VoS News

The Views of Scotland Newsletter No 3 April 2003

MSP candidate calls for an end to wind-power carnage

See page 3

Finnie's Folly or DTI ploy:

Does Dough-for-Blow scam herald comeback for nuclear?

Make no mistake. The Breeze Wheeze is a cover for a Nuclear Revival.

Westminster has decided to cover Scotland with wind turbines and export their flaky product down south to meet England's meaningless Kyoto targets. It's well on the way to doing it.

The consequences to jobs in Scotland's tourism and conventional energy sectors are irrelevant. The damage to the environment is of no interest to anybody. Considerations of the engineering viability of the scheme are a tiresome bore. The lessons of the energy disasters in Denmark are just too dull to contemplate.

It has nothing to do with cutting CO2 emissions (the Danish experience is that excessive reliance on wind power *increases* emissions). It has everything to do with ecological totemism — and the political rehabilitation of the nuclear power industry.

The big guns in the environmental movement have fallen for the DTI line. They get their 'green' symbols (and some of them — Greenpeace and the RSPB for starters — even stand to turn a shilling as commission agents for wind generators).

Meanwhile, the power companies get to run the oldest, most profitable and dirtiest coal-fired plant in the country to provide the power that the turbines appear to be producing.

And our chums in the power sector get to make a bob or two on the way thanks to Renewables Obligation price fixing.

What on earth for? Almost every power engineer in the land has told the government it won't work. The Scottish Executive, charged with turning Scotland into England's windfarm, has ridden roughshod over local authorities, NDOs, objectors' groups and the rest in their frenzy to do Wilson's bidding.

Because the government plans to rehabilitate nuclear power, not now but in its third term of office probably with a new generation of imported US technology.

We analyse on page six two recent policy documents — the DTI's Energy White Paper (published in February 2003) and Ross Finnie's *Securing a Renewable Future* (March 2003) to chart the progress of this scheme.

We appreciate that this is a controversial assessment of these documents and we welcome correspondence on it.

Brian Wilson lets his slip show ...

ENERGY MINISTER Brian Wilson has finally come clean: Scotland *is* to become England's Windfarm.

He has conceded that getting 20 per cent of Scotland's electricity from renewables is unviable.

This confirms VIEWS OF SCOTLAND's arguments in its response to Ross Finnie's recent consultation document.

On the hustings in the Western Isles Wilson said:

'It is quite right, because of our natural resources, that we should have higher generation targets for renewables in Scotland than the rest of the country. But the credibility of these targets depends totally on selling the electricity into the English markets.'

In a swipe at the SNP he went on: 'Scotland could not sustain 20 per cent of generation from renewables – far less 40 or 50 per cent – as an independent state and separate market.'

In what might as well have been a quotation from VoS's recent document 'Scotland's Landscape: England's Windfarm?' he continued:

'No country can carry such a high proportion of renewables because of their inherent unpredictability – as Denmark has found with wind and Norway has found with hydro.

'A high Scottish output of renewables has to be dispersed throughout the far larger markets of the south. It is precisely to achieve this that the government is currently preparing legislation [BETTA] to create a single all-Britain market in electricity.'

He claimed that an independent Scotland would be unable to sustain the cost of transporting wind-generated power south.

He further claimed that southern power companies would have no 'need or obligation' to buy Scottish and the market would therefore prevail.

That at least is debatable.

VoS News

SINCE THE LAST *VoS News* was published in February, the Department of Trade and Industry in Westminster has published its long-awaited Energy White Paper.

Press interest generally focussed on a coy reference to the fact that the nuclear power option could be re-examined in the near future. Otherwise, the paper was widely dismissed as a fudge. Which it was.

Shortly after, the Scottish Executive Environment Minister Ross Finnie published his conclusions after a six-month consultation. We analyse both papers in this issue.

Press speculation is that Finnie will lose his job in an incoming Lib-Dem/New Labour coalition.

Wilson is also known to be unhappy with New Labour's 'Renewables or Bust' scenario (he does at least grasp that 'bust' is an all-too-real option) and he too is rumoured to be ripe for transfer in the next cabinet reshuffle.

Meanwhile, the Scottish Executive has given the go-ahead for massive wind-driven power stations at Robin Rigg in the Solway Firth and Cairn Uish and Paul's Hill in Moray.

It has also given the slightly smaller An Suidhe site the go-ahead after a Public Inquiry. God help Inverleiver's tourist trade.

In all cases, objections from Scottish Natural Heritage or the RSPB and (in the case of Robin Rigg) two local authorities were over-ruled.

