NUCLEAR INDUSTRY NOT WORTH THE MONEY?

A SPRU report, UK Nuclear Privatisation and the Public Sector Liabilities, reached the front page of the Independent with its assertion that the nuclear industry may be worthless. According to authors Gordon MacKerron and Mike Sadnicki, government plans to sell the greater part of the UK nuclear generating industry are unlikely to raise much cash for taxpayers and will leave a huge and unfunded liability for nuclear clean-up.

The report also warns that the potentially poor sale price for the new nuclear stations may tempt the government to keep some of the liabilities that belong with these stations in the public sector. Overall, the government may get just £800m from the privatisation of the nuclear industry, less than a third of the £2.6b it is hoping for.

The root of the problem, say the authors, is that nuclear power has always been uneconomic in the UK. In the past this has been handled by pushing up as many costs as possible into the future ("liabilities"), and avoiding setting up any funding mechanism to pay for them. £30b undiscounted future costs now face the industry – a predicament highlighted by the government’s privatisation plans.

The government is planning to privatise the newer nuclear stations in a new company, British Energy. Given

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Steve Bell Exhibition at the Gardner

Photo by kind permission of the Evening Argus

A retrospective exhibition of political cartoonist Steve Bell’s work opened on 12 January at the Gardner Centre. Until 2 February, the public can enjoy the acid wit of the man who immortalised John Major’s grey Y-fronts. As Guardian cartoonist and last year’s Political Cartoonist of the Year, Steve has come a long way from “an interminable year spent drawing fertiliser bags, healthy grass and turnips in the Publicity Department at ICI Billingham.”

In recognition of his achievements the University is to award Steve Bell the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters at its Winter Graduation Ceremony at the Gardner Centre on Thursday 25 January.

The University is also to confer honorary degrees of Doctor of Science on Dr Jan de Winter, one of the world’s most eminent cancer specialists, Dr Peter Doyle, a leading industrial scientist and Trevor Mann, the distinguished engineer and industrialist.

Fire in the Refectory – Update on Services

The fire is still under investigation. Refectory staff are doing all they can to get things back to normal. At the time of going to press services are:

- Main staircase, south end: still closed.
- Bookshop: now open. Newsagent operating from bookshop, selling newspapers only.
- Catering: Coffee Shop, Level 1 and Level 2 Refectory services all functioning as normal.
- Grapevine Bar: now open as normal. Access via the South Fire Escape staircase (see signs).
- Supermarket: hopefully to open Monday.
- Laundrette: as normal.
- Lloyds Bank Kiosk: closed due to loss of electrical power. Use Barclays machines, Sussex House.
- Post office: open.
- Travel Agent: closed. All business conducted via Carlson Wagonlit, Crawley, 01293 514601.
- Porters’ Lodge: destroyed. Temporary cabin outside south end entrance.
- Private Dining Rooms: limited service available. Call David Chick, x3929, for details.
- Update: see USIS:
  http://www.sussex.ac.uk
Maths Masterclasses

Forty-six teenagers from local schools took part in the Thirteenth series of Royal Institution Mathematics Masterclasses at the University throughout last term. The children met in MAPS on eight Saturday mornings. Visiting lecturers taught the children interesting extra-curricula areas of maths, setting them problems and puzzles. Many local teachers gave up their time to act as tutors with the children. Thanks are due to the Dean of SMS and everyone who helped, particularly the porters.

Revolutionising Russian Housing

CCS lecturer Peter Ambrose travelled to St Petersburg in December as part of an EC team of housing experts. The INTAS-funded specialists from Sweden and the UK advised the Russian Federation on how to privatise their public housing. Eleven out of 30 million housing units have been privatised to date in Russia. Peter’s team has been granted 66,000 ecus to run a three-year advisory programme to help complete the task.

Alumni Reunion: Sixties Swingers Reunite

The class of 1966 entrants to the University will celebrate the 30th anniversary of their arrival at Sussex with a Reunion Weekend on the 13-14 April. The alumni will be taken on campus tours, meet former tutors, attend a dinner with guest speakers and twist the night away at a 60s retro disco. All students who arrived in ’66, or staff who were here at any time between 1966-70 are warmly invited to attend. The Alumni Office would like to hear from anyone who thinks they might be able to help with names, addresses or clues regarding any staff or students from ’66. Please contact Shivonne on 2334 or email: alumni@admin.susx.ac.uk.

