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1. Gordon puts his foot in it

"We have made the decision to continue with nuclear power," (1) said the new Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, at his first Prime Minister’s Question Time on 4th July. With those ten words, he managed to break the law, sabotage an ongoing public consultation and do a U-turn on his promise to listen to the people. As head of government, Brown's meant to be abiding by a high court ruling that says the government can't legally make a decision on whether to build new nuclear power stations before a proper public consultation has been carried out. Greenpeace, which brought the high court action which led to the ruling commented that: “it now looks like this consultation is as much of a sham as the last one; the government seems to have already made up its mind on nukes, before the consultation's even really underway”. (2)

Greenpeace lawyers wrote to the Prime Minister and demanded that he "immediately and unreservedly withdraw the government's decision to support the building of a new generation of nuclear power stations," and that the new consultation be abandoned. (3)

The Observer commented that the government's energy policy was in disarray again. Greenpeace, warned it could take legal action again. Executive Director, John Sauven, said people engaged in this process already felt the government was only doing it because it was ordered to by a high court judge, but it has, in fact, already made up its mind. 'Coming from a Prime Minister who said he was going to listen to the people, this is quite shocking.' (4) The Guardian reported that civil servants were “having kittens”. (5)

Clearly the Prime Minister had to find a way to withdraw the statement. So at Prime Minister’s Questions on 11th July, Jamie Reed MP, former BNFL press officer, asked a planted question about nuclear power. Gordon Brown looked down and read from a statement, saying he'd only decide after the consultation. Conservative Blogger, Iain Dale, called it “a stealth withdrawal” of his earlier statement. (6) Mr Brown emphasised that the Government will make a decision in the autumn, after, and in the light of, the consultation. (7)

(1) Hansard 4th July 2007, Cmn 955
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070704/debtext/70704-0003.htm
(2) Greenpeace UK website 6th July 2007
(3) Letter from Greenpeace lawyers to Gordon Brown dated 5th July 2007
The new UK department for business, enterprise and regulatory reform (DBERR), which has recently substituted the DTI, has approved all four applications for the opening phase of generic design assessment for new nuclear reactors. The designs eligible to go into the first stage of the pre-licensing process, were put forward by AECL, Areva, GE-Hitachi and Toshiba - Westinghouse. If successful in phase one, which includes an assessment of each design’s safety case, a design may be able to progress to phase two of the generic design assessment to be assessed in more detail. The DBERR added that it is likely that only three designs will make it to phase two due to resource constraints of the regulators. (1)

The Daily Telegraph said ‘sources close to the industry’ expect the Canadian Advanced Candu reactor (ACR) to be the design which is dropped. (2) While few people doubt the Government will conclude more power stations should be built, companies are having to put time and money into positioning themselves for the work with no certainty it will happen. The cost of the reactor design pre-licensing process could be as much as £10m, according to the Telegraph. Nuclear insiders said the position will become more difficult in the next few months because building reactors is a very long and complex process. Certain parts can take years to make, so have to be ordered early. While the cost of pre-licensing is relatively small for the size of the companies involved, ordering parts can run into hundreds of millions.

Nucleonics Week gave a contradictory assessment, saying that while the industry feels justified in paying the relatively small amounts of money for UK reactor design assessments, site studies, and other new project pre-development costs, it is conscious that the really big investment decisions will only have to be taken toward 2012 as the first projects approach the start of construction, and a number of "blocks" to new UK nuclear construction will have to be cleared before then. (3)

The lack of certainty about long-term carbon pricing is a key block to investors’ confidence in new nuclear construction, according to British Energy, and further clarity is needed on decommissioning and waste management arrangements. But Peter Bird, director of investment banking at Rothschild said it is the carbon price that will be crucial. At the moment, the private sector and existing suppliers would be extremely reluctant to enter into a long-term investment which was critically dependent on the cost of carbon. But by 2011, there may be enough confidence about the cost of carbon to make people take the plunge and invest.

