

Hinkley INQUIRY

The only complete and clear account

"Dangerous, Wasteful, Expensive" - First SHE Witness

As Week 6 drew to a close, the first witness to speak for *Stop Hinkley Expansion* gave evidence. Professor Jim Jeffery of London University told the Inquiry that a Hinkley Point C would be not only dangerous and unnecessary - but almost twice as costly as a coal-fired plant.

Jeffery himself is clearly most concerned about the risks of the proposed PWR. "The basis of my opposition is that it's too dangerous to be used except in dire necessity," he says. "Human error is more of a problem than is normally allowed for."

In his evidence Jeffery will draw on the words of a power station operator who lived through the near-meltdown accident at the Three Mile Island PWR in America. At a recent symposium, the operator spoke of the terrible "human confusion" during the accident - of having to evaluate hundreds of different dials and readings, of not being sure which were correct, of being faced with rapid and irreversible life and death decisions. In such a situation, argues Jeffery, "calculations about the likelihood of an accident mean very little."

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Even so, he recognises that ultimately "economics will decide" whether or not we get a Hinkley C. "And there is now no doubt that nuclear power is nothing like as economic as coal-fired electricity."

Jeffery's costings are based on eight years thorough investigation of figures produced ("reluctantly at

THE DOCTOR SHOWED THE BOYS HOW TO DISMANTLE A P.W.R. SAFELY



times") by the CEGB and the Department of Energy. He is a veteran of the Sizewell Inquiry and sends his economic evidence to both the Board and the Department of Energy. As a

Speedwriters From Sheffield

Having difficulty in reading through the Inquiry transcripts? Spare a thought, then, for the brave souls whose task it is to write them.

Every day, all day, for as long as the Inquiry lasts, one of the team of shorthand writers and transcribers sits on the Inspector's right hand, as it were. Her job (they are mostly women) is to record every word said in the Inquiry hall, both in shorthand and on tape.

After a stint of 20 minutes, another transcriber arrives to take over, and her colleague goes upstairs to type all the verbiage on to a computer. With four people a week working from 10 in the morning to nine at night, each member of the team goes into the Inquiry six times a day.

They belong to a Sheffield-based firm, veterans of inquiries at Wind-scale, the Vale of Beauvoir, Dounreay and Sizewell. And this one, says their boss man Harry Davidson, is especially heavy on words. "At over a hundred pages a day, the transcripts are 20% longer than the normal inquiry. People are putting more words into it - filing every second and speaking faster. There's a certain anxiety..."

"This is a mini Hansard we've been writing," says Davidson, with the difference that Christopher Wilcock from the Department of Energy told ▶

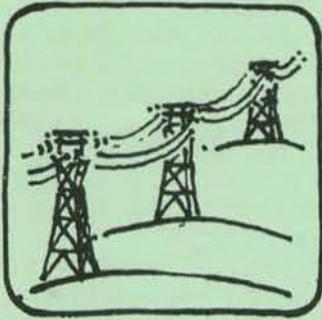
First SHE Witness . . .

former consultant to the Central Electricity Research Laboratories he is very well respected in this field.

After the Layfield Report on Sizewell B, he says "coal prices had plummeted. They didn't take nearly enough account of this. And there is every possibility that they will stay low for a long time."

He believes he has spotted a crucial mistake in the Department of Energy's calculations. "They said (after Layfield) that there was a one-in-seven chance that coal would be cheaper than nuclear. But they have refused to give me the result of their calculation. I'm pretty certain they have made an error."

Objectors Demand "Fawley" Guarantee



Calls by objectors for the Inquiry to be delayed until the CEBG can guarantee a buyer for Hinkley C's electricity were rejected by the Inspector as Week 5 began.

The justification for raising this issue was the dramatic announcement the previous week about Fawley B power station in Hampshire. This proposed coal-fired power station has been shelved by the CEBG, who have failed to get assurances from the Area Distribution Boards that they will buy electricity from it under a privatised industry. On this basis the planned Fawley Public Inquiry has also been postponed.