New Faces

Wendy Clements, BIOLS

Wendy Clements studied Psychology at Royal Holloway and Bedford College before moving to Sussex to start her PhD. Three years later, she’s just begun work as a lecturer in experimental psychology, focusing particularly on child development. The perils of life as an experimental psychologist were discovered early on at a local playgroup. “I’d made a wonderful scene with mice and cheese, and the first kid grabbed the bit of cheese and put it in her mouth. In the end she took it out and threw it across the room. I had to frantically make another to carry on with the experiment.” Another time, in the pouring rain, Wendy stepped out of the car clutching her felt-tip coloured scene – only to arrive in front of the kids with bright green hands and a ruined background. After months of research based in sand-pits and classrooms, one thing for Wendy is certain: her own kids won’t be here for a long time yet.

Andrew Ormsby, COGS

After a brief foray into the world of get-rich-quick computer whiz-kids, Software Systems Lecturer, Andrew Ormsby, is back where he feels happy, in a research environment. “After two years in commercial computing,” he says, “I didn’t like the nasty things it did to other people.”

Today, Andrew’s research might just cut computer giants like Bill Gates down to size. Software could be designed in chunks that can be mixed and matched to the consumer’s requirements.

Hillwalker Andrew’s previous home was a tiny cottage in the hills above Aberystwyth. At Easter, he’ll sail his 32 foot sloop from Cardigan Bay back to Brighton – a three week trip if visits to pubs are included. Sailing fits in perfectly with an academic’s long hot summers, but Andrew’s sights are set further afield. His life-long ambition is to sail round the world. If he develops a research interest in mobile telecommunications, would he be eligible for a two year sabbatical?

LETTERS

EURO student, Diana Housego-Woolgar, reports from strike-bound Paris on life as a Year Abroad Student.

“Receiving the October Bulletin prompted me to write of my experiences as a current mature student thrown out for a year to the mercy of a foreign university.”

I note you are getting the car parking in hand at Sussex. Here, Paris has been virtually under siege, out on strikes of every description. Most of Paris travels by metro and it was quite a revelation to have to walk. The professeurs couldn’t really go on strike, but when they turned up to half a class they’d cancel it. The student union representatives obviously lived nearby. They walked into classes and requested students to stand up for solidarity by walking out – so they did.

I note Sussex is having a lot of new building work carried out. The promised new classrooms and buildings for the Paris universities have been on hold for ten years. The classrooms often hold twice the number required and you don’t always find a desk or a chair.

It’s all over now and back to normal. I’m quite grateful to the strike now. I’ve discovered parts of Paris I never knew existed and become fitter than I have been for a long time. You won’t see me walking into Sussex next year though, so I hope the parking’s sorted out by then. Best wishes for 1996 to all those involved in the Bulletin and those in the European Office who thoughtfully sent it out to me.”

Diana Housego-Woolgar

Dear Editor

Tomorrow’s World on BBC1 has started up a mailing list to give updates on the programme and what’s coming up in future weeks. We would like to get as many academics/students as possible on the list to inform them when a specific story is going to appear that may of interest to them. I know it is an unusual request but I think the mailing list will be appreciated by academics in the long term.

To subscribe to the mailing list (at no cost), send an email to: majordomo@bbcn.co.uk and put “subscribe megalab 96” in the main body of the email (leave the ‘subject’ line blank).

Ian Barnes, Tomorrow’s World
ian.barnes@bbc.co.uk, tel: 0181 752 6680

Dear Editor

No doubt there will be great competition for the coveted award of ‘My Favourite Mistake’ in the Spring Term Arts Timetable, but I think this one will be hard to beat. It seems that I, a Lecturer in Media Studies, am due to teach the MA option in Tudor Humanism in conjunction with two lecturers in English and one Professor of Physics. Now that’s what I call interdisciplinarity.

Andy Medhurst, CCS
Sussex University Sub Aqua Club members dive off the Sussex coast, Cornwall and Scotland, with some members making it as far afield as the Red Sea, Thailand and Australia. The club trains all new members to an internationally recognised qualification. After training, which takes a term and a half, members can take their first open dive. For further information, contact Liz, Simon or Shelly on 727696.

Here Simon Judd describes life beneath the waves:

One of my weekend dives last summer was to the wreck of an old steam-trawler, about six miles from Brighton Marina. This was one of my first deep dives, down to 25 metres, and I was struck by how dark it was down there. Before I could even see the wreck, my torch light picked out the silvery flanks of a large shoal of poating drifting around it. Soon we were surrounded by them. It was eerie to see the outline of the ship looming out of the darkness. I shuddered at the thought of its unfortunate crew. Life covered the rusty decks though. Large crabs marched among the anemones and starfish, seemingly oblivious to our presence. Colourful wrasse picked at the urchins. I saw delicate, glass-like, jewel anemones forming a carpet of pinks, green and oranges. As we reached the rudder, there were four large fish called pollack hanging in ambush under its shadow. But it was time to leave, and our thoughts turned to making the ascent to the surface.

