



## EDF nuclear reactor carries 'Chernobyl-size' explosion risk

The Guardian 7<sup>th</sup> March 2010

**Protest network Sortir du Nucléaire says leaked EDF documents show reactor's defects could cause massive nuclear accident**

French anti-nuclear campaigners claim a new power plant being built in Normandy carries an accident risk of "Chernobyl proportions".

Sortir du Nucléaire, a protest network, says leaked confidential documents show that tests on the third-generation pressurised water reactor present a potentially catastrophic scenario.

The network has eight internal papers showing the results of tests on the European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) that, it claims, reveal defects in the mechanism that controls the nuclear reaction. These defects, it says, could cause an explosion sending a massive cloud of radiation into the atmosphere.

The documents, leaked by an insider at the French electricity firm EDF, which will run the new Flamanville 3 power station, date from between 2004 and 2009. "They show the main arguments in favour of the EPR ... are false," a spokesperson for Sortir du Nucléaire said.

The news will cause consternation among campaigners against nuclear power in the UK as EDF is one of several companies hoping to build the next generation of British reactors over the next seven years.

Philippe Brousse, Sortir du Nucléaire's director, said the documents revealed that in certain circumstances, the reactor ejected the cluster rods that regulate the nuclear reaction, causing a leak of coolant and, eventually, an explosion.

A committee of experts asked by Sortir du Nucléaire to examine the documents concluded: "It seems that the conception of the EPR increases the risk of a Chernobyl-type accident, with the destruction of the reactor chamber and the massive dispersion of nuclear radiation into the atmosphere."



Sortir du Nucléaire claims EDF kept the findings secret and accused it of taking risks "for economic reasons". However, EDF said the documents were part of the "normal process of analysing risks" applied to all nuclear reactors. "No conclusion can be drawn from them at the moment," said a spokesperson, adding that the papers form part of a report to go before France's nuclear safety authority by the end of the year.

Flamanville 3 is the first of the new EPRs developed by France's nuclear company Areva using French and German technology to be built in France.

# 80-strong group calls for UK public inquiry on new nuclear

Platts News Agency 11th March 2010

**A large group of academics, politicians, planners and environmentalists called on Thursday for the UK government to hold a public inquiry into the justification for new nuclear reactors in the UK.**

Claiming that key issues surrounding the safety of the reactors and the management and disposal of the nuclear waste they would generate are yet to be resolved, the 80-strong group said the decision on justification required a more involved debate than the government had given it so far.

The justification process, required under the 2004 law called The Justification of Practices Involving Ionizing Radiation, allows for the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy and Climate Change to hold an inquiry, but it does not specify its nature or form.

"Once the justification decision has been taken it will be all but impossible to re-open major issues of policy on nuclear," the group said in a statement released during a press conference at Westminster Palace.

A government consultation on DECC Secretary Ed Miliband's proposed decision in favour of justification closed on February 22, but the government has not yet responded to the consultation. In that consultation, DECC said it had not decided yet whether to hold an inquiry, despite previous calls for one by various individuals and groups.

Thursday's call was publicly backed by some 80 individuals including many academics from various disciplines including politics, geography, sociology,

planning, and environmental sciences, as well as politicians, mainly from the Liberal

Democratic Party, but also some from the ruling Labour Party such as former environment minister Michael Meacher.

Jane Davidson, Minister for the Environment, Sustainability and Housing of the Welsh Assembly government also backed the call for a public inquiry as did Jonathan Porritt, a former chair of the government's Sustainable Development Commission and two former members of the government's Committee on Radioactive Waste Management.

The government has said the country must have a new fleet of nuclear power stations to replace the ageing existing plants many of which will close over the next decade, but also to help the UK meet its self-imposed carbon emission reduction targets and for energy security.

French energy giant EDF has said it wants to build at least four new nuclear plants in Britain, and German counterparts E.ON and RWE have expressed an interest in building three. But all are waiting on the government's reform of the planning system to strip away obstacles that have delayed major infrastructure projects for several years in the past.

They are also pressing the government for some form of subsidy or guarantee either on the price of electricity or the price of carbon to make the huge capital outlay for a nuclear plant attractive for potential investors.

## Letter to Ed Miliband

Supporters will find enclosed a letter addressed to the Secretary of State, calling for a public inquiry on 'Justification' of nuclear power. As outlined in this article, scores of academics and politicians have demanded an inquiry into the adverse effects of nuclear power. Under European law the Government must justify any new radioactive process such as new reactors but Ed Miliband plans to sign this off himself, despite his well-known bias towards nuclear. Please sign and post this letter, adding weight to our demands for the inquiry.

# Why nuclear plans are 'totally wrong'

Western Daily Press 18 March 2010

**New power station will leave an unacceptable legacy, says environmentalist**

A new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point is not needed and would leave an unacceptable legacy of radioactive waste to future generations, according to a leading environmentalist.