Jane Wildblood (*Greenpeace*) asked the Inspector to recall the CEBG's policy witness, Mr. Davis, in the light of the announcement about Fawley. She pointed out that the Board had already said that "they cannot guar-

There is a third plank to Jeffery's opposition to the plans for Hinkley C. "More economic than either nuclear or coal - and more desirable - is the efficient use of energy," he says. "Our energy use has been so inefficient. Take lighting: only about 5% of the electricity used by the standard incandescent light bulb is turned into light. The rest is lost as heat.

"This is also a very polluting industry - whether with carbon dioxide or nuclear waste. So we have to keep it to an absolute minimum. We must go for a more efficient use of electricity. If we do that we can do without any more power stations until about the year 2000."

antee that Hinkley Point C will produce electricity profitably" (Davis, Day 2) and that "Mr. Wilcock of the Department of Energy last week confirmed that government policy concerning the non-fossil fuel fraction is far from fixed." How then could the Board guarantee that the Area Boards will want to buy power from a Hinkley C station?

She also asked the Inspector to call the Chairmen of the Area Boards, who might tell the Inquiry whether they would buy electricity from Hinkley C.

The Inspector told her that he had no plans to ask witnesses to come back to the Inquiry - but that he is keeping an open mind. "What I suspect will be other events in the development of policy will unfold themselves over the coming weeks and perhaps months... I am keeping an open mind on recall of any witness as further events proceed."

Then George Pritchard, an individual objector, asked the Inspector

Speedwriters . . .

him the transcripts are more accurate than Hansard.

They take a great professional pride in their job. Sandra Baty - whose work station is pinned with snapshots of her children, dog and cat - claims she types the transcript at over 80 words a minute. News that one of them recorded "Taffy Thomas" instead of "Dafyd Elis Thomas" is greeted with genuine dismay.

Working as they do without a break throughout each day, they haven't seen any of Somerset yet. "We're like moles," says Harry, "of the furry variety that is." They don't eat - apart from sandwiches - until they get back to their hotel after nine at night.

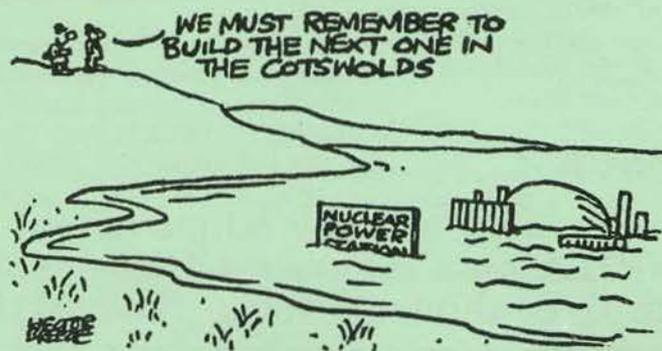
Isn't this a punishing schedule? Harry denies any headache problems ("except from the whisky!"), and won't reveal what they're paid, except to say, "we get rewarded well."

So do they find the Inquiry interesting, informative, entertaining? Well no, frankly, says Sandra, because they're in and out all the time. And pointing to the latest copy of the *Hinkley Inquirer* spread across her desk - "we read this to find out what's going on."

Which means she's in good hands, since we read her transcripts to write much of the *Inquirer*...

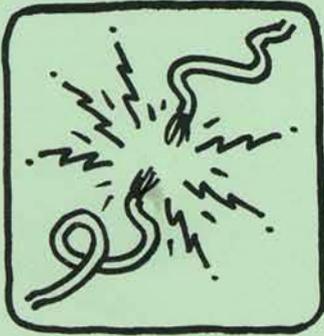
to adjourn the Inquiry. He argued that the Fawley announcement showed the government's hypocrisy. "The government on the one hand is saying 'Yes, we will allow the CEBG to cancel an Inquiry because they cannot sell their electricity.' On the other hand they are saying 'We will allow the CEBG to carry on with an Inquiry even though the same thing applies.'"

The Inspector said it was his duty to hold the Inquiry as long as the Board wished to proceed with their application. But he added that it was open to objectors to make their points about the relevance of the Fawley decision at the Inquiry.



From 'The Guardian'
14 November 1988.

