist society. It was recognised that big companies, such as BNFL, MacDonalds, ICI and Tarmac were using similar methods to frustrate environmental protests - ie injunctions, libel laws, phone tapping, private investigators and hiring security thugs. In response the sharing of information and mutual aid amongst all those opposed to environmental destruction was vital.

We discussed ideological differences in the environmental movement. Some felt that general networks eg Merseywatch had less ideological differences than previous single-issue campaigns - people worked in different ways, but were mutually tolerant of one another. Other people felt that tactics such as taking part in government inquiries diverted time, energy and money

from direct action. Some felt that the explicit non-violence stance of Earth First! at recent demonstrations against the timber trade in Liverpool would leave them dangerously exposed, given the likely level of cop/security thug violence. Most people saw a role for monkeywrenching in the movement.

"Partnership for change" conference

This is a follow up to the UN Earth Summit in Rio and will take place in Manchester from 18-22 September. The 500 'invited' politicians, businessmen and a handful of tame NGO's will discuss Agenda 21 on the environment. It looks set to be a big media hype pseudo green jamboree. Ideas are split between a "Stop the Summit" counter demonstration and an "alternative summit" putting forward our views, or possibly both. A meeting in Manchester on 17 May will discuss a response.

Nuclear transport

Tricia, from Manchester Nukewatch described how nuclear weapons convoys have been tracked and followed from Faslane to Burghfield. Home Office regulations on what to do in the event of an accident were suspended in 1989 and haven't been updated. Local authorities are supposed to be responsible - but Merseyside for example has only 6 trained fire officers and no police, and no money to plan for nuclear emergencies. The Emergency planning officer of Glasgow council estimated that 60,000 people could be effected by a convoy accident.

The London Anti-Nuclear Network group & CND had been spotting nuclear trains in the South East region. (see article)

There is a national Nukewatch day of action on 19 June. Tel 071-700 4524.

Sellafield

The campaign against Sellafield will go on whether or not THORP gets the go ahead. At the moment changes in German federal law may put several BNFL contracts in jeopardy. We need a specific response if and when THORP gets the go ahead.

Menwith Hill

Pete, from Otley Peace Campaign described the campaign that has been going on against the US spy base at Menwith Hill. People have been trespassing onto the base on a regular basis and have managed to challenge the by-laws. See page 7 for action.

HAVE YOU SEEN ONE OF THESE?

For the past two months North London Anti-Nuclear Network and London Region CND have been monitoring the movements of nuclear waste trains in the South East. We have been able to draw up this picture of their movements:

Bradwell Usually one flask leaves Southminster (Essex) at 12.51pm, is spotted at Shenfield about 1.40pm and arrives at Stratford, East London about 2.15pm. on Thursday.

Sizewell Up to three flasks leave Saxmundham (Suffolk) at about 4pm on Thursday. They wait at Ipswich until about 8.30pm, and arrive at Stratford at about 10.20pm.