However, approval for ScottishPower's massive proposal for Whitelee on the outskirts of Glasgow has been 'postponed' until the summer, much to the company's chagrin.

Rumour has it that the Ministry of Defence is sceptical of reassurances about plans to transfer a weather station currently in the middle of the site and relied on by emergency services and others.

The civil aviation authorities are also believed to be standing firm on upgrades to the radar systems at Glasgow Airport and, by implication, other airports as well. Well, we should be grateful for that.

We are pleased to welcome a new contributor, Iens Elliot Nyegaard, who has campaigned against the wind-power scam in Denmark for twenty-odd years. His views are not necessarily ours but what he says is always interesting and often provocative. We hope to persuade him to contribute regularly.

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Now you see it ...

'As you may be aware responsibility for dealing with planning applications and local planning matters generally, rests, in the first instance, with the planning authority. The general principle under which the planning system operates in Scotland is that decisions should be taken at the most local administrative level unless there are compelling reasons for taking them at a higher plane. This approach has been reinforced by successive Governments who, as a matter of policy, have kept their involvement in local decisions to a minimum. The Scottish Ministers would, therefore contemplate intervening only in very exceptional circumstances and would normally only become involved in cases which raise issues of national, rather than local, significance.'

Extract from a letter to an objector to the Edinbane proposal from the Planning Division, Development Department, Scottish Executive,

and now you don't

'To some extent the success and speed of expansion of the UK renewables industry is in the government's hands. They are beginning to put downward pressure on planning authorities to make presumptions in favour of granting planning permission for new windfarms. In other words, unless there's a very good reason for not granting permission, it should get the green light.'

Extract from Renewables in the UK context*, published in NRG, a Scottish and Southern Energy staff journal, December 2002.*

Sunday Herald

READERS MAY HAVE SEEN a full page article in the *Sunday Herald* (April 27) accusing Views of Scotland of being a pro-nuclear lobby group. The piece claimed that an editing error in a 'Primer' on our web site proved that we had a hidden 'pro-nuclear' agenda.

The piece was published too late to allow us to make a proper reply in *VoS News* although, ironically, this issue argues strongly that it is not we who are opening the door to a nuclear revival.

We do not have a 'party line' on nuclear power but a concensus of our membership is against it. We argue that it is a myth that wind-power can replace nuclear. It can't. Many of those who argue that it can should know better. We shall pursue the issue.

Vote Bob Graham X

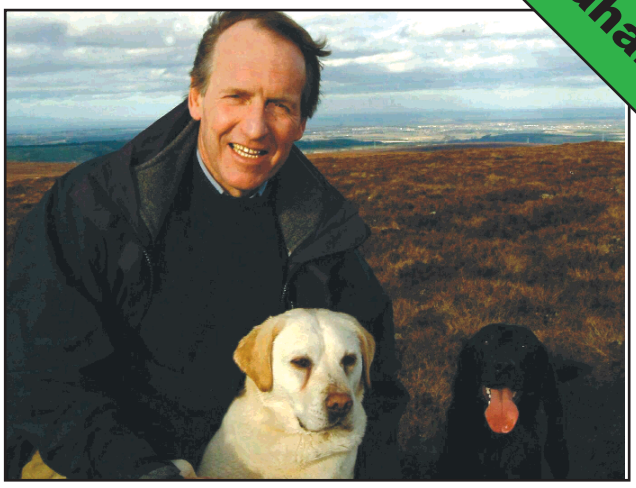
Bob GRAHAM

VIEWS OF SCOTLAND supporter Bob Graham is running for the *Protect Rural Scotland Party* in the May 1 elections for the Scottish Parliament.

VIEWS OF SCOTLAND endorses Bob's stand against the uncontrolled development of on-shore wind power, nowhere more prevelant than in his native north-east.

He has played a leading role in the campaign in Aberdeenshire and Moray.

We caught up with him in his home and asked him about his decision to stand.



YOU SEEM TO LIVE in modestly comfortable rural retirement. What prompted you to enter politics (about which you admit to knowing little) at such short notice?

The realisation that our democracy is probably the most undemocratic in the western world, coupled with my overwhelming desire to stop this wanton destruction of Scotland's natural heritage.

No-one has heard of your party. What are its policies?

Our policies are quite simple: we will listen to what our electorate have to say and ensure that their voice is heard at the highest level. We will fight especially to restore the rights of all the disaffected people who live in rural communities. We will also campaign to reduce the ridiculous number of MSPs in Holyrood. The wages bill for the 129 incumbents is around £13million. This is nearly as obscene as the bill for Holyrood House which has almost reached £400million – about 1000% over budget.

