A very happy new year from the PARTIZANS office, and welcome to this bumper edition of PARTING COMPANY - the newsletter that keeps you up to date with what can now be called THE MOST POWERFUL MINING GROUP IN THE WORLD. Since our last newsletter so much has happened: over the new year RTZ threw caution to the wind, and bought up BP minerals in the biggest private deal ever made in the UK. On the centre pages we look at the repercussions this could have on people throughout the world, and what it means to us and other campaigning groups.

On page two we bring you news of a peoples' fight back. Last month the giant Bougainville copper mine in Papua New Guinea was under seige from the people whose land they stole.

Were you confused when the government suddenly started to worry about the "greenhouse effect", or even more so when RTZ joined in? PARTING COMPANY explains what is behind this latest hype, and reveals that the mountain is not always greener on the other side. (Page five).

At last - official acknowledgment from the government that RTZ's Namibian uranium is being used for the Trident weapons programme - long asserted by activists, but always denied by RTZ. (Turn to page 3).

Also in this issue: RTZ, UK's number two producer of CFCs - how long will it be before new alternatives are produced commercially? Japanese sanctions against RTZ's Rossing uranium mine (page 9), news from around the world (pages 14 and 15).

After reading all this you may be incensed, angered, or energised. Flip to the back page to see how you can join in with our fight against this "Natural Resources" group. Remember, you are your own best natural resource (and ours!).
Miners ignored landowners' rights

Late last year, the island of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, was put on alert as demonstrations blocked roads to the giant Bougainville Copper mine. Saboteurs blew up parts of the plant and electricity pylons, and for a while the mine was forced to close. The PNG government reacted with alarm and a heavy hand: sending in riot police (apparently with orders to "shoot to kill"), and preparing to use troops to hunt down the "terrorists". For its part, the company running the mine, Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL), threatened to pull out of the country altogether, thus jeopardising 16% of the country's internal revenue.

On the surface it seemed as if BCL had been inadvertently caught up in a conflict manifestly not of its own making. Down in the woods, the natives were stirring again: how could it be blamed for getting on with its own business? In fact, the mine is at the very heart of the disorder. The "Saboteurs" who were active in November and December last year were simply articulating demands that have been made by local landowners since the operation started two decades ago.

BCL is controlled by CRA, the 79% Australian owner of the PNG government 20% of BCL's equity. When BCL was launched RTZ owned 90% of CRA and this venture represented the first major investment RTZ ever made in a third-world country. It did so when PNG was under protectorate under Australian administration, securing control of one of the world's most valuable copper and gold deposits. Through the connivance of Australian administrators, its own ruthlessness, and in the face of a virtually united resistance of the local Nasiol and Rotovana people, on whose ancestral lands both the mine and its ancillary services were built.

CRA's trespass began with a feasibility study, carried out under a 1966 Act which gave it up to 10,000 sq. miles of indigenous territory. Sporadic resistance continued for the next three years, until land clearances commenced. In mid-1969, CRA survey teams, protected by riot police, were confronted with Rotovana women carrying out nonviolent direct action. Some of them were desperate enough to place their own babies on the survey markers to prevent them from being disturbed.

A few days later, riot police fired tear gas and made baton charges on 65 landowners who were protesting the arrival of CRA bulldozers, intent on knocking down their coconut trees, destroying their villages and clearing their bush. Shortly afterwards, women and men from other parts of Bougainville joined the islanders of Panga in attempts to halt the devastation. Out of these solidarity organisations came Napakoe Nativ - a Bougainvillean unity and resistance organisation whose calls were supported by church people, white sympathisers, students and trade unionists throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Although the Ming was stopped - support for CRA from within the PNG administration was too great for CRM and Rotovana people milked some concessions out of both the administration and the company. The amount of Rotovana land earmarked for takeover was somewhat reduced, and compensation terms somewhat increased.

For the next four years however, BCL was to operate an employment system which in the words of one Australian Labour Party investigator was tantamount to slavery, while it chalked up fabulous gains. Its 1974 after-tax profits of $A 144 million were the largest ever made by an Australian company - a fact which appeared many in the newly-independent PNG government, boosted separatist demands from many Bougainvillean, and fed calls for the nationalisation of the copper mine.

By the following year Bougainville had gained provincial status. Calls to renegotiate the original colonist Bougainville agreement forced CRA to the bargaining table with an independent government, under the tough leadership of Michael Somare. The new agreement was many things remarkable for the concessions it secured from a western multinational, introducing concepts of taxation and royalty payments which have since provided a model for indigenous peoples elsewhere. (For example during the Aboriginal Northern Land Council negotiations over the Ranger uranium mine in 1978.)

