

# SAFE ENERGY E-JOURNAL

## No.36

### January 2007

<http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk>

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#### **1.0 New Nuclear Monitor**

- 1.1 The location of the next generation of nuclear power stations will be decided by unelected experts rather than ministers under proposals unveiled in a Treasury report. Kate Barker, a member of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, says that controversial projects such as power stations should be decided by an independent planning commission. Her recommendations echo those of Sir Rod Eddington, the former chief executive of British Airways, on transport infrastructure, in his report to the Treasury.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2 What this mean is that, in England and Wales, decisions would be taken by an independent planning commission rather than Ministers. Barker did suggest that there should be a statutory framework for consultation. Her recommendations apply to the Town and Country Planning Act, so would have to be transferred across to the Electricity Act if Ministers want the Planning Commissions to decide on power stations. What she was also saying was that much of the delay in coming to a decision on planning matters was caused by Ministers not making decisions quickly enough after receiving the recommendations from Inquiry Inspectors ie. it is not mainly caused by objectors lengthening public inquiries. Scottish Ministers might not want to go along with these recommendations, but it would be difficult for the Scottish Executive to pursue a line distinct from Westminster. In any case the Executive might well be sympathetic to the idea because of proposals for developments of National Strategic Importance in the Scottish Planning Bill.
- 1.3 Clare Spottiswoode, deputy chairman of British Energy says that, except for France and Finland, it is "highly unlikely" that any plants will be built in Britain or the rest of Europe before 2020. Europe is looking to the UK and will not undertake a new nuclear station until Britain does, she said. It will take until 2020 for the UK governments to put in place a proper planning regime and regulations for new construction.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.4 British utility group Centrica is sceptical about construction of new nuclear power plants in Britain, despite government efforts to lower some hurdles facing nuclear energy. The huge costs and lengthy construction and life cycles are putting investors off.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Telegraph 5th Dec 2006

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/main.jhtml?xml=/money/2006/12/05/cnuke05.xml>

Independent 6th Dec 2006 <http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/politics/article2042960.ece>

24Dash.com 5th Dec 2006 <http://www.24dash.com/news/7/13937/index.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Platts Nuclear News Flashes 30th November 2006

<sup>3</sup> Reuters 6th Dec 2006

[http://investing.reuters.co.uk/news/articleinvesting.aspx?type=allBreakingNews&storyID=2006-12-06T141217Z\\_01\\_L06840069\\_RTRIDST\\_0\\_BRITAIN-ENERGY-NUCLEAR.XML](http://investing.reuters.co.uk/news/articleinvesting.aspx?type=allBreakingNews&storyID=2006-12-06T141217Z_01_L06840069_RTRIDST_0_BRITAIN-ENERGY-NUCLEAR.XML)

- 1.5 The Mayor of London Ken Livingstone and Greenpeace have joined together to launch a stark public information campaign highlighting alternatives to nuclear power. Under the headline '£70 billion - Nuclear Waste?' the Mayor invites Londoners to participate in the debate. The posters have been appearing on tube stations across the capital.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.6 The completion of Finland's fifth nuclear reactor will be further delayed, until early 2011, because of construction and planning complications. The 1,600-megawatt reactor is now expected to be in operation eighteen months later than originally planned.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.7 The French state-controlled nuclear group, Areva, already facing growing problems and costs in Finland, lost out to Westinghouse, now owned by Toshiba, in the competition for four nuclear reactors in China. The French government claims the delays in Finland persuaded the Chinese to opt for the Westinghouse AP 1000. But it may have more to do with the fact that Areva was reluctant to agree to significant transfers of sensitive technology to China whereas Toshiba was prepared to offer transfers to clinch the deal.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.0 Nuclear Waste

- 2.1 For over three decades, efforts to find solutions to the problem of long-term radioactive waste management in the UK have failed.<sup>7</sup> The Government's latest review of policy led to recommendations being made by the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) in July 2006.<sup>8</sup> CoRWM recommended deep geological disposal, but also stressed the vital role of interim storage, because of the uncertainties involved with deep dumps. It also recommended a new approach to implementation, based on the willingness of local communities to participate. The Government is now inviting comments on its own response to CoRWM's recommendations by 31 January 2007.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.2 The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee is holding a short inquiry into CoRWM's recommendations and the Government's response.<sup>10</sup> The remit is to look at plans for implementing CoRWM's recommendations and the planned Government consultation on a geological disposal framework.
- 2.3 The Government has not captured the heavily qualified nature of CoRWM's recommendation about deep disposal. The concept is not proven for the many thousands of years that containment and isolation of wastes would be required. The Environment Agency in its