Our readers are mainly interested in your stand on inland wind power. A spokesman for a major developer (whose parent company, after all, built much of Sellafield) recently said that the development of wind-power will stop the proliferation of nuclear power and possibly prevent recurrence of the recent floods in Elgin and elsewhere. Why do you oppose that?

His comments can only serve to frighten the public into believing that wind-driven power stations will reduce global warming and climate change, which, quite emphatically, they won't.

The mainstream environmental movements are overwhelmingly in favour of wind power. Are they all wrong?

These groups are well meaning and, in general, I support their principles. However, they have hung their hat on wind power because it is the only technology that is commercially available. They refuse to accept the overwhelming scientific evidence that shows how futile wind turbines are when it comes to reducing greenhouse gases.

I do stand to be convinced that there is a place for wind power but not in the form of these huge land-based windfarms that will destroy the very thing that makes Scotland famous – our countryside and its associated tourism.

Why do you think that your intervention might make any difference to what is, after all, a UK government policy administered by Edinburgh?

I can only refer you to that old maxim: 'If you think you are too small to make a difference, then you've never been in bed with a mosquito'.

The Scottish Executive has promised that Renewables will bring major employment opportunities in these difficult times. How do you justify being against that?

Currently, wind turbine technology is either European or American and the majority of the developers are foreign-based. All contracts have to go out to European tender and, unless the government gives out huge subsidies to the factory in Machrihanish, there will be very few jobs created in Scotland.

As you know, other than a few temporary construction jobs, these windfarms are manned by about two people. Interestingly, in Spain, the job specification for these two workers involves collecting dead birds prior to inspections by the wildlife authorities: there are thousands of birds killed every year by wind turbines.

Conservationist challenges US and European reports:

Are bird-kill data doctored?

WIND TURBINES KILL and maim birds. The burning question is – how many?

Many of the studies and reports on bird-strike have been commissioned by those with a financial interest in wind power. Who else, after all, has the resources?

Mark Duchamp is a Belgian conservationist living in Spain. He has written detailed reviews of two studies of strike-rates commissioned by the governments of Andalucia and Navarra and a third from the California Energy Commission.

VoS News has not thoroughly studied the original papers but Duchamp's logic is compelling. He notes that each report is prefaced with an Executive Summary which skilfully plays down or omits the negative points and draws conclusions that are not substantiated in the main report.

He claims that strike rate data have been so manipulated as to be fraudulent and that the methodology of the studies is totally inadequate. If a small proportion of what he claims is true, then the cover-up in bird (and bat) fatalities is staggering.

The summary of the Navarra report apparently concludes mendaciously that the mortality rate is about eight per cent of its true figure by quoting a carcass-count of 11 – but disguising the fact that this is per month not per annum.

If the fatalities per turbine per year for each of the five sites considered (and the data are in the report) are multiplied by the total number of turbines then the true total is a staggering 7,150 fatalities per annum.

This includes over 400 griffon vultures and 24 other protected raptors such as golden eagles, eagle owls, booted eagles, sparrow hawks and kestrels.

Unscientific methodology

Duchamp also draws attention to an unscientific methodology used which he says makes even these figures conservative.

A lone government employee searched only the shrub-free areas of the sampling zone (35 per cent of the site) once a week.

No account was taken of predators, several of which were reported in the vicinity of the turbines: foxes, martens, polecats, cats and feral hunting dogs.

On one occasion a fox dragged the carcass of a Griffon Vulture out of the Salajones windfarm. On another, a fox dragged the body of a vulture 30 meters, hiding it in a bush. In the case of an Eagle Owl, only the severed wing was found. 'Very busy fox tracks' and an abundance of domestic species on the sites were noted.

Among the many species observed flying close to turbines, the Black Stork, White Stork, Black Kite, Lammergeier, Egyptian Vulture, Hen Harrier, Montagu´s Harrier, Booted Eagle, Bonelli´s Eagle, Common Kestrel and Merlin are thought to be at particularly high risk.

The Tarifa report apparently uses the same methods. It reports a carcass-count of 64 large or medium-size birds, generally collected twice a week from one third of the site's area. However, the summary only counts kestrels, making the mortality rate 89 rather than 190. Again, predators are disregarded.

Duchamp complains that some studies were not methodical, relying on staff 'happening on' afflicted birds and ignoring the role of predators.