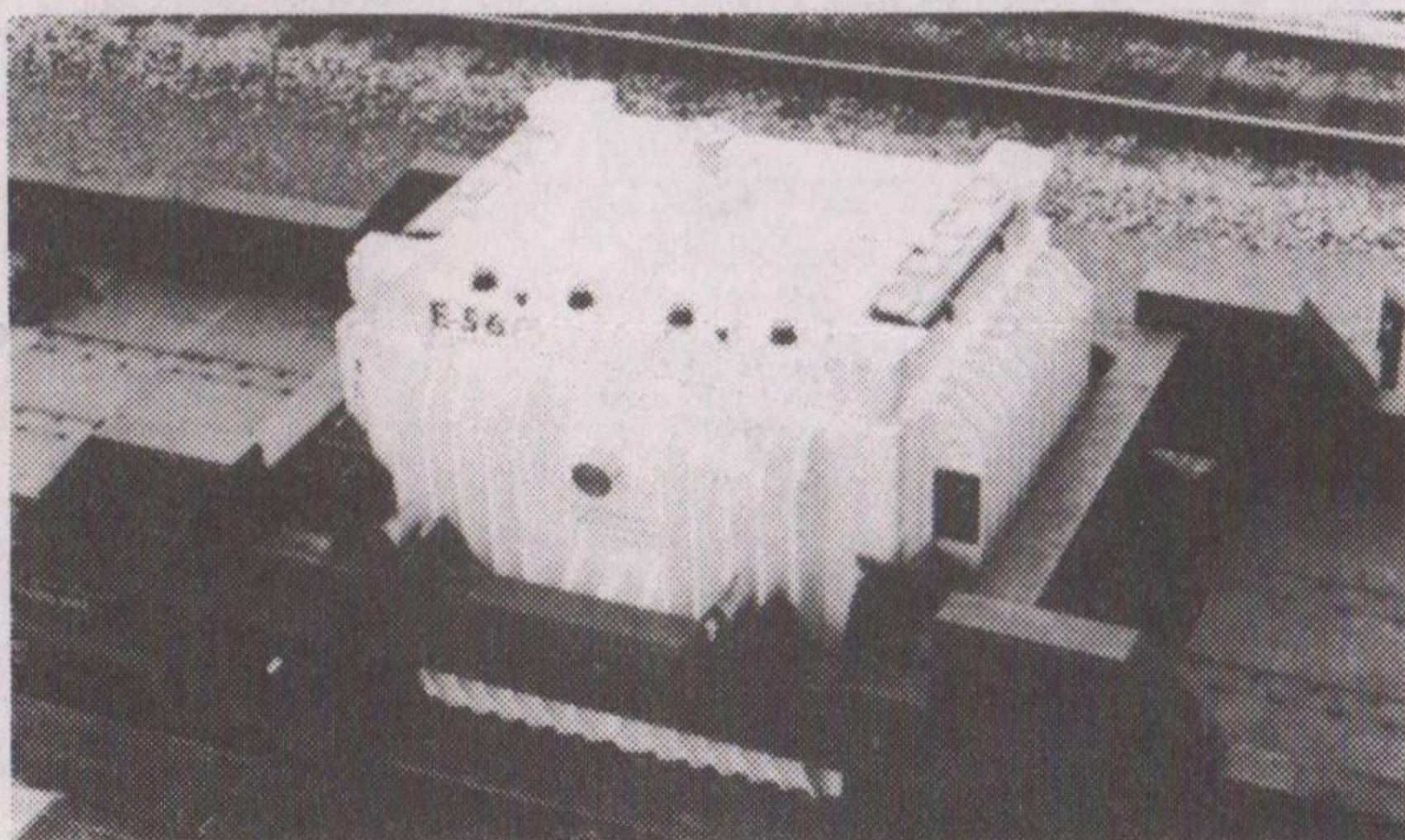
Sometimes the trains join up and sometimes they run straight through, mainly using the North London line to Willesden junction.

Dungeness Leaves Dungeness about 12.30pm, passes through Seven Oaks (Kent) about 2.20pm. Stands at Hither Green until about 9.30pm and then joins up with Sizewell/Bradwell train at Willesden.

Dover Continental flasks of nuclear waste are brought in on the SNCF ferry "Nord Pas de Calais" from Dunkirk about 30 times a year.

*** ACTION *** Thurs 20 May - assemble 9pm at Stratford station, east London ****

BRITISH NUCLEAR WASTE



A MAGNOX SPENT FUEL FLASK

FROM : Magnox nuclear power stations at Berkeley, Bradwell, Dungeness, Hinkley, Hunterston, Oldbury, Sizewell, Trawsfynydd and Wylfa.

TO : Sellafield in Cumbria, via Bristol, Birmingham, London, Ipswich and Preston.

CONSTRUCTION:
Eight foot cube with 14" steel walls.