<sup>4</sup> Greenpeace Press Release 15<sup>th</sup> December 2007

<http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/contentlookup.cfm?CFID=712028&CFTOKEN=90306941&UCIDParam=20061215103933>

<sup>5</sup> AP 4th Dec 2006

<http://news.moneycentral.msn.com/provider/providerarticle.aspx?Feed=AP&Date=20061204&ID=6245665>

<sup>6</sup> FT 19th Dec 2006

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/fd47a13a-8f04-11db-a7b2-0000779e2340\\_i\\_rssPage=415f2042-300f-11da-ba9f-00000e2511c8.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/fd47a13a-8f04-11db-a7b2-0000779e2340_i_rssPage=415f2042-300f-11da-ba9f-00000e2511c8.html)

<sup>7</sup> See the History of Nuclear Waste Disposal Proposals In Britain

[http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk/reports/waste\\_disposal.php](http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk/reports/waste_disposal.php)

<sup>8</sup> CoRWM's recommendations can be found at [www.corwm.org.uk/content-1092](http://www.corwm.org.uk/content-1092)

<sup>9</sup> The Government's response to CoRWM at:

[www.defra.gov.uk/environment/radioactivity/waste/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/radioactivity/waste/index.htm)

Responses to DEFRA at: [radioactivewaste@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:radioactivewaste@defra.gsi.gov.uk) or,

Scottish Executive at: [RadioactiveWasteTeam@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:RadioactiveWasteTeam@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/lords\\_s\\_t\\_select/corwm.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/lords_s_t_select/corwm.cfm)

November 2005 review of Nirex's phased geological disposal concept, lists 10 'key technical challenges' "...where further work is needed before an acceptable repository safety case could be generated."<sup>11</sup> CoRWM called for an intensified research programme to resolve these questions but DEFRA commit only to 'ongoing' research.

- 2.4 The Government disregards CoRWM's recommendation about wastes from a new nuclear programme. CoRWM's entire public consultation and stakeholder engagement programme was around the management of the higher-level *legacy* wastes, not *new* wastes. CoRWM was explicit that a separate process of public consultation would be necessary to establish a publicly acceptable policy for the management of new wastes. This is ignored and the Government openly state that consideration of wastes from any new nuclear build *will* be included in developing a partnership approach with a potential host community.
- 2.5 A stage of consultation was skipped when the Government announced that the NDA is to absorb Nirex. This runs counter to the ethos of openness and transparency. There was no consultation about whether the NDA is the most appropriate body to take forward long-term policy implementation. In fact, as Nirex itself highlighted, there is a potential conflict of interest because the NDA is a waste producer.
- 2.6 CoRWM's recommendation about independent oversight of the policy implementation process have been diluted. Rather than an oversight body, the Government has only committed to a reconstituted CoRWM as an advisory body. Members of CoRWM have "*substantial misgivings*" about these plans, which they fear could undermine public trust, because the Government has rejected the idea of establishing an independent oversight organisation to find a site. The appointment of the NDA is regarded as "*problematic*" by some because of its agenda to promote short-term efficiency. There were "*potential conflicts and loss of public confidence*" caused by its dual role as waste creator and waste disposer.<sup>12</sup>
- 2.7 DEFRA has reopened the door to landfill disposal of radioactive waste even before publication of its review of low level radioactive waste policy that is expected in early 2007.
- 2.8 Finally, regarding the proposed voluntarist approach, the Government acknowledges that the practicalities have yet to be fully worked out. Time is needed to think through and consult on workable arrangements. DEFRA needs to allow sufficient time for consultation on the proposed Framework on Implementation to enable full democratic local debate and for the commissioning of expert research and advice if necessary. 24 weeks is the minimum practical consultation period. Currently the DEFRA timetable through to 2008 looks far too tight to allow 24 weeks consultation.
- 2.9 As part of its campaign to build new nuclear stations around the globe, the nuclear industry often claims that any problems associated with burying nuclear waste in a deep underground "repository" are to do with public acceptability rather than being technical in nature. The industry often points to nuclear dumping proposals in Finland, Sweden or the United States to underline its point. But the lack of a solution to the nuclear waste problem, and the absence of an operating HLW, spent fuel nuclear waste dump, acts as a barrier to the construction of new nuclear reactors.
- 2.10 Waste dumping plans are probably most advanced in the United States. The Bush administration's original plan was to get a license application for the waste dump at Yucca Mountain in Nevada submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the end of 2004, and to start burying waste in 2010. But after a string of problems, including a federal court