The Californian study concerned breeding golden eagles within a 30km radius of a wind site. Duchamp quotes its summary: 'estimates are that wind turbines kill 40-60 sub-adult and golden eagles each year, on average … plus other protected species …'.

He explains that the authors of the study did not collect this data. The 42 golden eagle carcasses mentioned as found in a single year were reported by service staff who 'happened upon' them.

The report actually concludes that they are

A beheaded bird found on a Californian wind-site

probably only a fraction of the total [golden eagle] fatalities and mentions that in 1994 a total of 348 raptor fatalities were reported in the Wind Resource Area (WRA).

But not as part of the survey – just that 348 carcasses happened to be found in 1994.

Duchamp also criticises a report commissioned by the Council of Europe dated September 2002, claiming that it uses misleading figures while omitting significant data.

His grim conclusion is that birds stand to be slaughtered in their millions, including endangered and (allegedly) protected species.

References:

The SOE/Birdlife Tarifa Report, commissioned by the government of Andalusia, June 1995:

www.seo.org/pdf/AeroGeneradoresWindTurbine.pdf

The Lekuona Report, commissioned by the government of Navarra, April 2001, currently available only in hard copy: markduchamp@hotmail.com

The Grainger-Hunt Report on Golden Eagles, commissioned by the California Energy Commission, July 2002 - http://www.energy.ca.gov/reports/2002-11-04_500-02-043F.pdf

The Birdlife International Report, commissioned by the Council of Europe for the Bern Convention, also available from markduchamp.

Iberica2000.org

New edition of Views of Scotland wind power station maps now available

THE VIEWS OF SCOTLAND MAPS showing the extent of visual pollution of our landscapes have created a wide interest.

Because of the speed at which new applications are flooding in and because proposals of which we were previously unaware are being reported to us every week, it has been necessary to publish a new edition. It is now on the Views of Scotland web site.

The main changes since February are:

Errors: there were two sites #109: the wrong one has been deleted; Beatrice Field and Kinnaird Estate have been moved to their correct locations;

Mid Hill has now been submitted;

Ark Hill has been revived and will in all probability soon be re-submitted;

The application for Ardeer has been withdrawn by ScottishPower following objections from SNH: it will probably be re-submitted with 20 turbines instead of 29.

The following sites have been added:

Drumderg, Wardlaw, Glen Moriston, MistyLaw Muir, Hareshaw Rig, Harestanes Height, Careston Estate, Auchnagatt, Balado (this was recently referred back by Perth & Kinross Council; it has not been reported before), Hunterston, Camphill Reservoir, Sell Moor, Dun Law extension, Lissens Moss, Berry Hill, Knockintiber and Kelburn Estate.

The Highland Council recently published a map showing some 50 Anemometry sites in its region. We hope soon to have further details. It is clear that many of the sites are either progressing or have progressed through planning and therefore already feature on the maps in other forms. Several are close to clusters of proposed wind-power sites. We therefore show five of them that have not featured on our maps before and are not close to known site clusters.

Braes of Doune has now been passed by Stirling Council and is with the Scottish Executive;

The massive S36 sites at Robin Rigg, Cairn Uish and Paul's Hill have been approved by the Scottish Executive.

The ScottishPower proposal for An Suidhe has been approved after a Public Inquiry.

Please report updates or additions to:
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Is wind power a stalking horse for nuclear's comeback?

VoS News analyses two curious papers from the DTI and the Scottish Executive

Our Energy Future: Creating a Low Carbon Economy

The DTI's *Energy White Paper* is neither policy nor plan but seeks merely to soothe public concerns about global warming.

It seems doubtful whether there was a power engineer within ten miles of its drafting and it is difficult to analyse in any meaningful sense of the word.

We are led to believe that the government is striding forward into a brave new 'low carbon' future. We already have smart bombs and smart cards. Now we have 'cleaner, smarter energy'.

Ruses like highlighting 'positive' phrases in bold get the casual reader 'on message'. Confusion is woven into the text by the use of the word 'energy' in its widest sense in some paragraphs but referring to electricity in others.

The banality of the writing can be staggering. A concluding snapshot of the UK's proposed energy system for 2020 argues that:

'Energy efficiency improvements will reduce demand overall, despite new demand for electricity for example as homes move to digital television and as computers further penetrate the domestic market. Air conditioning may become more widespread.'

No, we did not make this up.

The paper identifies three challenges:

Addressing the threat of climate change

Dealing with reduced domestic oil, gas and coal production

Updating the energy infrastructure.