However, what the agreement did not do was adequately compensate the landowners for the loss of their land, nor provide any real measures for rehabilitating them. Over the next fourteen years, Bougainville became a relatively good outfit to work for, and an appealing one to work with. Heavy metals from the tailings (waste) created by the mine have raised the Saba valley river-bed no less than 30 metres and deforestation has severely disrupted local rainfall patterns.

It is this devastation of their environment, combined with the removal of entire villages and the destruction of valuable agricultural land, which lies at the root of the militant actions taken last year. As John Momi, the island's leading politician, put it in December: "When the mine is finished, the landowners will be left with a big hole, an environmental and perhaps a socially isolated and deprived society...The landowners of PNG own their resources and they must be given the same consideration as the people who come in with the capital and the expertise."

The landowners are now demanding compensation of around $10 billion kina ($A15 billion). Since 1972, accord
CONFIRMED

Government Receives RÖSSING Uranium for Trident

Last August the government admitted receiving a shipment of 1,100 tons of uranium from RTZ's Rossing mine in Namibia. Not only did that violate a United Nations ban, but it came after public denials from the government and RTZ. Through the House of Lords the government owned up to transactions that anti-nuclear campaigners had known about for a long time.

But after this had been dragged out of Lord Trefgarne, minister for defence procurement, he then went on to deny that these consignments were being used for military purposes: an assertion long challenged by the anti-nukes. On 12 December 1988 a Guardian article reported that uranium had been shipped to the U.S.A. from BNFL's Capenhurst plant to make warhead components for Britain's Trident programme. This uranium is from the British military stockpile, shipped into Britain from South Africa and Namibia in the 1970's and early eighties, having been ordered at a time when it was believed that there would be a world shortage of ore.

Since then other uranium producing countries have placed restrictions on the use of uranium for military purposes.

The nuclear warhead materials are being bought from the US under the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement, the first time the treaty has been activated for some years. The uranium has already been shipped to the Nuclear Weapons Laboratories where a complex and expensive process turns it into a highly enriched uranium metal. The quantity of metal being produced and the contract price are restricted information, and the M.O.D. has said that details are confidential.

But, says The Guardian, it is certain to cost the British taxpayer millions.

One of the most outrageous aspects of this collaboration is that Sir Alistair Frame, chairman of the board of directors of RTZ, the largest mining conglomerate in the world, a man who is relentlessly responsible for vast numbers of peoples' lives, Sir Alistair Frame, one of the world's most powerful businessmen, has stood up in public in front of his company's own shareholders and blatantly lied through his teeth to them!!!!

In successive years Sir Alistair has been questioned at annuals on military use of RTZ uranium. He has not refused to answer the question on grounds of confidentiality, nor has he needed time to ponder on the question; there has been one consistent answer. Sir Alistair says that RTZ uranium has never been used for military purposes.

If he was a head of state he could be dismissed immediately for his deliberate and calculated deception. But unfortunately for us and this planet he will not be automatically dismissed: being top knob in the world's largest mining company, which operates in 44 countries and has certain governments under its thumb, does not even carry with it the miniscule level of accountability which is there in law, but only occasionally there in practice by the government.
It was only six months ago, at RTZ's a.g.m. that chairman of the board, Sir Alistair seemed to be one of the only remaining people in the world who was not aware of the link between CFC production and ozone destruction. This is either disturbingly surprising or annoyingly familiar considering that one of his companies is, along with ICI, the UK's biggest producers of CFC's.

During the 1987 a.g.m. Frame, with a belligerent panache which manages to convince only the most money-hungry shareholders, stated that as far as he was aware there was no existing scientifically proven evidence that CFCs are having a detrimental effect on the ozone layer. But in the December edition of his own company's review 'RTZ REVIEW No.8' the company virtuously announce that they are joining with other CFC producers from around the world to "accelerate toxicity testing on compounds being considered as alternatives to fully halogenated CFCs" because of the "ozone depletion potential" of CFCs.

In September 1987, industrialised nations signed a treaty - the Montreal Protocol - to cut CFC production by half by the year 2000. Since then there has been alarming evidence found by NASA scientist Dr Robert Watson, who now recommends that a reduction of more than 85% is needed if chlorine levels are to be reduced to the levels found in 1960, and low enough for ozone depletion to be repaired naturally. At a UN Environment Programme conference in The Hague in October 1988, government and industry representatives agreed that the Montreal Protocol should be tightened up to require an 85% reduction in CFC production.