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<sup>11</sup> [http://www.corwm.org/pdf/1529%20-%20nwat%20\(ea\)%20review%20of%20nirex%20viability%20report%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.corwm.org/pdf/1529%20-%20nwat%20(ea)%20review%20of%20nirex%20viability%20report%20(1).pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Sunday Herald 10<sup>th</sup> December 2006. [http://www.robedwards.com/2006/12/conflict\\_of\\_int.html](http://www.robedwards.com/2006/12/conflict_of_int.html)

ruling in 2004 that invalidated a repository safety standard and ongoing investigations of e-mails in which several workers discuss falsifying quality assurance documents,<sup>13</sup> the 2010 date has been abandoned.<sup>14</sup> The US Department of Energy (DoE) says it will be at least another 10 years before the facility opens - 19 years after the original target date of 1998.<sup>15</sup>

- 2.11 In 2005 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed a draft new rule for radiation doses to future generations in response to the 2004 federal court ruling. This new proposal would still overturn all established principles of public health protection, according to the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER). It would be the worst standard in the Western world, by far. The proposal seems tailored to fit Yucca Mountain so that it can be licensed.<sup>16</sup> The proposed standard would allow a dose limit of 3.5 mSv per year beyond 10,000 years - three-and-a-half times the maximum limit allowed to the public from any human activity (other than medical radiation) according to current limits established in the United States and all western countries.
- 2.12 The EPA now expects to release its finalised targets for Yucca Mountain later in January. And Yucca Mountain could also be in the News over the next few months, because the new Democrat Senate majority leader Harry Reid of Nevada has been the Senate's leading opponent of DOE's planned spent fuel repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.
- 2.13 A new book on Yucca Mountain entitled "Uncertainty Underground", says despite a large knowledge base, substantial funding of over \$7bn so far, and a large number of talented scientists engaged on every aspect of the problem, there continue to be delays. One important reason, say the authors, is that the scientific and engineering communities have underestimated the effort required to characterize the site and model the behaviour of the rocks and the waste over long periods of time, and the large uncertainties inherent in such analyses.<sup>17</sup>
- 2.14 The state of Nevada is also opposing the U.S. government's plan to store thousands of tons of nuclear waste temporarily above ground at Yucca Mountain. Because the underground dump is so far behind schedule the Government wants to place the nuclear waste temporarily above ground.<sup>18</sup>
- 2.15 Bechtel, which has built the nuclear waste dump at Yucca Mountain, is one of three American engineering firms which have been approached by the UK Government over the construction of a British dump. Bechtel, Washington Group and Jacobs Group have already given the UK Government informal advice on how to proceed with the £12bn construction

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<sup>13</sup> No Criminal Charges in Yucca Mountain Email Science Scandal, Environment News Service 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006 <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/apr2006/2006-04-28-03.asp>

<sup>14</sup> Virtual Repository, Enviro website.  
[http://www.enviros.com/vrepository/not\\_subscribed/country/usa/index.cfm](http://www.enviros.com/vrepository/not_subscribed/country/usa/index.cfm)

<sup>15</sup> Platts Nuclear News Flashes 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006  
Las Vegas Review-Journal 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006

[http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj\\_home/2006/Jul-19-Wed-2006/news/8571904.html](http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj_home/2006/Jul-19-Wed-2006/news/8571904.html)

<sup>16</sup> Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER) Press Release, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2005.

