

CBI



EX JV

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2 pps

Prime Minister

Mr Younger,

Leon Brittan and Dr

Nicholson are content with

this much improved version.

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

Yes ml

Agree the written answer?

MUS 24/11

FAST REACTOR POLICY

When colleagues discussed this subject on 1 November it was agreed that I should announce our new policy soon, by means of a written answer.

I attach my proposed text which, as requested, I have drawn up in consultation with the Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Scotland and Dr Nicholson. My officials have also consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

I would like to make the announcement within the next few days, and would be grateful for your agreement.

Copies go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Sir Robert Armstrong and Dr Nicholson.

LONDON

Approved by the Secretary of State for Energy and signed in his absence.

23rd November 1982





FAST REACTOR POLICY - DRAFT ANNOUNCEMENT

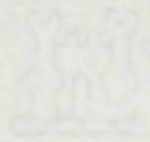
1. The Government has now completed its review of the Fast Reactor.
2. The Fast Reactor is of major strategic significance for the UK's and the world's future energy supplies. It is 50 times as efficient a user of uranium as thermal reactors, such as the Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor and Pressurised Water Reactor, and can create out of the spent fuel and depleted uranium which has so far arisen from our thermal programme fuel equivalent to our economically recoverable coal reserves.
3. The UK is among the world's leaders in the development of this technology. Through the successful programme of research and development undertaken by the Atomic Energy Authority, which centres on the operation of the prototype Fast Reactor and associated fuel cycle at Dounreay, we have demonstrated the feasibility and potential of this technology. We have also collaborated with other major countries who have programmes in this field.
4. We are in an excellent position to carry the programme forward and to prepare for the introduction of commercial fast reactors when these are needed to augment our thermal reactor programme.
5. The Government have therefore decided to continue with a substantial development programme for the fast reactor based on Dounreay and I have asked the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Authority, Sir Peter Hirsch, in consultation with the generating boards, British Nuclear Fuels Ltd and the National Nuclear Corporation to draw up a future development programme which makes the best use of our resources and experience.
6. In common with most other leading fast reactor nations, we now believe that the series ordering phase will begin in the earlier part of the next century, and thus on a longer timescale than we have previously envisaged. We shall therefore have more time in which to develop further the technology and before undertaking the construction of a first full scale reactor in the UK: and the development programme will be geared to this timescale.





7. The Government and the Atomic Energy Authority have been having exploratory discussions with other countries to establish whether a satisfactory basis for international co-operation can be worked out. The Government wishes to see these discussions continue, and has asked the Atomic Energy Authority, in preparing advice about the future programme, to take account of the potential for collaborating with other countries as a means of securing the maximum benefits from this vital development programme.

CONQUEROR



LONDON



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СОКОЛОВ







10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 November 1982

(answered on 29/11)

Dear Julian,

Fast Reactor Policy

The Prime Minister has approved your Secretary of State's plans for announcing, by means of a Written Answer, within the next few days the Government's new fast reactor policy, on the lines of the draft text attached to your Secretary of State's minute of 23 November.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Kerr (HM Treasury), Brian Fall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Muir Russell (Scottish Office), Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office) and to Dr. Nicholson (CPRS).

Yours sincerely,

Michael Scholar

Julian West Esq  
Department of Energy.

CONFIDENTIAL





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MCS 24/11

W.0723

24 November 1982

PRIME MINISTER

FAST REACTOR POLICY

I have been involved in the preparation of the announcement on Fast Reactor Policy which the Secretary of State for Energy has now sent you.

I believe that the announcement closely follows our discussion on 1 November and I am content with it.

Copies go to Secretary of State for Energy, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Scotland and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*RBN*

ROBIN B NICHOLSON  
Chief Scientist