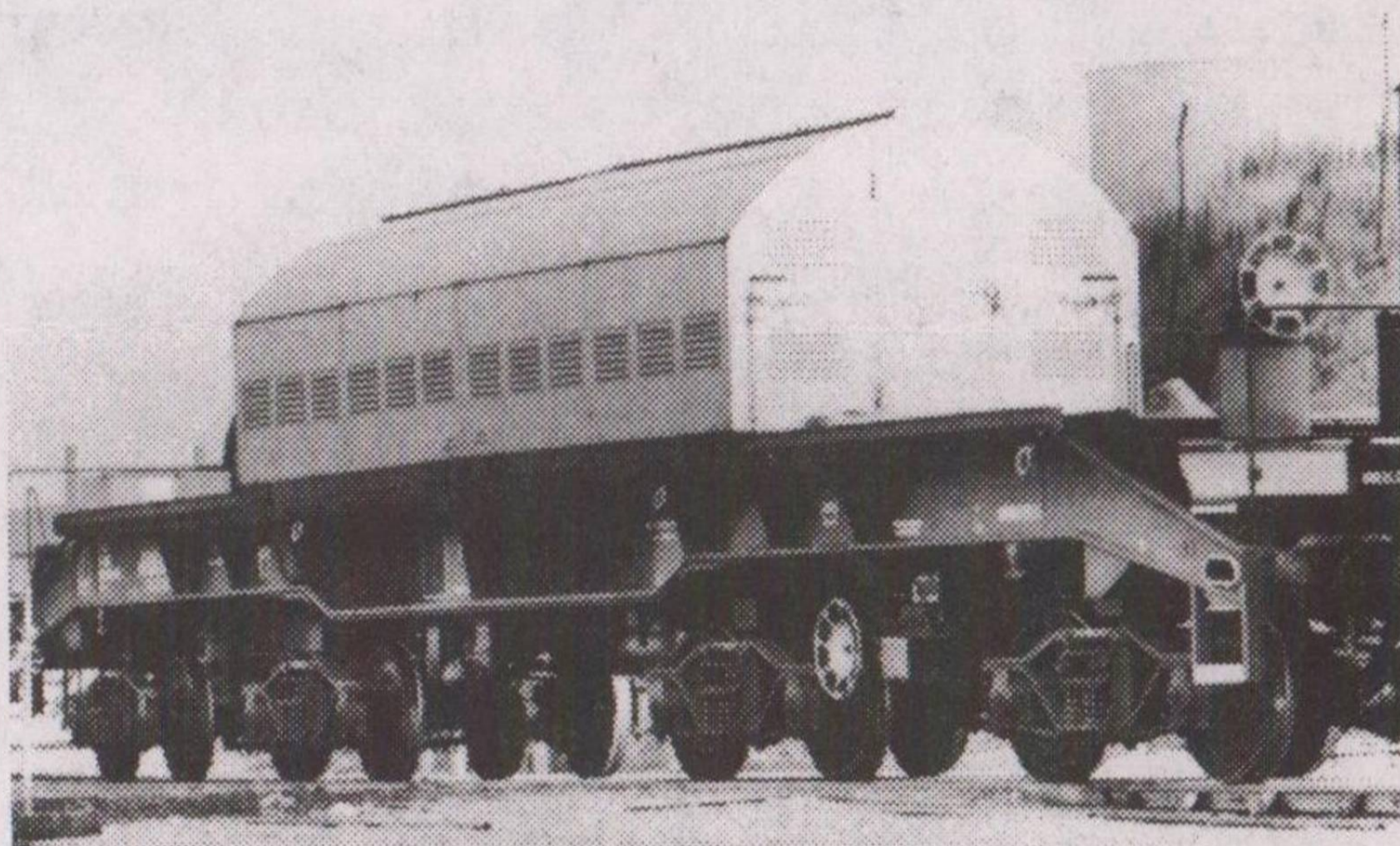
AN A.G.R. SPENT FUEL FLASK

FROM : Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors at Dungeness, Hartlepool, Hinkley, Heysham, Hunterston and Torness.