<http://www.ieer.org/latest/yuccaepapr0805.html>

IEER submission to EPA 21<sup>st</sup> November 2005, <http://www.ieer.org/comments/waste/yuccaepa.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk/reviews/index.php>

<sup>18</sup> Scientific American 22nd Dec 2006

<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?chanID=sa003&articleID=B5D4ADB2328AF2EF23F9DB2582AB3578>

Las Vegas Review-Journal 22nd Dec 2006

[http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj\\_home/2006/Dec-22-Fri-2006/news/11577047.html](http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj_home/2006/Dec-22-Fri-2006/news/11577047.html)

project. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), will put the design, construction and operation of the repository out to tender early this year.<sup>19</sup>

- 2.16 The Caithness convenor of Highland Council, Councillor David Flear, has called for a public debate on whether or not a nuclear waste repository should be built in the county. Fifteen years ago a local referendum showed 73 per cent opposed to a Nirex dump in the area. Stressing he was not supporting the idea, Mr Flear said: "Sooner or later this issue needs to be resolved one way or the other. The [Scottish] Executive wants to hear from communities that have an interest and I think our area has to decide whether it wants to come forward."<sup>20</sup>

### 3.0 Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

- 3.1 Three German companies, including E.ON, have launched a High Court action to prevent the British Nuclear Group (BNG) from claiming back the cost of the radioactive leak at THORP from them. The companies fear BNG is even trying to pass on the cost of the £0.5m fine imposed on them by the Crown Court in Carlisle as a result of the leak. The three companies are seeking a legal ruling that BNG is not entitled to recover the costs of the leak from them. A 42-page writ details the circumstances which led to the leak, and a culture of complacency among staff who believed that there could be no leak in the new plant. E.ON says it should not pay for the costs of the leak because it was caused by negligence. But BNG has already billed E.ON for some of the costs.<sup>21</sup>
- 3.2 E.ON will, no doubt, make use of information provided to the Crown Court in Carlisle. In his judgement, Mt Justice Openshaw said the leak should have been detected soon after it happened, certainly within weeks, if not days. That it went undetected for eight months is "*a serious failing deserving of condemnation*". He also mentioned two previous cases brought before the Crown Court which he said show that the defendants cannot reasonably claim to have a good safety record. The recent leak showed "...a significant departure from the relevant safety standard over a prolonged period of time and a failure to comply with important conditions concerned with safety attached to a license to operate the most hazardous nuclear undertaking in the United Kingdom".<sup>22</sup>
- 3.3 The continuing problems at THORP have caused a funding crisis at the NDA. The THORP leak, coupled with lower-than-expected profits from the Mox plant, have left the NDA with a £450m hole in next year's budget. (The NDA is supposed to receive £2bn each year, half from the Government and half from the income it earns from its ageing Magnox nuclear generators and its reprocessing plants at Sellafield). The Treasury has provisionally agreed to provide an extra £290m, but this would still leave a shortfall of at least £160m. This means that many contractors who were expecting to be hired for clean-up work will not now be hired. Some existing contractors and BNG and UKAEA staff are likely to be laid off.<sup>23</sup>
- 3.4 Altogether around 3,000 jobs are at risk. The NDA has given BNG and UKAEA until mid-January to provide a list of projects, originally due to go ahead in the financial year from April 2007, to scrap. The unions say they are appalled at how this budget cut has suddenly

<sup>19</sup> Independent on Sunday 17th Dec 2006

<http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article2081538.ece>

<sup>20</sup> John O' Groat Journal 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2006 [http://www.johnogroat-journal.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/1316/Convener\\_keen\\_to\\_open\\_up\\_nuclear\\_dump\\_debate.html](http://www.johnogroat-journal.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/1316/Convener_keen_to_open_up_nuclear_dump_debate.html)

<sup>21</sup> Whitehaven News 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 2007 <http://www.whitehaven-news.co.uk/news/viewarticle.aspx?id=451577>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/thorp-case>

<sup>23</sup> Independent on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2007

<http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article2132472.ece>

appeared without any consultation with lead stakeholders. Workers found out about the budget shortfall only from BNG and the media in December.<sup>24</sup>