There is little doubt that ISC Chemicals, who produce RTZ's CFCs, are exploring alternatives, not because of their own pangs of environmental concern, but because the issue is now taken so seriously that impending bans could force them out of business. The replacement, HFC 134a, would not be produced commercially until toxicity is completed - an estimated five years hence. This means that companies will be hard pushed to meet the 'too little too late' guidelines laid down in Montreal - let alone the agreements made between governments and industrialists in The Hague last October.
Environment chief quits 'in frustration'

The government's attempts to green its image were dealt a severe blow on the 18 November 1988, with the resignation of its chief pollution inspector, Mr Rod Perriman. Colleagues say he is leaving because of the "utterly disastrous state of the inspectorate...he was getting near the point of desperation where he did not want to see the department wrecked". This follows the resignation of his deputy, Mr David Mills, chief of the department's hazardous waste inspectorate, and author of three reports strongly critical of the industry and its control by local authorities. [Guardian 12/11/88]

Ridley Diddle Dee

A large increase in the use of nuclear power is needed to protect the environment from the slow heating of the earth's surface known as the greenhouse effect, Mr Nicholas Ridley, the Environment Secretary, said yesterday.

Speaking on BBC1's On The Record, he threw more light on the Government's environmental thinking - a bill is expected in the next session of parliament - and stepped up the pressure for nuclear energy.

Mr Ridley also said the elimination of chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) emissions from sources such as aerosols was the first, most immediate and most important thing to do to combat the greenhouse effect.

He said carbon dioxide from coal and oil burning stations was a major factor in the greenhouse effect and the nuclear programme was the only serious way of reducing carbon emissions.

Nuclear power was the cleanest form of power generation. "There is absolutely no doubt that if we want to arrest the greenhouse effect, we should concentrate on a massive increase in nuclear generating capacity."

He refused to be drawn on how many more nuclear power stations should be built in the UK but said hundreds would be needed worldwide.

The public could not oppose both nuclear power and atmospheric pollution, he said.

There was no doubt that deep burial in stable rock formations was one way of solving the water table was a perfectly safe way to dispose of atomic waste.

Mr Ridley applauded the Government's record on moves to reduce CFC emissions, identified as the main culprit for harming the ozone layer protecting the earth's atmosphere from radiation. [FT 31/10/88]

Nuclear industry 'must woo public'

The Guardian (3.12.88) reports that a campaign to win public support for the nuclear power industry is being considered by the government. This follows the latest findings by the Marplan polling organisation which shows that most of the public support abolition of nuclear power. Mr Cecil Parkinson, the Energy Secretary, has said that at least 20% of power must come from "non-fossil fuels" after privatisation. Thus protected, the already highly profitable nuclear industry is also to be, in effect, subsidised in order to make it competitive against other forms of electricity production, with the introduction of a 'tax' paid by consumers. This comes after the CEBGB's admission in December that after privatisation coal fired plants will be more cost effective than new nuclear capacity; and evidence given to the Hinkley inquiry by the Council for the Protection of Rural England that the nuclear "tax" would add up to £40 to domestic consumers' bills per annum. On top of this, the government is to make £1bn to £2.5bn available to the privatised industry to build the next generation of PWRs.

The Consumers' Association has attacked the privatisation bill, claiming that poor consumers would be hit hardest by the nuclear levy. RTZ has made pre-tax profits of £594.3m in 1987. They are set to make more out of Cecil Parkinson's bill than any other single party.

[FT 21/11/88 FT. 2/12/88 FT. 7/12/88 Guardian 12/12/88]
Mrs Thatcher - Eat Your "Greens"...

What's behind the government's "green" policy? Mike O'Door finds out.....

Now that the great C.T. Brain which sits over our futures from her plastic tower in Whitehall has pontificated about the greenhouse effect, it's tempting to chop down more trees, burn up more gas, and revert to coal fires, just to prove her misinformation wrong. After all, the present government has no time to take anything. The truth is, of course, that the Thatcher regime's belated conversion to environmentalism is little more than a substitute for the expansion of nuclear power.

Ever since the miners' strike (indeed long before), building more nuclear reactors and consuming uranium rather than coal, has been seen by our governing clique as the major strategy to curb the most radical of British transgressions. Nor has this escaped the attention of Thatcher's favorite captains of industry in his house at 6, St James' Square. It was an open secret that the prime minister wanted Alistair's model to take over the National Coal Board, and implement the programme of pit closures which precipitated the national strike a few years back.

But Alistair, who was on the热线 at RTZ, now sees not only in the world's most profitable mining company, but once the merger with BP is finalised. RTZ will be in a pre-eminent position once again to control virtually all Britain's uranium trade. More nuclear power can't just be good news for the happy couple. It provides the vital cement for a partnership between the most totalitarian regime this country has yet seen, and one of the most powerful natural resources corporations this planet has yet suffered.