Meanwhile Scottish & Southern Energy and Centrica, are reported to have teamed up to submit a joint proposal to British Energy about building a new generation of nuclear power stations. The three companies would be able to form a British consortium. The proposal is one of a number being considered by the board of British Energy. German power giants E.On and RWE and their French counterpart EdF have submitted proposals in recent weeks. Vattenfall, the Swedish nuclear company, currently struggling to recover its reputation in Germany after a string of incidents, is also understood to have expressed an interest. (4)
Areva, the French nuclear group, is understood not to have submitted a proposal. It recently signed up six companies as possible users of its European Pressure Reactor design, including Suez, the French-Belgian nuclear utility (5) EDF, E.On, RWE, Iberdrola, which has just bought Scottish Power. (6)

(5) See http://www.nuclearspin.org/index.php/Electrabel
(6) See http://www.nuclearspin.org/index.php/Iberdrola

3. Nuclear waste row

The row over the Scottish Executive’s refusal to support the nuclear waste disposal consultation has been rumbling on. Writing in The Scotsman, Gordon Mackerron, chair of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM), which held its last meeting on 15th June, accused Scottish Ministers of putting at risk CoRWM's whole package of recommendations. (1) He stressed the need to deal with waste which already exists today, or will be an inevitable consequence of decommissioning. Mackerron said this waste is “entirely separate from any waste that would result if the nuclear programme were extended”. CoRWM has always stressed that the ethics and desirability of producing yet more waste should be subject to a separate assessment process.

Bearing in mind that existing waste cannot be un-invented, Mackerron said no UK community should be denied the opportunity to voice its views on disposal, neither should it be prevented from participating in the process to determine what the benefits of helping to address the nuclear legacy might be or how decisions on siting should be reached.

He also warned against cherry picking from CoRWM's “interdependent and inseparable package of measures” lest the whole ball of string unravels, setting us back to where we were before CoRWM was formed. It has taken fifty years to get this far and it could easily take a further fifty to put in place all the components for geological disposal.

CoRWM recommended a security-led review of interim storage for radioactive waste, which could be required for up to 100 years and continuing research into the areas of uncertainty surrounding disposal. Mackerron himself has highlighted the lack of any visible progress in these areas, so the UK Government itself has left itself open to the accusation that it is cherry-picking from CoRWM’s recommendations. (2)

Richard Lochhead, Scottish Secretary for Environment said the new Scottish government remains fully committed to working closely with the UK government in important aspects of radioactive waste policy and to supporting CoRWM’s recommendations on interim storage and further joint research on other management options. But it does not agree on long-term geological disposal of such waste believing it to be an “out-of-sight, out-of-mind policy” which should not extend to Scotland. (3)
The Executive’s announcement was also attacked by councillors in Cumbria who have accused Scottish ministers of being "parochial" and "entrenched". Timothy Heslop, the executive member on Cumbria County Council for economic regeneration and nuclear issues, said: "If the Scots are taking the view that they are, then let them accept that their waste is not coming across the Border." He added that Cumbria will debate its position after the summer break, but that there was a cross-party consensus among both the Tory-Lib Dem coalition on the council and the Labour opposition that the Scottish waste should not be allowed to remain long term. Tim Knowles, the Labour nuclear spokesman at Cumbria, said: "Given that Scotland has taken against nuclear across the board, I'm quite happy for Scotland to look after their own nuclear waste. The CoRWM was actually a very good consultation. If the Scottish position wasn't so entrenched then there would be room for some movement." (4) Scotland's two operational nuclear power plants currently send spent fuel to Sellafield for reprocessing.

The UK Government’s consultation, (5) which the Scottish Executive is refusing to take part in, is about how to go about calling for expressions of interest from communities interested in hosting a geological disposal facility – it is not about gathering views on how to deal with existing nuclear waste which Gordon MacKerron appears to suggest. Since the Executive has decided that nowhere in Scotland will be offering to host a nuclear waste dump, and believes that public opinion in Scotland supports that view, its position seems perfectly valid. (6) The Scottish National Party has a long history of opposing nuclear power in general and reprocessing in particular and supporting above-ground storage of nuclear waste at the site where it is produced. According to Scotland on Sunday Ministers are suspicious that the nuclear waste consultation is aimed at justifying the case for building more nuclear plants in addition to dealing with waste.