Voluntary Recruitment Fair

This year’s Voluntary Recruitment Fair (Mandela Hall, 10am-4pm, Tuesday 30 January), attended by Oxfam, Mind, Social Services, the Samaritans, Street Outreach and Rape Crisis, is an excellent opportunity for students to get involved with local organisations and for those organisations to raise their profiles and recruit volunteers.

The Fair is organised by ‘Link-up’, the Students’ Union Community Action Programme and Volunteer Bureau. It forms part of ONE WORLD WEEK, organised by Sussex Third World First. The theme of One World Week (Monday 29 January – Saturday 3 February) is making connections between ‘here and there’, ‘us and them’, internationally and within our own communities. Events will be run by various student groups, clubs and societies with an interest in social, cultural, environmental, political and humanitarian issues.

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY NOT WORTH THE MONEY?

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the liabilities involved however, the sale value could easily be minus £2.6b. The older Magnox stations have clean-up liabilities which exceed future income by £7.5b, and will have to stay in the private sector. With the government not planning to spend any of the hoped-for privatisation revenue on these huge liabilities, Magnox will be a drain on public re-

sources for many years.

“The issues here are of great public importance,” say the authors. “Taxpayers and consumers have already made very large financial contributions to the nuclear power industry, most recently in the form of some £6.6b of consumers’ money paid to Nuclear Electric through the Fossil Fuel Levy.”
What's on...

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

- Monday 22 January
  2pm Feminism and... Lecture: Always Cinderella? Feminism and Comparative Social History, B. Einhorn, Arts C133.
  3.30pm Women's Studies Seminar: Realism, Emancipation and Ecofeminism, J. Parker, Arts C133.
  4.15pm Chemistry Colloquium: Chemistry in Pictures, D. Clarke (Kodak Ltd), MSLT, MOLS.
  4.30pm Neuroscience Seminar: Enhancer Trapping and Brain Function in Mice, G. Lally (Cambridge), Biology Lecture Room.

- Tuesday 23 January
  12.30pm Sussex Life Histories Research Seminars: Deconstructing Memories: issues about oral history relationships and remembering, A. Thomson, University Library Seminar Room 122.
  1.30pm Psychology Seminar: The Attentional Blink: the eyes have it but the brain? K. Shapiro (Bangor), PB2A1.
  3pm Sussex European Institute Seminar: Unemployment benefits and incentives in transition: an example from Hungary, J. Micklewright (London), AT1, SE1.
  4pm COGS Seminar: Solving Constraint Satisfaction Problems with MV-Resolution, A. Frisch (York), PB5C11.
  4.15pm Biochemistry, Genetics & Development Seminar: Entry of cytotoxic proteins into mammalian cells, M. Lord (Warwick), Biology Lecture Theatre.
  5pm Social Anthropology Seminar: Men's work and women's work is never done: gender complementarity in a Highland New Guinea ritual, P. Peach, Arts E419.
  5pm German Colloquium: Hannah Arendt's New Concept of Politics, A. Hess, Arts A155.

- Wednesday 24 January
  12.30pm Environmental Science Seminar: Managing Mountain Environments in Morocco, R. Parish & D. Funnell, MOLS, MS3.
  2pm USIE Faculty Seminar: Improving Tutorial Support for MA Students, L. Dart et al, Arts D610.

- Thursday 25 January
  4pm Experimental Psychology Seminar: The rocky road from task prediction to task completion, D. Griffin, EP 3.9.
  5pm Social & Political Thought Seminar: Gewirth and the Concept of Power, S. Brown, Arts A71.
  5pm Geography Research Seminar: Geography in Schools: the Key Issues, T. Blunt, Arts D610.

- Friday 26 January
  2pm SPRU Seminar: Innovation and Industrialisation: a long term view, N. von Tunzelmann, EDB Lecture Theatre 121.
  4pm Astronomy Seminar: Simulating the Universe, P. Thomas, PB1A7.