The British government justifies nuclear expansionism on the grounds that burning uranium, rather than coal, is the biggest factor that will cut down on CO2 emissions, with the consequent warming of the earth's surface. For a while last year, this massive lie was allowed to rest, throwing the environmental lobby into a state of confusion. Now, the trade unions have done their homework, and several recent reports demonstrate conclusively the chimera which is at the root of the government's holy "greening". Our friend Herman Danveldt shows, in an impressive report, that in order to reduce the greenhouse effect by 0-1%, it would be necessary to increase nuclear powered electricity output to a huge 700% each year between now and AD2005. Sixty-six new reactors would have to be built and come on stream.

The world's current proven uranium reserves would probably be depleted by that year, leaving the world hanging by a very thin thread: either build more fast breeder reactors and plutonium reprocessing plants (Danveldt reckons that 50 years would have to be built), or face the appalling actual and potential dangers the technology has already revealed - or else dig uranium on a scale never seen before.

Of course, plundering the planet for yellowcake has never been a major problem for the Thatcherists, whose view of a green world stops short at Dover, or not East Dulwich. But there's a real prospect that, in order to find and exploit such new uranium reserves, the production of CO2 would actually increase. Mines aren't dug by nuclear power plants, but heavy machinery. Uranium isn't enriched by fast breeders, but in extremely costly plants which themselves consume inordinate amounts of fossil fuels.

Greenpeace Ltd. has made similar calculations: even if all the world's power stations switched to fission tomorrow, it declares, the greenhouse effect would be reduced by only 13%.

This is partly because destruction of forests and other living organisms accounts for one-third of CO2 emissions; partly because agricultural activity coughs up a lot of methane and nitrous oxides; partly because chlorofluoro-carbons (CFCs) are playing their malevolent part as well. (Readers of PARTING COMPANY will be aware that, next to IC1, RTZ is Britain's biggest producer of CFCs.)

The Rocky Mountain Institute, Colorado, agrees but goes even further. They're convinced that investing in more nuclear capacity would contribute to the global warm-up, because it would preclude effective strategies to abate carbon dioxide buildup. Adding support to Danveldt's arguments is another US report (from Richard Rudolph of the University of Massachusetts) claiming that 60% of CO2 emissions comes from trucks and cars, while the respected Worldwatch Institute gives a lower figure (17%), but admits this doesn't take into account the fuel consumed in vehicle production and transport infrastructure.

Whichever way you cut it, nuclear power is no solution to any environmental problem simply on economic grounds. Let alone when you consider the destruction and dangers posed by mining uranium, burning it in a Chernobyl or Three Mile Island reactor, transporting it in fixed, mass-produced, or coping with its corrosive "wastes". The British government would more get green out of wiping its dirty nose on the back of its sleeve.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR GREENS? SEE IF YOU CAN MATCH THE PICTURES WITH THESE DESCRIPTIONS: A HEAD OF GOVERNMENT B A HEAD OF A MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION C A CABBAGE HEAD.
till death do us part
The biggest ever private deal between two British companies took place at the beginning of the year. RTZ has bought-up BP Minerals and other of its small businesses, paying an estimated £2.75 billion. There is still much speculation over exactly which of BP's companies will come under RTZ's sway - those companies which are majority owned by another partner and those involving third parties will be having another round of negotiations. Details of these should emerge over the next few months.

This means that RTZ - already the world's biggest mining company now becomes the world's largest supplier of titanium, (used in the aircraft industry and as a pigment in its dioxide form). With the acquisition of CIT Fer et Titane of Canada it will be responsible for 45% of world production.

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More South African investments

CIT Fer et Titane gets some of its raw materials from its 42% owned Richards Bay mineral sands deposit in South Africa. Together with one-third interests in two South African gold mines - Unisel and Oryx - this means that RTZ has doubled its exposure in South Africa, at a time when many companies are pulling-out of the apartheid state.

Even further involvement in the apartheid regime will be on the cards for RTZ if BP's 14.25% holding in the huge TSUME B copper mine is included in the deal. This is Namibia's largest mine, managed by Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, but this has not been mentioned in the "list of significant assets" which was sent out by RTZ to shareholders in early January.

RTZ confirm that they are definitely taking-over the Bingham Canyon operation in Utah, USA. This is the largest copper mine in the world, and together with RTZ's existing operations at Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, and operations in South Africa, Australia and Chile, will turn RTZ into the biggest copper producer in the world.
Domination in the Pacific.