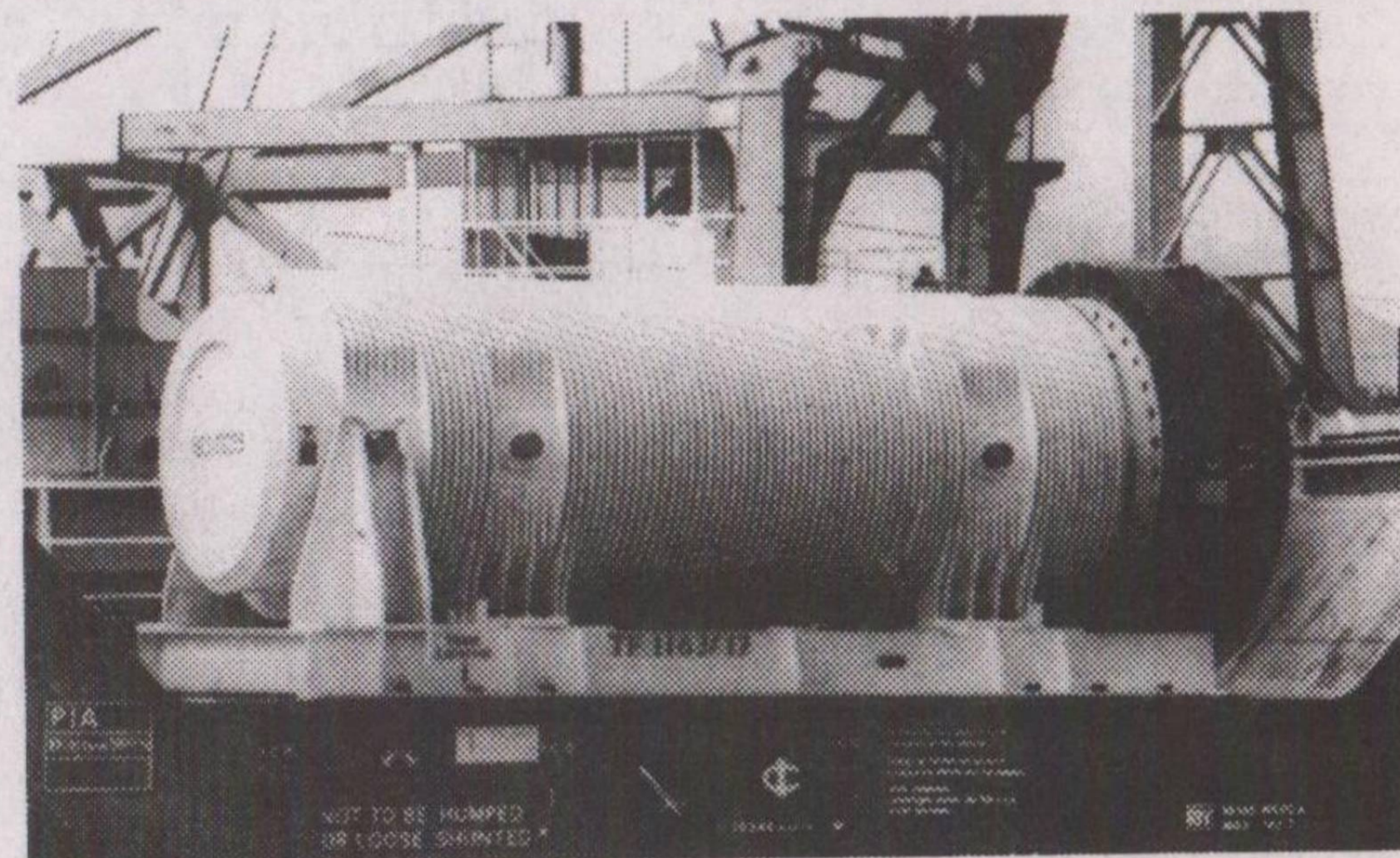
TO : Sellafield via Carlisle, Bristol, Birmingham, Edinburgh and London.

CONSTRUCTION :
Eight foot cube with 4" steel walls and a 5" lead liner.

IMPORTED NUCLEAR WASTE



AN N.T.L. FLASK



AN EXCELLOX FLASK

FROM : Foreign Pressurised Water and Boiling Water Reactors in Japan, Germany, Switzerland and Holland - via Dover, Barrow, Immingham, Southampton, Hull and other British ports.

TO : Sellafield in Cumbria for indefinite storage awaiting construction of THORP (Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant).

CONSTRUCTION :
Sixteen foot long cylinder with 3" thick steel walls and a 7" lead liner.