In the Bookshop

- A Dictionary of Phonetics and Phonology
- Chemistry of Fullerenes, Advanced Series of Fullerenes, Vol IV

Monday 22nd January - Sunday 28th January

Film at the Gardener

- Tuesday 23 January
  7.45pm Shock Corridor
  7.45pm Carrington

- Sunday 28 January
  6pm Carrington
  9pm The Abyss

Meeting House

- Lunchtime Recital
  1.20pm, Tue 23 Jan, Gavin Ashenden (Tenor), Chapel.

Language Centre

- Mandarin
  Some places still available on elementary level Mandarin course, Wednesdays 5.6-3.30pm. This is a course in colloquial Chinese for those with some experience of the language.
  Some places may still be available on French, Spanish, German, Italian, Russian and Japanese courses. Contact Alex van Westen, Language Centre, Arts A, x8006.

Academic Conferences

- The Direction of Contemporary Capitalism
  International interdisciplinary conference at the University of Sussex, 26-28 April 1996. Speakers will assess the direction and nature of some of the central economic, social and political changes in capitalist societies over the last two decades, the possibilities and dangers they create for the future, and their implications for social theory and political philosophy.
  Speakers include: Jeffrey Alexander, Elmar Jonathan Boswell, Shere Hite, Krishan Kumar, Michael Mann, Adam Michnik, Hans Singer, Hilary Wainwright, Stephen Wood.
  Fee: £35, £15 students. To register, send cheques payable to University of Sussex to Andrew Chitty, GRC in the Social Sciences, or email: s postpone@sussex.ac.uk.

- Teaching Culture & the Culture & Cultures of Teaching
  Interdisciplinary Conference at the University of Sussex, 22-23 March 1996. Drawing together writers and teachers of Cultural Studies, and practitioners and policy makers in the arts and cultural industries, Will explore issues in the teaching, practice, theory and politics of Cultural Studies.
  Plenary Speakers: Richard Johnson, Carole Freeman, Alan Sinfield.
  Booking forms from Mary Hoar/Gerry Holloway, x8449/4131.

Miscellaneous

- Thankyou
  To all the staff in Sussex House for the generous Christmas gift received by Ted & Peter, the Sussex House Porters.

- Girl Guides
  Leaders, helps and administrators needed by the Girl Guides. Tel: Dorothy Cook (County Sec.), 554272.

- USIS on the World Wide Web
  The University's Home page has a Website number http://www.sussex.ac.uk, and not the number listed in last week's Bulletin.

Small Ads

- HOUSE FOR SALE: Lewes Victorian house, close to University bus route & rail station, 2 double bedrooms, living room, study/bedroom, large kitchen/dining room. Garden, sun-trap in summer. £80,000 ono. Tel: x2496, 473465, email: n.alred@sussex.ac.uk.

- ROOMS TO LET: 2 rooms on top floor of peaceful house. Own shower, toilet & kitchenette, c.h. Near Sainsburys, Lewes Road, £45 p.w. per room. Non-smokers preferred. Available 5 Feb. Tel: 682406 (answer phone).

- ROOM TO LET: in Kenthouse. Share kitchen & bathroom. £40 pw. Tel: 692944.

- PRINTER FOR SALE: Epson Stylus 800, inkjet, good condition with good quality printing. Boxed with manual. £130. Tel: Marc 327966, email: marc@ogs.sussex.ac.uk.

- FRENCH LESSONS: By French assistant. Reasonable rates. Or, exchange of conversation with English native speakers. Tel: Isabelle 747551 (10am-5pm) or leave a message.

- HOUSE WANTED: French girl seeks to share house in central Brighton area. Friendly atmosphere, smoker. Tel: Isabelle as above.

- CONVERSATION: Person wishes to have Spanish conversation in exchange for French or English. Tel: Pierre x2640, email: tapa8.

CCE Saturday Schools

- 27 January
  Music in the Attic. J. Broughton. At the University. £16/£12/£6.
  Psychoanalysis and Culture. D. Barford. At the University. £16/£12/£6.
  Starlight on the Rails: the Railroad in American Literature. C. Gould. At the University. £16/£12/£6.
  Sex, Biology & Culture. M. Jones & L. Madeville. At the University. £16/£12/£6.

- 3 February
  Taking Word for Windows Further. D. Longman. At the University. £32/£24/£12.
  Medieval Paleography. C. Whitnack. At the E. Sussex Record Office, Lewes. £16/£12/£6.

Bulletin

The Bulletin appears every Friday of term with copy deadline the preceding Friday lunchtime. We welcome any suggestions for news, details of events, letters and small ads. Please contact the Information Office, Sussex House on ext. 8289 or email: Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.