RTZ could take over BP's 80% share in the Lihir Island gold mine which is being developed in Papua New Guinea, and is held through BP Minerals subsidiary, Kennecott (USA). Already worried about foreign domination, the government of Papua New Guinea exercises a right to acquire an interest in this project if it so chooses, thus reducing BP's holdings, RTZ already has the government in a stranglehold over the Bougainville Copper mine, which generates 40% of PNG's export tax revenue and 16% of its internal revenue; the government is in the situation of defending foreign big business against the protests of its own people (see article on Bougainville in this issue). But their biggest fear is that natural resources developments will fall under monopolistic control, with RTZ likely to be majority or sole owners of PNG's two most profitable mineral deposits.

Destruction of virgin Rainforests

Likewise, there is the worry that RTZ could monopolise "developments" or destruction, (call it what you like), of one of the only remaining virgin rainforests left on this planet. With speculation that the BP coal subsidiary is also being offered to RTZ, the possible outcome could be a single-handed assault on Kalimantan and its almost entirely indigenous population, and a carte-blanche to exploit the unexplored territories of its rainforest.

Both in their pre-production stages, BP has two interests in Kalimantan. First, a 40% stake in a diamond mining project in S.E. Kalimantan (with

Z/BPM

Australian Acorn Security holding the other 60%)

and second, the Kaltim Prima coal mine which is a fifty/fifty joint venture with CRA. If the deal goes ahead, RTZ would gain ownership of what is expected to become one of the most profitable coal mines in the world. BP also has coal mining interests in South Africa.

See separate article on Kaltim Prima operation.
Perhaps the biggest question mark for activists, hangs over the Roxby Downs uranium mine in South Australia. Will BP's partners on this project, WMC, buy-up BP's 49% share in this, the mine with the largest known reserves of uranium? Will RTZ take over the BP stake and hand it on to their Australian company CRA, or will they hang on to it for themselves?

Clearly with Roxby Downs out of the way, BP would be rid of its most controversial project and the international boycott campaign that it has caused. (See last page of this issue for information on Roxby Downs and a forthcoming action which we ask you to become involved in). Wouldn't RTZ be a little foolhardy to throw themselves into the centre of yet another controversy? We are quite aware by now that RTZ's avarice will stop at nothing.

For environmental campaigners, anti-nuke activists, anti-imperialists, indigenous peoples (and their support groups), health campaigners, anti-interventionists, anti-apartheid and anti-racist groups, this merger could be a landmark in the history of campaigning. Depending on exactly which operations are bought by RTZ, this company could ally even more pressure groups against itself.

There is no doubt that RTZ are sailing very close to the wind with this deal. They do have a history of obtaining assets on the cheap; under favorable conditions their new assets could be worth twice as much. Motivated by sheer greed, and never able to say "no" to a bargain, this could mark the beginning of their downfall. Where will the estimated £2.75 billion come from? This is the biggest gamble RTZ has taken in its history.

ERGER

Personal Comment from Meg O'dor

British national news coverage of the BP-RTZ minerals deal was a curious affair. First, every commentator eagerly awaited the day when RTZ would become the world's biggest mining company - oblivious to the fact that it already is. (See Parting Company, last issue). Second, all the pundits eagerly trumpeted the fact that RTZ would measurably increase its share of the gold, copper, uranium and titanium markets. When (if you looked at the smaller print), you'd realise only BP's Bingham Canyon mine and its interest in QIT Fer et Titane of Canada were definately to fall under the imperial sway of St. James'.

Third, there was the high profile given to Derek Birkin, RTZ's cuddly Chief Executive. What is such a man doing in a place such as this? - the bard himself might well have demanded, Virtual silence surrounds the role, or views, of Allistair Frame (probably the least cuddly chair in the field of high finance). Could it be that the man who took RTZ substantially out of minerals five years ago - and into oil, gas and manufacturing - is less than 100% happy at its U-turn now?

"Hubris", the Greeks called it. It was the central part of tragedy. It happened when a man (inevitably) overstepped himself and dropped off the precipice, just when he was in reach of the stars. But does anyone read Sophocles at 6 St. James' Square?
There have been anxious pleas from workers at Capper Pass to speed up the decision on the future of the plant. RTZ was sent a three option plan by Capper Pass Ltd: sell, shutdown, or continue processing. RTZ could not find a buyer for the plant, which they strongly denied had anything to do with the links made between emissions of polonium 210 from Capper's chimney and child cancer clusters in the area. Local residents will be disappointed that the plant is not shut down, instead production will be cut by half, with 328 job losses. Here we reproduce excerpts from a BBC radio 4 programme "Face the Facts", which reveals the sequence of insidious lies which has protected Capper Pass, and which poses the question: Do the government's pollution inspectors exist to protect us, or the industry?

