

KICK NUCLEAR & NUCLEAR TRAINS



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The monthly mailing of Kick Nuclear and the Nuclear Trains Action Group of London Region CND.

Editor: David Polden

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REGULAR FRIDAY SOLIDARITY VIGIL

Every Friday (since August 2012) 10am-noon, leafletting outside Japanese Embassy, 101-104 Piccadilly (Green Park tube); then go on to new Tokyo Electric Power Company offices near Chancery Lane tube to leaflet there too. In solidarity with the anti-nuclear movement in Japan. Organised: *Kick Nuclear* and *Japanese Against Nuclear UK* (JAN UK)

NEXT ACTION

September 15th, 8-9am: leafletting delegates going in to the World Nuclear Association Symposium at the Park Plaza Hotel, (south of) Westminster Bridge, where we leafletted last year. Registration starts at 8am, speeches at 9am.

NEXT JOINT KN/NTAG PLANNING MEETING

Monday August 1st, 7pm, At CND Office. Address in masthead.

HINKLEY C: GOVERNMENT SCUPPERS "GO-AHEAD"

After months of continually putting off the "final investment decision" (FID) on whether to go ahead with Hinkley C - the last delay being supposedly to this September - on July 28th, at short notice, the EDF board met to decide whether to approve the FID for the plant. This they did, but only by a margin of 10-7, with a further member resigning from the board.

What happened next smacked of pure farce. Two hours after this final

decision the UK government, after years of professing its enthusiastic support for the project, stepped in and announced that ministers would now conduct another review of the Hinkley Point C project and announce its decision in the early autumn.

The announcement seems to have surprised EDF, whose directors were preparing to sign contracts with the government the following day and it is reported had erected a marquee and planned a signing ceremony in which the EDF's UK chief executive, Vincent De Rivaz and officials from China General Electric (CGN) who have a one-third stake in the project would take part. Following the government announcement this ceremony was cancelled.

Subsequently, matters became murkier. It emerged that the UK government had informed the French Prime Minister, Hollande, in advance that they would wish to review of the project and the EDF CEO and chairman of the board Jean-Bernard Levy, has subsequently told board members that he knew about the intended government delay before the board met to make the FID, but had believed that the PM, Theresa May, had only wanted "a few more days" to consider the project.

So why did the UK government or indeed Hollande not tip off the EDF board before its meeting that it would call for a lengthy delay to consider the project, thus avoiding embarrassing everybody concerned – EDF, the UK government, the French government, CGN and the Chinese government and indeed throwing yet further doubt over the whole project?

Was the UK government hoping - particularly through hinting it was having doubts about the project - that the EDF board would decide not to invest in Hinkley C, thus putting the obloquy for stopping the project onto EDF rather than the UK government? There are also financial considerations. The UK government would be liable for vast sums compensation to EDF if it decided to cancel the project at this stage.

Was the EDF board, in bringing forward the FID at such short notice, trying to bring about a *fait accompli*, leaving the UK government, because of fear of loss of face and monetary considerations, no alternative but to agree to go ahead with the project? Perhaps the hints from the UK government of doubts in the project had had the opposite effects to those intended and persuaded EDF to make its FID precipitately before the UK government could intervene.

Three of the main unions involved with EDF, who are all opposed to Hinkley C, subsequently called for the FID to be declared null and void because the decision had been made on incomplete information, because at least some of the board members had not been informed of the UK government's intention to

delay approval, to allow for further consideration of the project.

The Chinese government on August 9th expressed its displeasure at the delay through an article by the UK Chinese Ambassador in the *Financial Times* in which he warned that Theresa May, in imposing a delay on a final decision on Hinkley C, had placed ties between the UK and China in jeopardy. He went on to call for “mutual trust” between the two countries and expressed the hope that, “the UK will keep its door open to China and that the UK government will continue to support Hinkley Point – and come to the decision as soon as possible that the project can proceed smoothly.”

The talk of “mutual trust” is significant in the light of it being suggested that the reason for the government’s delay was that they had security concerns about the Chinese government being given so much access to the UK’s major infrastructure.

There seem indeed to be some basis for this concern. Last October May’s chief of staff, Nick Timothy in *Conservative Home* talked about Chinese intelligence working against the UK’s interest and fears that China could use its nuclear role to build weaknesses into computer systems that would allow them to shut down Britain’s energy production at will.

NUCLEAR TRAINS DAY OF ACTION, July 23rd

Direct Rail Services (DRS), who run the nuclear trains which carry highly-radioactive “spent” nuclear fuel rods from UK nuclear power stations to Sellafield, held their annual “Open Day” on Saturday July 23rd this year at their Crewe Depôt.

Martyn Lowe, an NTAG member in Liverpool, helped leaflet the crowds going into at a similar event held at the Crewe Depôt in 2014 and at the Carlisle Depôt last year, and reported that the event attracted lots of visitors, including train-spotters and families and that they were very willing to take leaflets. So he decided to organise similar leafletting at Crewe again this year. It was agreed at a nuclear trains workshop in Manchester to support this action with leafletting at stations up and down the country served by nuclear trains.