Meanwhile Greenpeace has warned that communities thinking of bidding to host a nuclear waste dump could be left financially ruined despite the promise of huge Government subsidies. Winning the bidding competition could end up being a poisoned chalice. Greenpeace nuclear advisor Jean McSorley - who lives in Cumbria - claims that apart from the obvious environmental dangers of hosting radioactive waste civic leaders should think about the long-term economic effects of their area being essentially marketed as a nuclear dumping ground. The financial incentives need to be balanced against any detrimental impact on other investments. McSorley says “I can't see businesses wanting to invest in an area associated with the stigma of being the world's largest nuclear waste disposal site.” (7) The board of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), has said a nuclear waste repository in Caithness would harm efforts to regenerate the economy after the rundown of Dounreay. (8)

The NDA is advertising for someone to lead its repository programme. The authority has created the role of Repository Project Director, to be based at Westlakes, and needs someone who can handle controversy. The successful candidate will be someone with “substantial, relevant and broad-based professional experience in radioactive waste management” and who can “handle public and stakeholder engagement on contentious projects.” (9)

The irony of a situation in which the Government has launched a consultation on nuclear waste disposal with a lot of talk about openness, at the same time as incorporating Nirex into the NDA in rather a “ham-fisted” and secretive way has not been lost on Nuclear Engineering International (NEI) magazine. It leaves the process open to legal challenges, and a real danger we will see a “re-run of the last repository failure”. The magazine says CoRWM points out that the trust it has built up is fragile, and it is “not persuaded” that the re-vamped CoRWM will ensure a continuation of public and stakeholder trust. This situation in which trust is draining away is exacerbated by the fact that there are no proposed changes to NDA’s remit, meaning it has no
clear statutory duty for the long-term management of radioactive waste. NEI concludes that it is hard to see how the mysterious demise of Nirex has simplified the repository programme. (10)

(1) Scotsman 30th June 2007 http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/opinion.cfm?id=1021622007
(3) Scotsman 29th June 2007 http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/letters.cfm?id=1013182007
(4) Scotland on Sunday 1st July 2007 http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/scotland.cfm?id=1026452007
(7) Newcastle Sunday Sun 1st July 2007 http://icnewcastle.icnetwork.co.uk/sundaysun/news/tm_headline=nuclear-dump-fallout-fears%26method=full%26objectid=19388403%26siteid=50081-name_page.html
(8) Scotsman 16th May 2007 http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/scotland.cfm?id=758462007

4. Consultation is dead, long live consultation.

The White Paper “Planning for a Sustainable Future” was published on 17 May. (1) The deadline for responses is 17 August. A briefing by the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) has been published to help local authorities in England and Wales respond. (2)

The Government is proposing to produce national policy statements (“NPS”) to provide a clear policy framework for nationally significant infrastructure (“NSI”); including nuclear power stations. Developers will be required to consult local authorities, statutory bodies, the public and so on before applying for consent. The Government will establish an independent “infrastructure planning commission” (“IPC”) to vet applications and take the decisions on such projects instead of the Secretary of State. But the IPC will be obliged to approve any project if it has “main aims (sic) consistent with the relevant national policy statement.”

The NFLA briefing concludes that despite the many references to consultation, the essential thrust of the White Paper is to diminish the ability of local authorities and their communities to influence decisions relating to national infrastructure projects, including nuclear power stations in England and Wales. The dominant motive is to clear the path for development at the cost of local accountability and popular participation. There is widespread opposition against these proposals and real opportunities to prevent their being implemented. Although confined to England and Wales it is clear that Westminster intends to urge the devolved administrations to introduce similar proposals.

(1) http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1510503
(2) http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A178(NB62).pdf

5. Nuclear power – an answer looking for a question

David Howarth, the Lib Dem Energy Spokesperson before the recent re-shuffle, quotes the organizational theorists, Cohen, March and Olsen, who said nuclear power “is an answer actively looking for a question”. But Howarth makes clear in his introduction to the Oxford Research Group’s latest briefing that climate change is not the question it is looking for. (1)
The ORG report calculates that, if nuclear power were to be able to make a reasonable contribution to combating climate change, and, at the same time taking into account the global increase in population and electricity demand, then around four reactors would have to begin construction every month between now and 2075. This compares to an average construction rate of 3.4 reactors per year which France managed at the height of its nuclear boom between 1977 and 1993. (The Nuclear Industry Association says that globally 16.6 reactors were commissioned per year during that period – still a long way from the required 48 per year. NIA also calls construction to begin on more than 23 reactors per year – a rate 40% higher than ever achieved before. (2))

ORG says the IPCC cites evidence which indicates that emissions from ore processing, construction and decommissioning may be significantly higher than other official sources. Decision-makers will need a more reliable calculation of how much CO2 nuclear power would displace. The House of Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee already recommended asking the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution to report on carbon emissions from different generating technologies. (3) As far as nuclear power is concerned this would have to take into account the likelihood of a decline in the quality of uranium ores.