NEWS ROUND-UP

- 6 -

April

- 2: President Clinton promised \$25Bn aid to improve safety at 19 Chernobyl type reactors in Russia.
- 2: The Government is planning to privatise AEA Technology (the former UK Atomic Energy Authority).
- 2: A Russian official inquiry found that the US nuclear powered sub which collided with a Russian submarine, missed the Russian vessel's nuclear reactor by only 20m.
- 3: Blue Circle Cement are moving 150 workers from their HQ next to Aldermaston after radioactive contamination was found.
- 3: Pressure is mounting on North Korea after its decision to pull out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty & refusal to allow IAEA inspection of two nuclear plants.
- 6: After 10 years, & \$27Bn paid out, on the "Star Wars" project SDI there is not one viable component of the system.
- 6: International protests against nuclear traffic may force the Govt to abandon THORP.
- 8: Egypt's nuclear power agency denied that a radon release was responsible for 1000 cases of nausea & fainting amongst teenage girls.
- 9: Large quantities of plutonium have been flown into Wick airport in Scotland in containers only designed to withstand a 30mph crash.
- 10: Maintenance costs in the French nuclear industry are out of control and could reach £1.25Bn per year by the year 2000, according to a leaked EDF document.
- 13: Over 600lb of uranium & strontium has disappeared from Lithuania's Ignalina reactor.
- 13: Chernobyl number 1 reactor was shut down because of a turbine fault.
- 13: An unexplained "accident" at Brazil's Angra 1 reactor caused a rise in radiation and an indefinite shut-down of the plant.
- 13: Nuclear Electric & Westinghouse are trying to sell 2 Sizewell type PWR's to Taiwan.
- 17: The UK Atomic Energy Authority was fined £8000 + £10,000 costs after 2 workers at Harwell were exposed to radiation last April whilst decommissioning a reactor.
- 19: A Tibetan human rights group claims that China has been carrying out extensive nuclear activities, including reprocessing & weapons production in Tibetan areas of western China since the early 1960's.
- 20: A UN team arrived in Baghdad to ship Iraq's stockpile of uranium out of the country.

March

- 4: Bob Hodson Smith was sacked by a computer firm subcontracted to Nuclear Electric after he revealed that a new reactor safety system had not been properly tested.
- 6: Three new reports have confirmed the link between childhood cancers and fathers who were exposed to radiation in the nuclear industry.
- 8: Having abandoned plans for a Fast Breeder Reactor at Dounreay, scientist are now trying to build a wave power generator.
- 10: Micheal Heseltine has refused to close ageing Magnox reactors to increase the market for British coal.
- 26: Extreme scepticism has met President de Klerk's claim that South Africa's nuclear capability was limited to 6 atom bombs & that there was no foreign help.
- 26: Reactor parts deemed unsafe by the French EDF are to be used in the Sizewell PWR.
- 30: A German federal investigator reported 158 nuclear smuggling attempts last year.

February

- 1: A peace camp has been set up outside the Sosnovy Bor nuke plant near St Petersburg.
- 1: Armenia is to reopen a reactor shut down for safety reasons after the 1988 'quake.
- 8: Following a world-wide outcry Japan has abandoned plan to ship plutonium from Sellafield.
- 12: A massive 1000 MBq of radiation was released during work on dismantling a disused reprocessing plant at Sellafield. "Nuclear Jack" Cunningham, who was visiting the plant at the time but wasn't told of the leak is said to be "furious".
- 16: Iran's President has pledged to finish the German-built Bushehr reactor abandoned in 1979.
- 22: Heavy water leaked from the Atuchi 1 reactor in Lima, 100km NW of Buenos Aires.
- 26: The Hunting Brae consortium apointed to run Aldermaston was involved in serious safety violation during the construction of the Comanche Peak reactor in Texas.

ECO! page

At our recent national meeting it was decided to devote some of the newsletter to general ecological/political campaigns. We've never seen the campaign against nuclear power as separate from the struggle against capitalism and for an ecological libertarian socialist society, so this isn't a big change. The emphasis will be on direct action against those whose profits are destroying the planet.

LETTERS

Dear ANN,

Greetings from TWYFORD DOWN ALERT!