Four goals are set to address climate change. They are laudable but, sadly, mutually exclusive:

'to *put ourselves on a path* to cut the UK's CO2 emissions by *some* 60 per cent by *about* 2050, with *real progress* by 2020' [my italics];

Second: 'to maintain the reliability of energy supplies'. The public at large might see this as non-negotiable but a heavy reliance on intermittent generation reduces it to an aspiration;

Third: 'to promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and improve our productivity'. This presumably refers to energy markets but we are later told that we will soon be importing three-quarters of our energy supplies;

And finally: 'to ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated' Tricky, as renewables can only raise electricity costs.

The second challenge is the decline of indigenous energy supplies. (In Finnie's paper, 'indigenous' means 'wind' and definitely not coal. But for the DTI, it seems to mean 'oil, gas, nuclear [honest] and coal'. But definitely not 'wind'.)

We are reassured that becoming a net importer of three-quarters of our energy is really not so bad since, of the G7 countries, only the UK and Canada are energy exporters.

Renewables, we are told, can make us less vulnerable to security threats.

The third challenge is to update much of the UK's energy (actually its electricity-generating) infrastructure over the 20 years but exactly where is unclear.

It is explained that during the 1990s there was significant investment in generating capacity, especially gas-fired plant. But much of this has since been mothballed and interest in building new plant other than renewables has declined.

European measures to limit emissions are likely in time to force modernisation or closure of most older coal-fired plant. So perhaps the updating will be here.

Renewables will become *the* source of electricity as we seek to tackle climate change.

Definitely not the 'N'-word

But not nuclear. Definitely, certainly, no messing, not nuclear. Nuclear's share will shrink: there will be only one nuclear plant still working by 2025. Remember this.

In short, the Dash-for-Gas is yesterday's news (so eighties, darling), even though an almost total reliance on imported gas, panned by the engineering establishment, was the central plank of the PIU's *The Energy Review* published only last year.

Now, everyone is talking about the Breeze Wheeze. Turbines are *de rigueur* for the chattering classes – and very lucrative they are too. Provided, of course, you are not working in Scottish touris or are unlucky enough to live near one.

But, despite all this, the white paper sets no targets for the share of supply to be met from different fuels as it is 'not equipped' to do so.

It prefers to 'create the right incentives' to find the balance that will most effectively meet its overall goals. The 'market' will make the key decisions on fuel mix and price, sustainability and security of supply.

Much as it did, presumably, on the railways. Forget the fact that if you provide 'incentives' for a market, then the market ceases to 'decide', it just follows the cash.

The 'N'-word

All lovely stuff. But, in stressing its priority to strengthen the contribution of energy efficiency and renewables over the next 20 years, there come two odd statements. First:

'We believe such ambitious progress is achievable, but *uncertain*.' [my italics] and

'We do not make specific proposals for building new nuclear power stations. However we do not rule out the possibility that at some point in the future *new nuclear*

build might be necessary if we are to meet our carbon targets.' [my italics]

On the role of coal, and looking at what it says is an as-yet-unproven technology, we are told:

'We will continue to support relevant research projects to develop options for cleaner coal technologies and for carbon capture and storage.

'Coal-fired generation will also have an important part to play in widening energy diversity provided ways can be found materially to reduce its carbon emissions. Domestic coal production is likely to continue to decline … we will introduce an investment aid scheme to help existing pits develop new reserves.'

Interestingly, the IChemE disputes this, saying that clean-coal technology is viable and mature, in regular use in the US and elsewhere.

A carbon emissions trading scheme will be at the centre of our energy markets from 2005 onwards.

The paper mentions in passing that the national grids, metering systems and regulatory arrangements were created for large-scale, centralised power stations. They will need restructuring over the next 20 years to support renewables and distributed generation.

A month later, OFGEM gave a go-ahead for a major multi-million cable linking Lewis to the mainland for old-style, centralised distribution down into England. And lastly, a word of warning to the English:

'The future energy system will require greater involvement from English regions and from local communities, complemented by a planning system that is more helpful to investment in infrastructure and new electricity generation, particularly renewables.'

Our advice: Come and visit the turbines – before the turbines come and visit you.

Securing a Renewable Future: Scotland's Renewable Energy

A month later, Ross Finnie published his one-man plan to revive the Scottish economy.

Energy policy is reserved but renewables are devolved and the report addresses a desire to produce 40 per cent of Scotland's *generated* electricity from renewable sources by 2020.

The response to a six-month consultation takes the form of a lavishly-illustrated brochure, fully supportive of Westminster's policy.

'Which Westminster policy?' the spoilsports cry.