So nuclear power has little chance of making any impact on climate change, yet even a small expansion in the use of nuclear power for electricity generation would have serious consequences for the spread of nuclear weapons to countries that do not now have them and for nuclear terrorism. (4)

ORG argues that worldwide stocks of high-grade uranium are expected to run dangerously low within 25 years so a significant increase in nuclear power will require a new generation of "breeder" reactors. Though this will reduce the need for uranium it will also add immensely to the amount of weapons-useable plutonium in circulation. Whilst the plutonium economy cannot be introduced in time to make any impact on carbon emissions targets for 2050, if decisions are taken now in the UK and elsewhere to go for a nuclear renaissance, we will be on a flawed and dangerously counter-productive energy trajectory.

By 2075, the nuclear industry predicts that most nuclear electricity will be generated by plutonium-fuelled fast breeder reactors, requiring more than 4,000 tonnes of plutonium to be fabricated into fresh reactor fuel each year - twenty times the current military stockpile. Society has to decide whether the associated risks of proliferation and terrorism are acceptable.

ORG concludes that for the nuclear weapons proliferation and nuclear terrorism risks to be worth taking, nuclear must be able to achieve energy security and a reduction in global CO2 emissions more effectively, efficiently, economically and quickly than any other energy source. There is little evidence to support the claim that it can, whereas the evidence for doubting nuclear power’s efficacy is clear.


(2) Letter from Keith Parker to the Guardian, 7th July 2007. [http://www.guardian.co.uk/letters/story/0,,2120896,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/letters/story/0,,2120896,00.html)

It is worth noting that the 1,000 new reactors mentioned by NIA would also require a new Yucca Mountain sized nuclear dump to be opened somewhere every three or four years. See [http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk/reviews/review01.php](http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk/reviews/review01.php)

(3) See “Keeping the lights on: Nuclear, Renewables, and Climate Change” (HC 584-1, April 2006): [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmenvaud/584/58402.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmenvaud/584/58402.htm)
6. Plutonium stockpiles

On 2nd July the NDA published a summary of the "Uranium and Plutonium: Macro-Economic Study". (1) The Study provides the NDA with a wide-ranging analysis of the possible options for the UK's embarrassing stocks of uranium and weapons-useable plutonium. It sets out the financial, socio-economic and environmental impacts of different options. The NDA says it will take these findings into account in its discussion with Government on the options for the future.

The report, written by Peter Wooders of ERM and Gregg Butler and Grace McGlynn, formerly BNFL and now Integrated Decision Management Ltd (IDM), says the UK has enough uranium and plutonium stockpiles to fuel three 1000 MWe reactors for their entire 60-year lives. (2) The report explains that at present the materials are currently considered to be "assets of zero value" but could be considered to be either an asset or a liability depending on a variety of factors including the uranium market price and the relative costs of treating them as waste, storing them, or of processing them for sale on the market in one form or another. Apart from enriching the uranium and using it for fuel fabrication and using the plutonium to manufacture mixed-oxide (MoX) fuel, other options include treating the materials as waste and storing the materials for possible use in the future. As well as powering three conventional reactors, the analysis suggests the material could also be used to power 12GWe of fast reactors for 700 years.

In terms of discounted costs, the quick disposal option would cost around $2 billion; Long-term storage would cost around $0.6 billion, but the cost of quick re-use as fuel would vary from a cost of $2 billion to an income of $4 billion. The report notes that it is outside its scope to make recommendations – these should “follow an integrated, transparent decision-making process conducted by the NDA, government, regulators and other stakeholders.”

It concludes: The 'waste' option is low-risk and low cost. If the uranium price is low, it could even have the lowest cost of all. The 'store' option is flexible and puts off large capital expenditure for significant periods. The 'use' option could realise significant value from the materials (particularly if the uranium price is high) but is subject to significant downside risks.