As concern grew over the childhood cancers experts at the Capper Pass smelter also had a problem: a complaint from a customer who said metal from the smelter sold on to an electronics manufacturer in West Germany was too radioactive to use. After further investigations, Capper Pass discovered radioactive polonium being emitted from the chimney in significant quantities to require a radioactive emissions license from the government's Inspectorate of Pollution. That licence was duly obtained, but no one told local residents, who were becoming increasingly worried about their children. By 1986, 10 children in the villages west of Hull, had developed leukaemia or other cancers. In the same year councillors invited officials from the smelter to a meeting to discuss the emissions, and although the Radioactivity Emissions license had already been in force for more than a year, no one told the council about it. Not even when the question of radioactivity cropped up;

INTERVIEWER: So you asked specifically is there a possible radioactive source of problems? And the reply was?
COUNCILLOR: "It was glossed over. I didn't get the impression that there was anything radioactive coming from Capper Pass. They just sort of admitted that there was a problem with heavy metals, but radioactivity was just ruled out of the conversation, so much so that I didn't think to pursue it at a later time."

Local County Councillor Margaret Crampton approached East Yorkshire Health Authority...

**NEW ANGLE ON ANGLESEA, SEE?**

**State of the art air control**

The Board of Directors of Anglesea Aluminium Metal Limited has announced approval for an £11 million project to install "state of the art" air control facilities at the Holyhead Reduction Plant.

The project, which will require three years to complete, has been reviewed and approved by both the Anglesea Aluminium shareholders, RTZ and Kaiser Aluminium.

The existing air control facilities having been upgraded in many areas since they were installed in 1969, have proved very reliable over time in protecting the environment – but the people living in it. Further improvements to existing equipment, however, are now becoming impractical.

After the installation of the new technology, the plant will be able to operate at even higher outputs and, with modified reduction chemistry, remain well within the new emission standards being introduced into the EC.

This major capital project is yet another demonstration of Anglesea Aluminium’s continuing commitment to the preservation and protection of our environment.
The authority assured her that the figures for child cancers in the area were statistically insignificant. An assurance which signally failed to convince either Margaret Crompton or a growing number of worried mothers.

Dissatisfied, Margaret Crompton wrote to the District Medical Officer, Dr. Alan Sheard, asking him about child cancer cases, and possible links with local industry. If anybody should know about the potential dangers of pollution it would be him: not only was the Inspectorate of Pollution obliged to keep him informed, but Dr. Sheard was also on the North Bank Liaison Committee, a team of health and safety experts set up to monitor the Capper Pass smelter, and which, unlike the residents, knew about the plant's radioactive emissions license. So his reply, when it came, had been eagerly awaited.

"The causes of childhood cancer are, in general, unknown. The only known factor in the causation is radioactivity. We have no sources of radioactivity in East Yorkshire. I do not therefore think that there is any cause for concern."

But the concern did not go away. Dr. Crompton wrote again and again, and again he dismissed her fears.

"I am not aware of any sources of radiation in the district. There are no nuclear power stations, and the port of Hull is not visited by nuclear powered vessels."

Confirmation that Capper Pass was emitting radioactive polonium didn't come until March this year, when a copy of its radioactive emissions license unexpectedly surfaced in the Humberside County Council civil defence emergency planning department. They had stumbled on what the authorities had known about for years.

As local fury and fear mounted, the village of west Hull learnt at first hand that ordinary people have few rights of access to information on pollution, particularly airborne and radioactive pollution. Capper Pass was under no obligation legally, to tell the public what was in its smoke. The Radioactive Substances Act, law enacted to protect the public interest in radiation matters keeps details of such information confidential. Even the Inspectorate of Pollution of the government's, and therefore the people's watchdog, couldn't by law, tell them what was in the smoke.

Liz Yardley (Capper Pass Child Cancers): "I was told that this kind of information is not available because it is of interest to various firms."

What was going on. Why, for example did the district medical officer, Dr. Sheard, tell the councilor Crompton that there were no sources of radiation in the area, when Capper Pass had held a radioactive emissions license for 24 years?

DR. SHEARD: "It would have been helpful if that councillor had made it clear to me what was in her mind. When that question was asked I was not aware that there was any concern about this theory. This hypothesis that very low levels of radiation might be a factor. Of course I'm aware of it now, but if she'd made it clear what her concern was, I could have given a better answer that would have been more appropriate. I thought she meant by radiation, what I mean by radiation, and that is significant radiation.

Both Capper Pass Ltd and the Inspectorate of pollution share the view that the levels of polonium being emitted are so low they present no health hazard. So why weren't public fears alleviated by volunteering this information? Especially as the company chairman, now deceased, John Mills was well aware of the public concern.