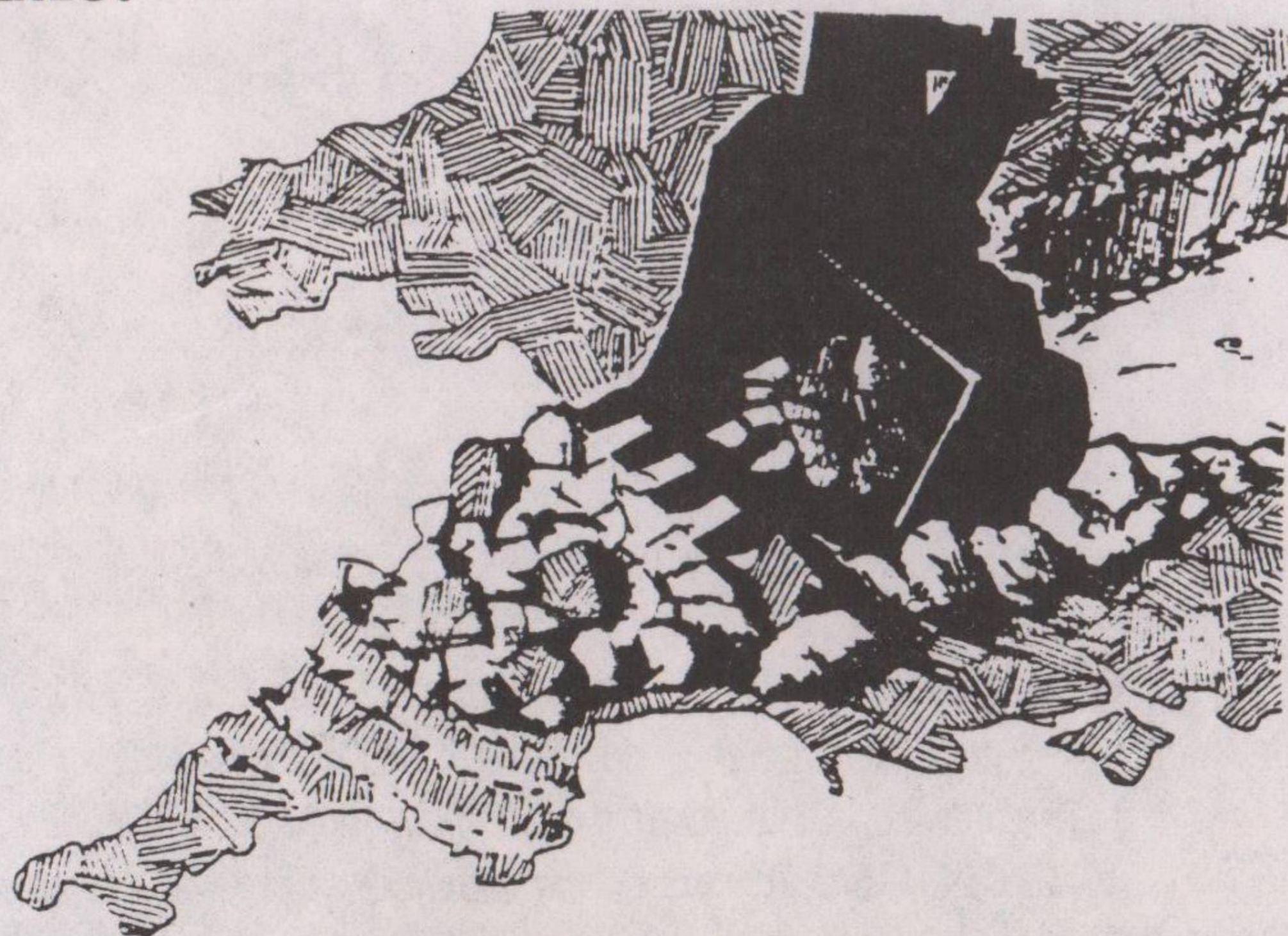
A massive anti-roads movement is gathering around Twyford Down at the moment and people are determined to make the government's road programme STOP HERE. Please read the enclosed direct action leaflet and information on contractors Mott MacDonald, the British Road Federation and security thugs at the site Group 4. Group 4's free phone number is 0800-440 000 - use a public phone and leave it off the hook.

Our pleas for money are desperately important. Pub runs for Twyford work really well. Every little bit helps as we are seriously skint.