- 3.5 The NDA has already asked BNG and UKAEA to cut spending in this financial year by a total of £63 million to cover a shortfall in the cleanup budget because commercial operations have not had quite as much income as expected.<sup>25</sup>
- 3.6 The enormous cost of putting THORP back in working order is still to be finalised, but once it has been, the NDA hopes to be able to claim the cost from its insurers. Such a claim would be unprecedented. In the past when an incident was caused by negligence there would not have been a claim, but the NDA is hoping that, because BNG are the plant operators an insurance claim would be possible.<sup>26</sup>
- 3.7 BNG has denied reports that THORP's re-opening faces a further delay. The Independent claimed that it will be at least the summer before the troubled plant re-opens because of further technical problems. But BNG said Thorp remained on track to open at the beginning of the new financial year in April.<sup>27</sup> In fact the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate has already given BNG permission to re-open THORP.<sup>28</sup>
- 3.8 The early bidding process for BNG's contract to manage Sellafield will begin soon, although a decision from the NDA is not expected until 2008.<sup>29</sup> Contractors preparing to bid for the £5bn, five-year clean-up contract are now likely to demand higher profit margins, because of the risk of their work being cancelled in the future because the NDA is under-funded.
- 3.9 Meanwhile BNG closed down two more Magnox stations on schedule on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006. The stations were Dungeness A in Kent and Sizewell A in Suffolk. The lengthy decommissioning process will now start with de-fuelling the reactors and transporting the waste to Sellafield. One of the objectives of the Magnox closure timetable is to allow for the closure of the Magnox reprocessing plant at Sellafield by the end of 2012. Only two Magnox stations remain open – Oldbury, which will close next year and Wylfa, due to close in 2010.<sup>30</sup> BNFL has commenced the sale of the BNG division which runs the Magnox sites.<sup>31</sup>
- 3.10 Reprocessing has also been halted at the Magnox Reprocessing Plant following the discovery that radioactivity had been leaking into an evaporator's cooling water. BNG said in December it hoped evaporation would recommence in January. *"In the interim we are temporarily suspending Magnox Reprocessing operations until the Evaporator becomes available."*<sup>32</sup>

## 4.0 Terror

<sup>24</sup> Guardian 8<sup>th</sup> January 2007 <http://business.guardian.co.uk/story/0,,1984800.00.html>

<sup>25</sup> Platts Nuclear News Flashes 9<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Whitehaven News 28<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006. <http://www.whitehaven-news.co.uk/news/viewarticle.aspx?id=449382>

<sup>27</sup> Carlisle News and Star 28<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006

<http://www.newsandstar.co.uk/news/viewarticle.aspx?id=449481>

Independent on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006

<http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article2099913.ece>

<sup>28</sup> NucNet 10<sup>th</sup> Jan 2007

<sup>29</sup> Times 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2007 <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,5-2526378.html>

<sup>30</sup> Scotsman 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 <http://news.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=6072007>

<sup>31</sup> FT 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2006 <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/b07fd3e6-9160-11db-b71a-0000779e2340.html>

<sup>32</sup> Whitehaven News 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006 <http://www.whitehaven-news.co.uk/news/viewarticle.aspx?id=444202>

- 4.1 The government's failure to prepare for a nuclear attack by terrorists is endangering the lives of thousands of people, a former NHS radiation advisor has warned. Professor John Haywood, who retired five weeks ago after 27 years as radiation protection advisor to the health service in the north east of England, has accused the Home Office and the NHS of ignoring the risks of a terrorist nuclear bomb.<sup>33</sup>

## 5.0 British Energy

- 5.1 British Energy confirmed a worst case scenario in the repair of two of its nuclear plants. BE revealed that repairs to Hunterston B and Hinkley Point B in Gloucestershire would not be completed until at least March 2007, and even then they would only run at 70 per cent capacity. The problems will wipe £100m off the company's profits for this year.<sup>34</sup>
- 5.2 There was better news for Hartlepool which was shut for repairs to the water cooling system in September. Both units were back in service by the end of December.<sup>35</sup> But in January a reactor at Heysham had to be closed to repair a steam leak on a turbine valve. One of the two reactors at Dungeness B is shut for a prolonged refuelling outage which began late last year.<sup>36</sup>

## 6.0 Dounreay

- 6.1 Geoffrey Minter, the owner of the Sandside Estate in Caithness has received an apology from the UKAEA over a suggestion that he had not taken sufficient care to check out possible radioactive contamination of Sandside in 1990 before he bought the estate. The suggestion was made during an exchange at a hearing of the House of Commons trade and industry select committee in March 2005. It was then suggested that Mr Minter should have sued his advisers and not the UKAEA over the contamination of Sandside. Norman Harrison, Dounreay's acting Chief Operating Officer, has now written to Mr Minter to retract the suggestion saying there is no evidence to substantiate it. In 1990 there was no record of any radioactive metal particles at Sandside.<sup>37</sup>
- 6.2 A large piece of contaminated plastic was found on the Sandside beach on 15th December. The eight by three inch object was found by radiation monitors and the UKAEA said after examining it the contamination was not one of the 'hotspot' particles that have previously been found on the beach. The contamination was caesium 137 at a level of about 4,600 Bq.<sup>38</sup>

## 7.0 Trident

- 7.1 There is almost certainly a majority in the Scottish Parliament opposed to Trident replacement. However, despite three votes on the subject in 2006, it has not been possible to get this majority to express itself.<sup>39</sup> It is unlikely there will be another debate before the next election.