Short Circuit



Richard Cottrell, M.E.P. for Bristol, gave evidence at the Inquiry on Tuesday. He claimed that nuclear power was the answer to the 'greenhouse effect' and produced a map showing areas of the low-lying Somerset Levels which would be drowned if sea levels rise.

The map seemed to be carefully drawn down one bank of the River Parrot, which suggested that the other side, which includes Hinkley Point, was safe. This would no doubt come as a considerable relief to the CEBG, who have until recently thought that their Hinkley Point site was equally low lying: a view shared by the Wessex Water Authority, at present building a new sea defence wall adjacent to the site at some considerable expense.

How reassuring, Mr. Cottrell's slip of the pen: though local residents who bought the **Bristol Evening Post** (see illustration) must have been confused.

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Dawn Primarolo, Labour MP for Bristol South, launched an attack in parliament on the Hinkley Point Inquiry. She is concerned that the Inquiry is being rushed along and that objectors are being prevented from presenting their cases effectively. She has asked for permission to hold an emergency debate in the House of Commons on the way the Inquiry is being handled. Primarolo is outraged and also plans to use the time allotted for business questions to ask for an adjournment of the Inquiry until electricity privatisation has been sorted out. This is the third call for an adjournment within the first six weeks of the Inquiry. At an average of one a fortnight that leaves some 23 still to come, should the Inquiry last a year.

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Left on a note in the Stop Hinkley Centre: "There are lies, damned lies and statistics... then CEBG forecasts... then again CEBG records!"

Will Richard Cottrell be standing as a Green at the next European elections? Not only did he appear at the Inquiry full of concern about the greenhouse effect, but he sported a fetching green tie to emphasise the depth of his commitment!

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'GREENHOUSE DANGER'



The disappearing West... where the waters could reach, including Wells, Glastonbury and Bridgwater, based on research carried out at Durham University.

The pretty village of Combech is only a stone's throw from Hinkley Point. Hence the informal survey by their Parish Council over the use of Combech wharf and approach roads in the construction of a Hinkley C. 72% were opposed, while 81% said they didn't want their approach roads used for decommissioning of the A station either. These figures sit oddly with the other result - that about half the villagers are not opposed to a C station. 540 questionnaire slips were delivered and 300 replies received.

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The Inspector questioning Adrian Atkinson on November 4: "I take a specific date out of the air. Let us take July 16, 1990. I choose that because it happens to be my birthday, but it is just a date in mid-1990, July 16, 1990." Just in case you didn't get it first time! Cake, cards, etc. Don't forget Lord Silsoe's is on May 2...

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With two days coming up when the Inquiry holds informal sittings in Cardiff (on November 22 and 23), the South Wales Women's Support Group made sure local people knew about it by giving out 10,000 leaflets in the city centre.

SPREAD THE WORD?

Would you like to sell the *Hinkley Inquirer* in your area to friends, local newsagents, conferences? You'll get to keep 10p per sold copy for your efforts. Contact us on 0278 652407.

News From The Stop Hinkley Centre

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Shock tactics were adopted by the Secretariat, coincidentally on November 5, when they sent out letters requesting everyone's statement of proof (or at least objectors' intentions) on Topic 1 by November 8. Very short notice as you can see. This was the result of the Inquiry running more quickly than predicted

What has happened, in essence, is that the COLA witnesses on Topic 1 were subjected to quite short cross-examination by Lord Silsoe, and their evidence, expected to last up to a month, has barely lasted a week. So it has suddenly become the turn of other organisations and individuals to be thrown into the fray.

Or perhaps that should read frayed around the edges (!) as people have had to back up their objection with a real proof of evidence, in other words what they would like to say in person at the Inquiry. The phone has not stopped ringing as people endeavour to find out what is happening, what they should do and when. The short answer is that any objection which refers to areas contained within Topic 1 (see *Hinkley Inquirer* No. 1, p. 5) has to be sent, in writing, by literally yesterday!

Phil Davies of *Friends of the Earth* immediately alerted FoE groups on the importance of making a case under Topic 1 at once by contacting Keith Parker, the Programme Officer, on 0278 652408. If it is impossible for you to collect your wits (and evidence), it is still possible for written submissions to be made, but not as

much weight will be given to these statements as to spoken words to the Inquiry.