The camp is well organised and comfortable but is due to be evicted. Please do as much as you can to help. Our country is seriously under threat now from the Dept of Transport and we must make the anti-roads movement even bigger.

With lots of love. BECKY

NO COMPROMISE IN DEFENCE OF MOTHER EARTH!
Contact TDA on 0258 - 73795 for latest info.



Squatters needed

A number of desirable residences in the leafy London suburb of Wanstead are now available for immediate occupation. The properties have been bought under compulsory purchase orders so that the D. of Transport can put in a link road to the M11. This road would cut Leytonstone in half and is opposed by local people. Tenants and owner occupiers have been given notice to quit but some are now squatting in their own homes. If you can help out by squatting a house, with supportive neighbours - and stop these beautiful 1930's houses being trashed by DoT subbie thugs contact Patsie Braga 081-530 8369 (who is squatting her own home).

Financial appeal

WISE News Communique is the only world-wide newsletter on anti-nuclear power topics. At the moment they are suffering a financial crisis. Send donations to:
WISE, PO Box 18185, NL-1001 ZB, Amsterdam.

Anti-Atom Aktuell

Would any London subscriber be prepared to translate articles in German from this magazine.



Resources

Please send SAE when asking for leaflets:

"Coal & Energy Policy" pamphlet (£3) and leaflet - Yorks & Humbs Green Party, 16b Byram buildings, Station St, Huddersfield HD1 1ND.

"How to beat Poll Tax jail threat" leaflet & regular "Penguin" bulletin - Hornsey & Wood Green Solidarity Group, PO Box 2401, London N8 9LR.

McLibel Support Campaign

Two unemployed members of London Greenpeace are being sued for libel by the multi-national hamburger chain MacDonalds. They are defending themselves without legal aid. Contact London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1. Day of action - 16 October.

Events

Sat 3 July - Point the finger at Filingdale.
Sun 4 July - Independence Day at Menwith Hill. Contact John Brierley 0422-883 927.
July-Aug - Disarmament camp in Sweden, lots of ongoing actions, disarming weapons etc. Linköping Peace Camp, Akvarn, S-36070 Aseda, Sweden. T +46-481-66052.



Around a hundred people demonstrated against the restart of Trawsfynydd nuclear power station on 13th March. The ageing Magnox reactor, which is nearly 30 years old, has been closed for two years because of safety fears.

Dr Chris Busby, of the Wales Green Party, chained himself to the gates. Jill Stallard of CND Cymru describes the scene: "It was a lovely day. A couple of mini-buses brought some Merseyside CND'ers down with their children. John Ellis, station engineer came out to talk to us (poor disillusioned chap) and the police took hours to come and then ate their sandwiches."

Nuclear Electric's safety case has not been helped by the discovery that two tie-rods holding the reactor core in shape broke because they were made of the wrong steel alloy. The information was contained in an internal Nuclear Electric document leaked to the Wales Green Party. John Large, an independent nuclear expert

said "These two alloys are as different as chalk and cheese and could make the difference between a tolerable and an intolerable accident." He estimated that a quarter of the 800 tie-rods could be made from the wrong steel. "There has been a failure in quality control and construction that raises considerable doubt about Nuclear Electric's safety case."

Meanwhile CND Cymru have protested strongly as the mad nukillers tried to put themselves forward for an award run by the Wales Tourist Board. As Jill Stallard says "Trawsfynydd and Wylfa are nothing to glorify. There will be no visitors to Wales if we continue with this abuse of our environment and people, there will be no Wales Tourist Board, no Wales."

Source: Cambian News. For more info: CND Cymru, Nantgaredig, Cynghordy, Llanymddyfri, Dyfed SA20 0LR.

The Anti-Nuclear Network

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

Thanks to Nick, Sheffield - £5; Mark, Wolverhampton - £4; Jake, Faslane - £10.50; J.L., Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition - £10; Stephen, Mid-Somerset CND - £20; Martin, Tavistock Peace Action - £5; AK Press - £2; SW anarchists - £2; Sheila, Rye - £10.

All correspondence to:

Anti-Nuclear Network,
c/o 265 Seven Sisters Rd,
London N4 2DE.

or annews on Greennet.

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