Here is Martyn’s report of the leafletting of the Open Day, followed by reports from some of the 11 stations at which supporting actions took place. (Some have been edited for reasons of space.)

Bristol

Southwest Against Nuclear held an awareness-raising event at Bristol Temple Meads Train Station. Leaflets were given out about the problems of nuclear

waste transport and maps of Britain’s Nuclear Train routes showing people that this deadly silent cargo isn’t just a problem for communities living near nuclear power stations but for communities everywhere; the highly radioactive spent fuel is far more vulnerable during transport than it is inside the containment of the reactors it came from!

Interesting conversations were had and many leaflets were given out; over-all the response was positive - people had questions about what we think should be done about it, our answer has to begin with the obvious and that is to curtail production of more nuclear material, acknowledging that we cannot ensure its isolation from the environment for the timescales involved. The best that we can do is to continue to manage, monitor and repackage the so-called “legacy” waste, and pass it forward to the next generation letting them know that we’ve failed to protect them and that this is the best we can do. Christine Porath

Bridgwater

Stop Hinkley held a protest from 9.30 to 3pm at Bridgwater station, the start of the nuclear train’s journey carrying nuclear waste from Hinkley B. Lots of interesting conversations took place with local people about all aspects of the Hinkley and the waste story. Jo Smolden



Bromley South

Three people gave out about 100 anti-nuclear train leaflets outside the station.

Crewe

We managed to shift 1,800 leaflets in the space of 3¼ hours, despite the fact that only three of us turned up - the problem with Crewe is that there are no local peace, eco-, or anti-nukiller groups.

Now for the fun bit. The first person I meet upon turning up at the depot was Mark, the head of security at DRS. I'd meet him at the DRS depot at Crewe while leafletting outside of their open day two years ago, and at the similar event at Carlisle last year. So it was a case of big smiles, shaking each other by the hand, and “it’s very nice to see you again”. Mark refers to us as their

“Official Protesters” and at the end of our protest he asked if he could take a selfie pic with the three of us in it. This we were very happy to do with smiling sun signs clearly visible in the picture.

I learnt from Mark that he wrote an article about last year’s Carlisle protest that was published in the DRS staff magazine and that he has been looking at our nukiller waste trains Facebook page and some of our webpages.

Also a woman called Kyle, who is the DRS Communications & Marketing Manager came out to talk to me. This was a very productive conversation as I was able to mention some of our safety concerns about the flasks, and the state of the track they travel over. Kyle said safety is one of the matters that she & the company is concerned with and we agreed to hold a meeting in order to talk over these concerns in the next few months. So for the first time ever we will be able to hold talks with the management of DRS about our various concerns. We need to discuss how best we can approach these talks.

Martyn Lowe (edited)

Inverness

Highlands Against Nuclear Trains (HANT) members and supporters set up a stall outside Inverness Station on the day of action to call for the halting of nuclear trains from Dounreay to Sellafield

HANT was then moved on by British Transport Police, then by Eastgate Centre Security from Falcon Square and finally the HSBC bank before continuing “fourth time lucky” at a site on the Inverness High Street opposite a vacant shop!

Falcon Square is owned by real estate fund manager F&C REIT and when built was to “replace Town House end of the High Street as a gathering point for civic events” Clearly this aim has not been communicated to Eastgate Centre security guards!

HANT highlighted the dangers involved in these train movements which include: the low level radiation emitted from the flasks carried on the trains; the danger of terrorist attack or accident and that the only current use for the plutonium in the fuel being in Trident nuclear warheads.

The petition, which was signed by 123 people called on the British Government and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) to halt the transport of nuclear waste from Dounreay to Sellafield due to the unacceptable risks to local populations and the environment

Many people who spoke to us were unaware that nuclear trains passed through Inverness and there was almost universal support for HANT’s campaign with many people linking the issues of Trident nuclear submarines and civil nuclear

power

HANT will continue to campaign for all waste to be retained at Dounreay where it has been generated”

Tor Justad, Chairperson of HANT. See www.hant.co.uk

North Wales

Efa Wulle of “People Against Wylfa B” reports: “We had actions in Colwyn Bay, Bangor, Llandudno Junctions and Rhyl with specially produced leaflets and other anti-nuclear material.” These are stations on the line carrying nuclear trains from Wylfa B nuclear power station in Anglesey. Below photo shows group in action.



Shepherd’s Bush

In 1¼ hour, under a blazing sun in an action organised by the NTAG, four of us gave out 650 leaflets produced for the occasion. These pointed out that nuclear trains from Dungeness went through Shepherd’s Bush overground station on a regular basis and explained the dangers these trains represented. We meant to go on for two hours, but the heat defeated us! We also had a large yellow banner saying “Nuclear Trains Action Group” attached to cycle racks in the middle of the road opposite us and a stall with information about nuclear trains, our campaign and nuclear power generally, as well as badges and stickers. This produced only moderate interest in the heat! David Polden.