JOHN MILLS: "Yes, there has been concern about environment and Capper Pass, and there always will be. You cannot run a big, ugly smelter: one of the largest in the world, and have people aware that it is an environmental burden. You cannot eliminate the effect upon the environment at Capper Pass. It's too big and the processes are such. (??) What you can make sure is that it is run in a perfectly safe and proper manner, and well within the limits set by others. And that we try to do. Where the authorities were more interested was in the emissions of heavy metals. Where they thought that the real matter for control rested, and that this radioactive emission was negligible."

INTERVIEWER: "So if it was such a small amount, what was the problem about releasing details about it?"

JOHN MILLS: "Because we can't release details about everything in a factory this size. We process 2,500 different materials a year. We do thousands and thousands of measurements - it was a matter of no significant problem to us."

INTERVIEWER: "Do you think you placed fair with the community?"

JOHN MILLS: "Yes. I do indeed. We're stuck with the terms of the license. I don't know what else we can do. It was suggested to me, why didn't we advertise in the local press, but we neither advertise, nor even cover it. It's a normal fact of life in a process industry, that's what it is."

A copy of this programme can be made for PARTIZANS members. Please send your empty tape to: "Capper's Last Tape", 218 Liverpool Road, LONDON N1 1LE. Please enclose an S.A.F.
Japanese Sanctions Hit RTZ

Four Japanese electric power companies have decided not to renew uranium supply contracts with RTZ in response to a tougher stance on apartheid from the Japanese government. This comes after a television broadcast which shocked the nation.

The Tohoku, Kansai, Chuba and Kyushu electric companies, who have already agreed to sever their links with southern Africa, are shown in a confidential industry document (Sanity Dec '87) to be among Rossing Uranium's top customers. Japan is Rossing's biggest single customer.

Mr Nobuo Tanak, director for international nuclear energy affairs, said that dealing with the Namibian issue was complicated, because of the circuitous route taken by uranium from Namibia to Japan. The US journal, "Nuclear Fuel", identifies BNFL as a link in that chain, processing Namibian material at Springfields for Chuba, Kansai and Tohoku. In February '88, BNFL admitted that all uranium entering Springfields is systematically mixed together, and that between 50% and 80% of their export work is done on Namibian uranium. This blows a hole in the Tokyo Electric power company's argument, who after pressure from Japanese campaigners, are denying that the uranium they use comes originally from RTZ's Rossing mine in Namibia. If any of the Japanese power companies wish to be taken seriously on their new stance on South Africa, they need to cease trading with BNFL altogether.

One Japanese uranium industry official has said "There is enough uranium in the world, and electricity companies have already contracted for deliveries by the 1990's from other big exporters such as Canada and Australia".

As Japan is now South Africa's number one trading partner, it is interesting to speculate the extent to which their sanctions are based on a real commitment to the humanitarianism of anti-apartheid, or simply on the international embarrassment they must endure. If it is the former they will be equally concerned at the plight suffered by inhabitants of areas affected by uranium mining in Australia and Canada, who have had their traditional lands stolen with the same underlying racism which operates in South Africa. There's only one solution, and that is to stop all nuclear power.
BP uranium deal with Japanese

British Petroleum’s Olympic Dam joint mining venture with Australia’s Western Mining Corporation has signed a uranium supply contract with a second Japanese power group, the Kyushu utility.

The contract is for 50 tonnes of uranium oxide a year over an initial four years. It is like a deal with Kansai Electric Power, Japan’s second-largest.

BP says the new deal means the mine has long-term supply contracts for about 80 per cent of initial uranium output of about 1,900 tonnes a year.

The joint venture is negotiating to supply the remaining output to other Japanese and South Korean utilities. It hopes to conclude these deals next year. Contracts agreed include:

- 300 tonnes for the UK’s Central Electricity Generating Board.
- 250 tonnes for Korea Electric Power Corporation.
- Ruling out deals are: Taiwan; because of the Australian Government’s worries over its safeguards.
- The US, because it will not pay the floor price of US$32 a pound set by the Australian Government, a figure far above the present spot price.
- BP has 49.5 per cent of the Olympic Dam mine and South Australia. The mine opened last month. 13 years after the deposit, the world’s largest, was discovered.

The mine can produce 1,200 tonnes a year of uranium if demand picks up. It is also producing copper, gold and silver. Western Mining is the operator. BP arranged the project’s A$750m financing.

(FT 7/12/88)

Copper expands as prices heat-up.