7. A catastrophe we must not repeat

Throughout its fifty year history, Britain's nuclear industry has consistently failed to deliver on its promises. Now, less than five years after the financial collapse of British Energy, we are being asked once again to believe that a new generation of nuclear power stations can produce electricity safely and without government subsidy. A new Corporate Watch report called Broken Promises claims there is good reason to believe that the industry's predictions are as spurious as in previous decades. (1)

Massive time and budget overruns, poor labour relations, and unexpected engineering and design problems were recurrent themes in nuclear power station construction in the UK. The first two Magnox plants, Bradwell and Berkeley, were completed over a year late. The final one – Wylfa - was three years late. This dismal pattern deteriorated with the AGR power stations, none of which
were completed on time or budget. Dungeness B the first AGR plant to be ordered in 1965, and at the time expected to be operational in 1970/1971, did not produce commercial energy until 1989, and exceeded its budget by 400%. Problems persisted throughout the AGR building programme. For example Heysham A was 13 years late and cost almost double its original budget. Even the final pair, Torness and Heysham B, were both over a year late. Torness was estimated to be 15% over budget. The cost of Sizewell B was estimated to be £2.01 billion but, by the time of its completion, costs had risen by almost 50% to £2.98 billion. As well as being late and over budget, the majority of the UK's nuclear stations failed to perform to their designed output.

For those who say the nuclear industry has put its past problems behind it, Corporate Watch highlights the problems of the reactor being built at Olkiluoto in Finland. Construction began in early 2005, but by spring 2006, the project was already delayed by around a year, and by March 2007 it was a year and a half behind schedule.

Corporate Watch concludes that the British nuclear industry shows no sign of having learnt anything from the hugely expensive errors of its past. If mistakes are not admitted and learned from, history tends to repeat itself.

(1) Olaf Bayer and Chris Grimshaw, Broken Promises: Why the nuclear industry won’t deliver, Corporate Watch, July 2007 http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=2968

8. Nuclear siting.

The Government has yet to decide whether British Energy (BE) will be allowed to retain the land surrounding its closed plants for new reactors, according to The Independent on Sunday. BE could be forced to give up some of its reactor sites, denting its ambitions to host the UK's next generation of reactors. BE has been in talks with European energy groups EDF, RWE and E.ON about forming a consortium to build the new reactors on its existing sites. The Company wants to use its sites as a lever to gain involvement in a consortium. But the Government could take back ownership of the company's oldest reactors, complicating negotiations with potential partners if it cannot guarantee that it will retain all its sites. Of BE’s six sites in England, three are scheduled to be decommissioned by 2014. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is likely to take over the sites when the reactors are decommissioned.

Independent on Sunday 8th July 2007 http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article2744853.ece

9. German nuclear safety row

Swedish state-owned utility, Vattenfall, Germany’s third largest electricity producer, (1) and one of the companies said to have expressed an interest in being part of a consortium to build new reactors in the UK, has been the target of massive criticism after it admitted fresh blunders at two of its German nuclear plants. (2) The Company failed to reveal the full extent of the irregularities in June and has now admitted further blunders at the affected plants, just as some of the media are reporting that Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, is preparing to perform a major U-turn by scrapping plans to phase-out nuclear power. (3) Problems started on 28th June when a fire broke out at the Krümmel power plant, 30 kilometers southeast of Hamburg. (4) Separately, Brunsbüttel, also in Schleswig-Holstein, was temporarily shut down about two hours earlier because its capacity was overloaded. Brunsbüttel is due to close in 2009 under Germany's nuclear phase-out programme. Vattenfall had applied for an extension by trying to borrow from the quota of the closed Muelheim-Kärlich nuclear plant but
the federal environment ministry in Berlin rejected the application. Now Vattenfall has asked to transfer quotas from Kruemmel instead, which must shut in 2015. (5)

*The Sunday Telegraph* reported that Merkel was preparing to abandon the nuclear phase-out policy, but that her plans would be unlikely to be finalised until after a general election in 2009. This is not unexpected since it is her party’s policy to abandon the phase-out, but is currently unable to do so as it operates in coalition with the Social Democratic Party. What the utilities appear to be trying to do in the meantime is to extend the life of reactors, due to close soon, beyond 2009 in the hope that a government willing to scrap the nuclear phase-out is elected.