Jonathon Porritt voiced his views to a packed meeting of local anti-nuclear campaigners who are opposed to the Somerset scheme.

Instead Porritt supports a power-generating barrage across the Severn Estuary as part of a sustainable alternative, in spite of its potential environmental and social costs. He said the barrage would meet up to ten percent of the country's electricity needs.

Mr Porritt, a former director of Friends of the Earth and head of the government advisory body, the Sustainable Development Commission addressed a meeting of lobby group Stop Hinkley in Taunton on Tuesday.

## Agreed in principle

He said there were practical and ethical objections to the new nuclear power construction programme agreed in principle by the Government, and of which Hinkley C would be the first.

"It would be totally wrong to impose on future generations a problem for which we have no solution," he said.

"We don't know how to deal with nuclear waste.

There is no clear strategy. We are just hoping that the next generation can sort it out."

Spent nuclear fuel could be stored at a new Hinkley nuclear power station for as long as 160 years.

French firm EDF Energy is expected to submit an application to build Hinkley C to the new Infrastructure Planning Commission this year [2<sup>nd</sup> August- Ed].

The first nuclear power station on site, Hinkley A is closed and being decommissioned and the second, Hinkley B, is due to close in 2016.

The Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency are working together to assess designs proposed for new stations. EDF is proposing twin EPR reactors for Hinkley.

Last November the Health & Safety Executive said it had a number of issues over the design of the EPRs and would not allow them to be built unless the French firm amended plans to make them safer.

Mr Porritt said: "I have huge concerns about the cost of nuclear power. Don't believe a single word that comes out of the industry. This is an industry that has obscured, concealed, lied and deviated from the truth from the 1950's onwards."

The economics of nuclear power were so unreliable, he added, that it was possible that Hinkley C would never be built because investors would have nothing to do with it.

He was also sceptical that new nuclear reactors would help in the battle against climate change.

EDF Energy said it "believes that nuclear power, alongside renewables and other low carbon generation, has a vital role to play in providing secure, clean and affordable energy supplies for the UK.

"our proposals for a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point will play a key role in helping to achieve this by providing low carbon electricity for around five million homes."

## Video of Jonathon Porritt's talk in Taunton

Watch Jonathon Porritt's eloquent case against nuclear power from the comfort of your armchair! Supporters can purchase a DVD film of the inspiring 90 minute talk given by Jonathon for just £5.

Call Paul Collins on 07855 941 211 or email him at: [goannafilms@gmail.com](mailto:goannafilms@gmail.com) website: <http://goannafilms.wordpress.com/>

We also plan to post highlights of Jonathon's talk on U-tube. Keep an eye on our website for more information:

[www.stophinkley.org](http://www.stophinkley.org)

## MPs call for debate on nuclear policy statement

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee slammed the Government's nuclear proposals and recent consultation. It called for significantly more detail on what interim radioactive waste storage will entail for local communities like Hinkley and the integrity of those sites. It also called on ministers to set out key milestones for the delivery of a long-term storage facility, reporting annually to Parliament on progress. A full parliamentary debate and vote on a new, improved policy statement was also demanded.

*Stop Hinkley* gave oral evidence to the Select Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> January. Watch the video on:

<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=5730>

## Petition against Hinkley 'C'

We need to show the strength of feeling across Somerset and the whole of the United Kingdom against the EdF proposal for a massive new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point. That means we have just a few months to get thousands of signatures to present to the government when EdF puts in its planning application (expected at the beginning of August 2010).

Get friends to sign the enclosed petition or sign online at

[www.stophinkley.org/PETITION.htm](http://www.stophinkley.org/PETITION.htm)

where you can also go to print off copies and collect signatures by 31<sup>st</sup> July.

## Stop Hinkley at Glastonbury

Former *Stop Hinkley* Coordinator Crispin Aubrey, has secured a stall in the Green Field area of the Glastonbury Festival. We have a core group to run the stall but need volunteers who have tickets and can fill in for short periods. Or just drop by for a chat! Dates: 23<sup>rd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> June.

Please contact Suki on:  
[suki@parsonfarm.co.uk](mailto:suki@parsonfarm.co.uk)



## Events

**"In the shadow of Hinkley"**  
Programme on impact of Hinkley Point  
on the surrounding area.  
Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> March 11am Radio 4  
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**EdF meeting on proposals for  
Cannington village**  
7.30pm Wed 31<sup>st</sup> March  
Cannington Village Hall  
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**Stop Hinkley monthly meeting**  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April  
at 7.30pm  
West Bow House, Milton Place  
off West Street, Bridgwater  
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**Chernobyl Day leafleting**  
Come and help  
Details to be confirmed  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April

## Contacts

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