<sup>33</sup> Sunday Herald 7th Jan 2007

[http://www.sundayherald.com/news/uknews/display\\_var.1107530.0.uk\\_unprepared\\_for\\_nuclear\\_threat.php](http://www.sundayherald.com/news/uknews/display_var.1107530.0.uk_unprepared_for_nuclear_threat.php)

<sup>34</sup> Independent 21st Dec 2006 <http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article2091904.ece>

<sup>35</sup> Guardian 21st Dec 2006 <http://business.guardian.co.uk/story/0,,1976465.00.html>

<sup>36</sup> Herald 5<sup>th</sup> January 2007 <http://www.theherald.co.uk/business/78094-print.shtml>

<sup>37</sup> Herald 5<sup>th</sup> January 2007 <http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/78031-print.shtml>

<sup>38</sup> Press and Journal 21<sup>st</sup> December 2007

<http://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/displayNode.jsp?nodeId=149235&command=displayContent&sourceNode=149218&contentPK=16234951&moduleName=InternalSearch&formname=sidebarsearch>

<sup>39</sup> Scottish Parliament Official Report May 4, 2006

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-06/sor0504-01.htm>

- 7.2 In the run up to the final opposition debate of the year, the SNP's Deputy Leader urged Labour MSPs to support an SNP motion against Trident.<sup>40</sup> The motion was deliberately worded to be similar to a written motion put down by Labour MSP, Bill Butler. There was no Executive amendment to the motion, but there was an amendment put forward by back-bencher Maureen McMillan. This supported further reductions in nuclear weapons, and called for a world free of nuclear weapons.<sup>41</sup> It was carefully worded to allow anti-Trident Labour MSPs to vote for it. In the event neither the SNP motion, nor the Labour amendment succeeded. But 4 Labour MSPs rebelled by voting in favour of the SNP motion including minister Malcolm Chisholm, Bill Butler, Elaine Smith and Marlyn Glen.<sup>42</sup> On Maureen McMillan's amendment, the Labour rebels abstained, and were joined by Charlie Gordon. Communities Minister Malcolm Chisholm resigned from the Executive after voting with the SNP.<sup>43</sup>
- 7.3 Bill Butler's Motion, put down after the publication of the White Paper, is still open for signature. It says that "*a convincing case can be made ... for the non-renewal of Trident, and therefore advises electors to lobby their Westminster representatives to urge them to vote against the renewal of Trident in any debate held on that subject in the House of Commons*".<sup>44</sup> So far, 37 MSPs have signed it including 9 Labour MSPs. The Scotland's4Peace website details responses on Trident from MPs and MSPs<sup>45</sup>
- 7.4 A BBC survey has found a majority of MPs with Scottish constituencies are opposed to Trident replacement. This found 11 Labour MPs, 8 Lib Dems and 6 SNP definitely against replacement, and 4 Labour and 1 Lib Dem probably against.<sup>46</sup> (So that 30 against out of 59 MPs).
- 7.5 In any future Scottish Parliament the Lib Dem's policy will be crucial. The Party has argued for deferring a decision. With a programme to extend the lifetime of the four Vanguard class submarines, it will not be necessary to take a binding decision on a replacement until between 2010 and 2014. This would allow us to judge the state of world security before making any commitment to any new system. In the meantime, Britain should be making an active contribution to supporting non-proliferation and kick-starting multilateral disarmament talks. Liberal Democrats have proposed going much further than the government's intended 20% reduction in warheads. The proposals would cut in half the UK's stockpile of nuclear weapons and send a strong signal that nuclear disarmament must be back on the agenda.
- 7.6 Jackie Baillie MSP (Labour - Dumbarton) highlights the "7,000 direct jobs and 4,000 further jobs in the supply chain [at Faslane] ... one quarter of the total workforce in the Dumbarton constituency". CND has set up a group on defence diversification backed by the STUC. SERA Scotland will input into this on building a renewables manufacturing base.