The DTI's white paper is, of course, welcomed wholeheartedly. Even though it contradicts the PIU's *The Energy Review*, which was equally enthusiastically and uncritically welcomed only seven months before.

The brave new world north of the border introduces interesting concepts such as 'renewable electricity' and promises 'new indigenous industries, particularly in rural areas, and significant export opportunities'.

It claims to be driven by environmental imperatives as well as the potential for new economic development.

But ecological and natural heritage issues are only mentioned twice – when the Executive undertakes to meet its international and national statutory obligations.

It also mentions 'carbon emissions' twice – in vague references to efforts to tackle climate change through increased renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures.

It explains that onshore wind and hydro will play a major part in achieving an 18 per cent/2010 renewables target but admits that the cumulative impact of onshore wind farms, coupled with the scarcity of suitable remaining hydro sites, make it unlikely that Scotland could achieve a substantially increased target by 2020 based on these technologies alone.

Never mind, of course, that such a target is totally unviable from an engineering standpoint, due to the intermittent nature of the supply.

Instead it appears that exploiting Scotland's renewable future is likely to lie in an ability to promote the

What the Executive has promised

Promises by the Executive in support of their 40 per cent target feature prominently. But they amount to very little, particularly in support of the development of new technologies. The Executive says it will:

- **provide £2.125m towards the cost of constructing a Marine Energy Test Centre in Orkney.**
- **undertake three studies on increased renewables generation and another to addess public awareness of renewables.**
- **undertake a study to review current forms of biofuel available and a skills audit.**
- **review the ROS target to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of the market and the emergence of new renewables technologies.**
- **keep planning guidelines and the S36 consents process under review and create a consents regime for waters outwith the 12-mile limit.**
- **set up a Forum for Renewable Energy Development in Scotland [FRED], to promote the development of Scotland's renewable energy industry.**
- **publish examples of small scale community renewable energy best practice, increase the numbers securing grant funding for small-scale renewable projects and optimise potential for small-scale distributed generation.**

To continue the battle for hearts and minds, the Executive will:

- **conduct seminars on renewable energy policy, planning issues and renewables technologies, for local planners and sponsor others to disseminate information and discuss renewable energy matters.**

development of new technologies such as offshore wind, biomass, wave and tidal power.

The current wind Klondike could see up to four billion pounds invested in on-shore wind in Scotland alone.

The Executive's proposed funding for wave-power research: £2.13 million – or 0.0006 per cent of the above. It has NO serious plans for alternatives to wind.

A Gigawatt (1000MW) of generation is apparently needed to meet the 18%/2010 target. Current peak demand in Scotland requires 6,000MW of capacity. A demand growth of zero to one per cent is assumed since 'affirmative action' will have been taken to reduce demand. (It's never happened yet.)

So at least 2,000-2,500MW of new renewables generation are required by 2020 – a constant build of 120-150MW pa.

VIEWS OF SCOTLAND estimates that proposals for over 3,000MW are already in hand – for on-shore wind in Scotland alone.

Local authorities and the Executive are currently approving plans for over 150MW of inland wind *per month*.

For years, Scottish economic growth has been slower than the rest of the UK. Scotland's manufactured exports fell by *25 per cent* last year compared with 2001.

Electricity exports would certainly make for better figures once the grid has been upgraded to facilitate 'The Journey South'. The Executive pledges to resolve this issue quickly.

Job Losses

While claiming that 130 jobs have been created by Vestas in Campbeltown and that 65 will come to Arnish, no figures are given for the far greater job losses to come in conventional generating.

(We estimate these at around 4,000 in the relevant period, not including tourism losses. Unison, which has many members in the electricity sector, makes a similar point.)

Siting industrial installations in rural areas will not be problematic. Scotland already has a 'sympathetic planning regime'. Ah, there's always good news – again, especially if you do not work in tourism.

The Executive promises to work with the DTI to create an appropriate consents regime for waters outwith the 12-mile limit and will consult on practical measures to improve the Section 36 consents procedure.

How is unclear as the Executive has yet to have an Public Inquiry into a Section 36 application, let alone turn one down, even though SNH and local authorities have objected all to no avail.

Complacency

On cumulative impact, the document is breathtakingly complacent.

It claims the planning process already provides for issues of cumulative impact and adds that 'as the pace and scale of on-shore wind developments in particular increases we would expect increased significance to be attached to consideration of cumulative impact in specific areas.'

It's all a bit late for that – see the VIEWS OF SCOTLAND maps.

A list is presented of wind and hydro projects being considered by the Executive. No mention is made of the sites consented or being considered by local authorities. Does the Executive even know about them?