Contrary to earlier reports, the Krümmel fire did affect the reactor. (6) Investigators found that crucial pumps supplying water to the reactor had failed, while two safety valves had opened unexpectedly, causing pressure to drop fast. (7) Politicians are now asking why the seriousness of the problem wasn't made public earlier. (8) Vattenfall also had to admit that human error at was to blame for a further incident at Brunsbüttel. Staff at the reactor were surprised by a surge of hot water and then forgot to hold down a control button. This caused an automatic cut-off of the reactor's water filtration system for eight minutes. There was no release of radioactivity. The revelations that staff were unsure what to do have put the nuclear industry in Germany on the defensive. The latest disclosures prompted the Greens party to demand that Vattenfall's nuclear licence to be revoked on grounds of unreliability. (9)

On 13th July police searched offices at Krümmel as part of an inquiry into a possible offence during the fire. The legislature of Schleswig-Holstein state warned the Swedish-owned company Vattenfall Europe that it might lose its license to operate the power station east. (10) Eon refused to confirm a report that it was in talks with Vattenfall to acquire the Kruemmel operating license. (11) But Vattenfall AB chief executive Lars Goeran Josefsson admitted that the Company had been incompetent in its efforts to communicate properly. (12)

Meanwhile, following the launch of the Department of Trade and Industry’s (DTI’s) consultation into the NDA’s proposal to allow advance allocation of THORP reprocessing products to overseas customers, (See previous ERU) *The Guardian* reports that if Sellafield is unable to supply MOX fuel for the MOX-licensed reactors in Germany it is contracted to supply, this could lead to major problems for them because the plants and their safety cases would have to be reconfigured to take uranium fuel and ultimately could lead to closure earlier than planned. (13)

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(2) DW-World 9th July 2007 [http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2675277,00.html](http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2675277,00.html)
(3) DW-World 2nd July 2007 [http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2663920,00.html](http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2663920,00.html)
(5) Royals 29th June 2007 [http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/international.cfm?id=1014632007](http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/international.cfm?id=1014632007)
BBC 28th June 2007 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6250458.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6250458.stm)
(5) Reuters 29th June 2007 [http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L29425732.htm](http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L29425732.htm)
Also see: [http://www.nuclearspin.org/index.php/Germany](http://www.nuclearspin.org/index.php/Germany)
(6) Spiegel Online 4th July 2007 [http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,492305,00.html](http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,492305,00.html)
(9) DW-World 9th July 2007 [http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2675277,00.html](http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2675277,00.html)
10. Dangerous and expensive

A group of experts gathered in Westminster, on 28th November 2006 to put the case for a non-nuclear energy strategy in the UK. The meeting was sponsored by Dr Ian Gibson MP and co-chaired by a panel of cross-party MPs. “Nuclear Power: Unnecessary, Dangerous and Expensive” is a report based on the presentations that were made on the day.

Contributors on alternative energy strategies include Allan Jones, Development Officer of the London Climate Change Agency, Professor Susan Roaf of the Oxford Centre for Sustainable Development, Dr Kevin Anderson of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Research, Dr Bridget Woodman of Warwick Business School.

On proliferation, terrorism and the dangers of nuclear power, Dr Rebecca Johnson of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, Dr Kate Hudson, chair of CND, Dr Frank Barnaby of the Oxford Research Group, Richard Bramhall, Dr David Lowry and Anthony Froggatt.

Nuclear Power No Thanks website 13th July 2007
http://www.nuclearpowernothanks.co.uk/unnecessary_dangerous_expensive.pdf

11. Another Privatisation

The UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA), operators of the Dounreay nuclear plant, were fined £15,000 for exposing two employees to potentially deadly plutonium, as they disposed of contaminated bricks in a laboratory. Wick Sheriff Court heard that the incident occurred in a former fuel processing plant on January 12th 2006. (1)

The Government is planning to sell off the nuclear decommissioning division of UKAEA, to raise up to £400m for Treasury coffers. US engineering giants such as CH2M Hill, Bechtel and Fluor, as well as UK services company Amec, are all likely to be interested. UKAEA employs 2,300 people and receives around £300m a year from the NDA to clean up sites including Dounreay. (2) The research division, which leads UK research into nuclear fusion and is involved in the international venture to build a €4bn (£2.7bn) test facility in France, will remain in government hands.

(1) Aberdeen Press and Journal 13th July 2007
http://www.thisisnorthscotland.co.uk/displayNode.jsp?nodeId=149664&command=displayContent&sourceNode=149490&contentPK=17822382&folderPk=85696&pNodeId=149221
John O Groat Journal 13th July 2007
(2) Independent on Sunday 15th July 2007
http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article2770929.ece