Just to look ahead for a moment, and help objectors who are thinking of coming to the Inquiry under Topic 2 (Safety and Health), here are two scenarios.

Scenario One has Topic 1 ending before Christmas and then Topic 2 starting before being interrupted in January for the CEGB's new coal evidence. Scenario Two has Topic 2 being delayed until after the coal evidence - in other words, later in January.

Either way, the subject will start off with evidence from the CEGB, the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, the National Radiological Protection Board, etc. But also either way, objectors on Topic 2 should waste no time in getting their proofs in. Otherwise they could face the same unpleasant deadlines now being experienced. For clarification of what counts as Topic 2 evidence, please call the Centre or the Inquiry Secretariat.

There goes our nice Christmas break...

Jill Sutcliffe

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Facilities For Objectors

LIBRARY

The Public Office at Cannington Court dealing with the Public Inquiry contains the whole gamut of documents being prepared in connection with the PWR proposals. Well worth a visit when you call in at the Inquiry and the staff are extremely friendly and helpful.

TRANSCRIPTS

Each day the shorthand writers plough on recording verbatim what is said in the Inquiry hall. These are available first thing the following day and are required and necessary reading to keep up to date with what has been referred to. It is impossible to earn a living and read everything but if you want to speak on particular points it

DIARY

This provisional outline programme is subject to change. Do contact Keith Parker, Programme Officer, 0278 444005 ext. 128, for up-to-date information and guidance.

Weeks Seven and Eight November 15 - 25

November 15

Procedural matters.

Evidence and cross-examination in turn of Mr. Ross and his two witnesses, Prof. Stephen Salter and Dr. Peter White, of James Brander, individual from London and of Allan Jeffery on behalf of Sedgemoor Green Party looking at systems vulnerability.

November 16

Evidence and cross-examination of Dr. Robert Drew, former Chief Technical Manager UKAEA, of Alan Debenham for West Somerset CND and of Mr. Jackson from the Railway Development Society, Severnside Branch.

November 17

Evidence and cross-examination of Mr. D. Swift-hook, witness for SHE on wind power, of Dr. Gregg of Devon Conservation Forum, of Mr. J. Kapp

of the Conservative Ecology Group and of Dr. Dave Elliott for SERA, Socialist Environmental and Resources Association.

November 18

Evidence and cross-examination of Karen Tunnah on Uranium mining, of Heather Jordan of the Women Working for a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific and of individual Julian Edmonds.

November 22

In Cardiff at the New Theatre, Park Place, Cardiff.

November 23

In Cardiff

November 24

Outstanding proofs and witnesses from COLA: Evidence and cross-examination of Mr. Brown on Least cost integrated planning (COLA 1), of J. W. Litchfield on Least cost integrated planning (COLA 18) and of Ms. S. F. Hickey on the Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, Oregon, USA.

November 25

COLA continues: evidence and cross-examination of Alex Henney on the US nuclear scene (COLA 17), of Brian Rome of the Bristol Branch of the Conservation Society and of Norman Jenkins, individual.

is well worth making sure you see what has been said on that subject. These can be obtained from the Secretariat, cost of weekly posting for four issues £2.00.

Transport

There is a free bus service to and from Cannington, as below.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Tuesday - Thursday | | |
| 9.00 am | Taunton BR Station | 5.55 pm |
| 9.30 | Bridgwater BR Station | 5.25 |
| 9.40 | Inquiry Venue | 5.15 |
| 9.45 | Creche | 5.10 |
| Friday | | |
| 8.00 am | Taunton | 4.25 pm |
| 8.30 | Bridgwater | 3.55 |
| 8.40 | Inquiry Venue | 3.45 |
| 8.45 | Creche | 3.40 |
| Creche on Fridays 8.30 am - 4 pm. | | |

Creche

People with children under five are welcome to use the excellent creche at Cannington. Open each day of the Inquiry from half-an-hour before proceedings begin. Telephone in advance to book your place: (0278) 653081.

The last word...

The Hinkley Point C Public Inquiry Secretariat, Cannington Court, Church Street, Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2HA. Telephone: 0278 444005.

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