Unsurprisingly, no mention made of the withdrawal of the discredited survey *Public Attitudes Towards Wind Farms in Scotland*. Instead, it is blandly announced that by June 2003 the Executive will publish the results of a new survey of public attitudes to wind-power sites.

It also intends to establish a web-based renewable energy database of existing and planned renewables developments. Whether this includes all projects or just those to be considered by the Executive remains to be seen. We cannot wait.

Available on www.viewsofscotland.org in PDF:
'Scotland's Landscapes - England's Windfarms?'
An analysis of Scottish Executive Energy Policy

A message from the Welsh Marches

I AM CHAIRMAN of the Friends of the Golden Valley fighting a proposal on the Herefordshire/Welsh border.

There is fledgling discussion here for an umbrella group to cover the Marches and also some discussion about a more concerted 'national' attack on the on-shore industry itself.

I cannot help but feel from all the information and advice we have absorbed over the last few months that the time might be right to launch a major 'attack' on the whole business of on-shore developments.

Angela Kelly and her colleagues have done a wonderful job over many years against enormous odds, successfully helping to defeat 75 per cent of onshore applications. The world is changing to our advantage with developing technology and we need to decide if we can go that little bit further and kill off the whole principle.

If we do not, we will leave a devastated countryside for our children - look at California!

Pie in the sky some will say but I do believe we must have the discussion.

We have received enormous support in this part of Herefordshire - far more than I had dared hope - including from quite high levels.

Ordinary people are concerned about what is being allowed to happen and when they have some of the facts, they quickly realise that wind turbines are a waste of time. There is a voice waiting to be heard.

I wish you every success with your campaign and will support you as I can. If matters progress here I will let you know.

Regards.
Tony Gray

Danish Diary

An occasional column from veteran Danish campaigner Iens Elliot Nyegaard

New winds blow in Denmark

SHORTLY AFTER taking office in November 2001, Denmark's new, non-socialist government stopped the building of three huge offshore windmill clusters. The Minister for the Economy and Commerce, Mr Berndt Bendtsen commented:

> This is done to save the Danish people from an unnecessary loss — for the next twenty years — of 900 million Danish kroner annually.

He added:

> We are deeply worried over the costs to the nation and over the consequences for our international competitiveness if we continue to invest in 'alternative' energy.

The true costs of 'windmilling'

ALL — REPEAT ALL — LATTER-DAY windmills run on subsidies as much as on wind. Not a single windmill in the world generates a true, end-of-the-year profit; they all run deeply in the red.

Thus, besides wasting a very scarce resource — our most valuable landscapes — they also waste copious amounts of investment capital, both public and private.

Some four years ago (and remember that the average windmill was smaller then) several eminent German academics — among them my late friend the mathematician and physician Professor Dr Lothar Hoischen of Marburg — calculated the net loss to the German economy per windmill at an average of DM 250,000 (today about £80,000).

There are now more than 11,000 of these inefficient machines in Germany. Those erected in recent years are considerably larger, hence also more expensive, than previous models.

As I understand it, the German calculation was rather on the low side as one important parameter was left out: the unrealised normal or average yearly profit on the huge private and public capital invested in these machines.

Conservatively, you can calculate it using the normal return on, say, building society or treasury bonds or the average long-term profit over several cycles of the stock market.

In addition, the costs of unloading unwanted windmill-electricity, churned out in low-demand hours (we in Denmark know quite enough of these losses) and of an ever-swelling windmill bureaucracy were omitted.

The annual loss to the Danish economy stemming from some 6,000 windmills is around 10 billion Danish kroner (£1 = approx Dkr 10). This sum includes:

- the price difference between subsidised wind-electricity and 'normal' electricity;
- costs incurred by the irregularity of windmill production including the costs of running coal-fired power stations on stand-by;
- losses incurred by selling unwanted wind-electricity churned out in low-demand hours on the inter-Nordic spot market, Nordpool (always at Dkr0.02/kWh less than current prices to compensate for irregularity);
- the cost of strengthening the remoter parts of the national grid, extra transformers etc;
- the cost of an extensive windmill bureaucracy on three levels (state, county, municipal) and of so-called windmill-research financed by taxes;
- unrealised normal or average profit on the huge private and public capital invested in windmills;

Not included in the above are:

- Losses to tourism in windmill-infested areas;
- Losses to private individuals as their property is devalued by adjacent windmill operation, including the time and money spent on fighting such developments and the health problems caused by windmill operation such as noise including low-frequency or infrasound, flashing light, casting of shadows and general stress-induced health problems;
- Public costs due to windmill litigation, police, public prosecutors, courts.