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Scottish Parliament Official Report September 28, 2006

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-06/sor0928-01.htm>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.snp.org/press-releases/2006/holyrood-to-vote-on-new-trident-system/>

Herald 18th Dec 2006 <http://www.theherald.co.uk/politics/76984.html>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-06/sor1221-01.htm>

<sup>42</sup> BBC 21st Dec 2006 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/scotland/6201737.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/6201737.stm)

Scotsman 22nd Dec 2006 <http://thescoatsman.scotsman.com/scotland.cfm?id=1900072006>

Herald 22nd Dec 2006 <http://www.theherald.co.uk/politics/77338.html>

<sup>43</sup> BBC 21st Dec 2006 [http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/scotland/6201737.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/6201737.stm)

Scotsman 22nd Dec 2006 <http://thescoatsman.scotsman.com/scotland.cfm?id=1900072006>

Herald 22nd Dec 2006 <http://www.theherald.co.uk/politics/77338.html>

<sup>44</sup> S2M5287 <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/motionsAndAmendments/motions.htm>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/btindex.htm>

<sup>46</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/glasgow\\_and\\_west/6183735.stm#table](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/glasgow_and_west/6183735.stm#table)

- 7.7 Scotland's 4Peace will be having a "roadshow" in the week beginning 19<sup>th</sup> February. There will be a series of rallies around Scotland – hopefully Ayr, Stirling, Dundee, Aberdeen, Paisley, Ullapool, Coatbridge, Bathgate. Already arranged Edinburgh – 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb; Glasgow 24<sup>th</sup> Feb (including a march)
- 7.8 Dr Hans Blix, the former UN weapons inspector, has attacked Tony Blair, warning that the decision to press ahead with a full replacement for Trident will make it more difficult to stop Iran acquiring the bomb.<sup>47</sup> Former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned that "mutually assured paralysis" has replaced "mutually assured destruction" as the greatest nuclear threat because world leaders are failing to act decisively to promote disarmament and stem proliferation.<sup>48</sup>
- 7.9 Michael Ancram MP says there seems to be an assumption that the Conservatives are unanimous in supporting the next generation of the Trident deterrent. This would be an unwise misapprehension. There is in the Conservative Party a significant and growing group who have a healthy scepticism about Trident in today's and, more importantly, tomorrow's world.<sup>49</sup>
- 7.10 New scientific modelling shows that a regional nuclear conflict between countries such as India and Pakistan could spark devastating climate changes worldwide.<sup>50</sup>
- 7.11 An SNP-Led Executive would put itself on a collision course with the UK government by criminalising ministers and civil servants who prepare the groundwork for using nuclear weapons based in Scotland. Nationalist leader Alex Salmond has said he will back a bill as First Minister which would thwart the renewal of the Trident missile system. He believes the measure will help make Holyrood the political centre for ridding Scotland of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>51</sup>

## 8.0 Miscellaneous

- 8.1 The NHS has been ordered to hand over details of childhood leukaemia cases around the Chapelcross nuclear power plant after a landmark ruling on Scotland's freedom of information laws. In the first case of its kind to reach the Court of Session, three judges upheld a decision by the freedom of information watchdog to order a public body to release hitherto secret
- 8.2 Local councils across the UK are ignoring the threat of climate change according to a Guardian survey. Only six local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland told the Guardian they were taking significant steps to curb household emissions.<sup>52</sup> The Guardian names Britain's best performing councils on green issues. Of those, the only Scottish authority is Aberdeen.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Independent 27th Nov 2006 <http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/politics/article2018719.ece>

<sup>48</sup> Reuters 28th Nov 2006

<http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=N28297915&WTmodLoc=World-R5-Alertnet-3>

<sup>49</sup> Independent 6th Dec 2006 <http://comment.independent.co.uk/commentators/article2042937.ece>

<sup>50</sup> Reuters 12th Dec 2006

<http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=N11428084&WTmodLoc=World-R5-Alertnet-4>

<sup>51</sup> Sunday Herald 7th Jan 2007

[http://www.sundayherald.com/news/heraldnews/display.var.1107515.0.snp\\_plan\\_to\\_criminalise\\_protrident\\_politicians.php](http://www.sundayherald.com/news/heraldnews/display.var.1107515.0.snp_plan_to_criminalise_protrident_politicians.php)

<sup>52</sup> Guardian 3rd Jan 2007 <http://environment.guardian.co.uk/climatechange/story/0,,1981672,00.html>

<sup>53</sup> Guardian 3rd Jan 2007 <http://environment.guardian.co.uk/climatechange/story/0,,1981389,00.html>