(Note on property devaluation: A *de facto*, if not *de jure,* expropriation for a mix of political purposes and private gain to windmill manufacturers, operators and investors without due compensation. In other words, the illegal expropriation of private capital.)

A note on Denmark's windmill exports

The leading Danish windmill manufacturers — one closely associated with AMRO-Bank, Holland, the other with UBS, Switzerland — in practice principally export three things:

1 The degradation of hitherto unspoilt, valuable landscapes.

2 Huge losses of invested private and public capital in the countries targeted.

3 Wind disorder in the national electricity grids of the countries concerned, hence further losses.

As a Danish patriot I am deeply ashamed of this disgraceful business and emphatically warn Scotland against investing in the erection of these electro-technically worthless political symbols.

Off the Beaton track

NORMAN BAILEY examines some curious statistics from the British Wind Energy Association

FIRST, I SHOULD ADMIT that I am not a Scot. The furthest north I can trace any ancestor is Newcastle upon Tyne but then I did have the good sense to marry a Mac.

I live in Scotland because I love the country and am appalled to see our elected representatives so keen to 'kowtow' to Westminster and so happy to see Scotland's scenery become nothing more than England's Windfarm.

Frankly, I'd rather be a Sassenach than a traitor but even the Scottish National Party, supposedly with only the interests of Scotland on its agenda, is jumping on this wind-driven bandwagon.

John Swinney, their leader, was not even willing to discuss with a concerned voter (my wife) a proposed wind power station with one of the highest Visibility Indices yet seen — which is within his own constituency!

Not surprising — his party's policy is to support this rape of Scotland.

The traditional English advice to anybody about to suffer being raped is to 'Lie back and think of England'.

So, Scotland, it's your turn to lie back — you are about to have The Experience.

Yes, it will be unpleasant, you will definitely not enjoy it, but at least you will have the immense satisfaction of knowing you save the people of the Sacred South East from The Experience!

So let us all touch our forelock in recognition of our Masters in Westminster and look at the facts.

This next bit may sound like Mrs Beaton, but then our political masters would undoubtedly recognise her so it is appropriate.

Take one publication from British Wind Energy Association called *Planning for Wind Energy*, add the population figures from the 2001 Census and stir gently. Take a wee Dram. No, not for the recipe, it's you who'll need it.

Now you can start to see the fiendish plan — in Scotland you will upset less People per Turbine than anywhere else in the UK. Brilliant!

But that is not all. The BWEA has come up with another masterstroke.

Note that London has no turbines.

This could not possibly be because it has seven million people and a Mayor.

It must be because there's no wind or open spaces. Silly me, when I saw its large parks devastated and its house roofs blown off in the 1980s, I must have been suffering from a night on their lousy beer.

To attempt to hide this slight problem with the strategy, the BWEA includes London with the East of England and the South East, suggesting that this allows London to Participate in Wind Turbines.

So back to good old Mrs Beaton. Take London, add first the East of England and then the South East and let them gently become one. Perhaps you should take yet another Dram before doing that.

By Area	No of Turbines	%	Population	%	Population per turbine
North East	137	5.4	2,515,479	4.3	18,361
North West	178	7.1	6,729,800	11.4	37,808
Yorkshire and Humberside	131	5.2	4,964,838	8.4	37,900
East Midlands	81	3.2	4,172,179	7.1	51,508
West Midlands	95	3.8	5,267,337	9.0	55,446
East of England	99	3.9	5,388,154	9.2	54,426
South West	251	10.0	4,928,458	8.4	19,635
South East	151	6.0	8,000,550	13.6	52,984
London	Nil	0.0	7,172,036	12.2	N.A.
By Country					
England	1123	44.6	49,138,831	83.6	43,757
Scotland	973	38.7	5,062,011	8.6	5,202
Wales	193	7.7	2,903,085	4.9	15,042
Northern Ireland	227	9.0	1,685,267	2.9	7,424
Total for UK	2516	100	58,789,194	100	
The sacred South-East	250	9.9	20,560,740	35	107,410

Look on the bright side. Scotland gets a turbine for every 5,202 people but the Sacred South East only gets one for every 107,410 people.

Strange isn't it, Scotland *is* a little colder than the South East but I would never have thought we used twenty times the electricity!

That was until our revered and benevolent leaders gave us this great gift. Well, they wouldn't be wasteful and generate electricity hundreds of miles from where it is used.

Would they?