Confidence that copper prices will stay strong has prompted CRA to invest an estimated A$150m (£70m) in doubling the capacity of its smelter and refinery operation. They believe that copper prices have emerged from their recent depressed period and will stay high for the next 20 years. The Port Kembla plant, south of Sydney will be replaced by a Noranda bath smelter and a sulphuric acid plant. Feed for Port Kembla comes from CRA’s Cobar mine in New South Wales.

Where there’s dirt, there’s RTZ.

An inquiry which began with sordid tales of police taking free sex and a few quid on the side wound its way right up to Queensland’s former premier, the notoriously rightwing and racist Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen.

The Fitzgerald inquiry, which heard its last evidence in December 1988, revealed that Sir Joh had taken large cash donations from developers and businesses, arranged for concessions on taxes and intervening in police investigations of his friends and enemies. But the inquiry mysteriously failed to reveal the 1970 scandal, which was widely publicised at the time, when COMALCO offered cut price shares to influential Queensland government officials.

COMALCO, 67% owned by RTZ’s Australian company CRA, included in its list of “trade customers”, (those usually entitled to preferential pre-day-of-issue buying rights), virtually any official whom it might be useful to be on good terms with. Those who took up the offer made a swift tax-free killing on the stock exchange when share prices soared due to the scarcity of shares available to the public, and COMALCO-produced hype about the abundance of bauxite deposits at its Weipa operation. Those “impartial” pillars of Queensland society included the Treasurer and Acting Premier, the minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and the minister for Industrial Development and many, many more.

With Queensland government aid to ward off the claims made by aborigines who had been living on that land for thousands of years, COMALCO bulldozed its way across much of Northern Queensland and established itself as the largest and most profitable of Australia’s aluminium producers. Bjelke-Petersen’s wife became a named shareholder in COMALCO and Sir Joh bought shares in someone else’s name a year later.

At no time were preferential shares offered to those on whose land the mine operates.
RTZ’s Factory blamed for cancer

The London Evening Standard reported on 13 January that an RTZ factory in East London is being blamed by local residents as the culprit of what has been called London’s “first cancer cluster”. Mrs. Sadler, a governor at Gainsborough Road school, West Ham, and who is supported by the parents association, said they were frightened about the high rate of cancers among friends and neighbours. They believe that the 18 cancer illnesses and 6 deaths from cancer are caused by the proximity of RTZ’s Berk Spencer acids. Last year the factory was given a clean bill of health by Newham environmental health officers and London Scientific Services who measured daily and weekly smoke emissions.

RTZ chemicals purchase

By Kenneth Gooding, Mining Correspondent

RTZ CORPORATION, mining and industrial group, has paid £2.4m cash for Staveley Chemicals (Holdings). Based on a 180-acre site near Chesterfield in Derbyshire, Staveley makes a wide range of bulk chemicals and intermediates, predominantly for sale in the UK. Staveley will become part of RTZ Chemicals, which said the purchase provided the opportunity to develop its business which produces intermediates for the pharmaceutical and agrochemical industries.

The consideration includes the discharge of certain loans from Staveley’s shareholders British Steel; National Smokeless Fuels (a British Coal offshoot); and Norsk Hydro (UK).

Rallip Investments Limited, an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of RTZ has bought all the outstanding shares of Indal Limited, the Canada and US based industrial manufacturing industry. As a result RTZ now owns 100% of Indal Limited.

Lockerbie uranium fears

Drinking water from around Lockerbie is being tested for possible uranium contamination from wreckage of the crashed Pan Am jumbo jet. Like most Jumbos, flight 103 used substantial amounts of uranium as a ballast to trim the plane. In a report coincidentally published one day after the accident an American physicist, Dr. Robert Parker pointed out that, combined with high temperature fires respirable oxide particles could present a hazard. In an aircrash he says “I calculate that about 250,000 people, at worst, could be put at risk from the 1000 lbs of uranium in a Boeing 747”. Boeing deny that there is any cause for alarm from this depleted uranium.

“GOOD RIDDANCE” – LASMO CELEBRATES

In October last year Lasmo, the oil exploration company, celebrated with champagne after RTZ announced that it was pulling out of the company. The shares are now scattered into the hands of many institutions. This follows RTZ’s disposal of its 10% owned oil and gas interests to Elf of France, earlier this year. (Guardian 8.10.89)

RTZ seeks gold in Galway

Residents on the beautiful Connemara peninsula in the west of Ireland are campaigning to stop low grade open-cast gold mining in their area. No less than 17 mining companies have obtained leases to explore the area, and RTZ are reported to be core drilling in Co. Mayo already. Activists in Ireland have been told that mining leases could be issued within a year and that 136 sites have been offered to companies in the USA specifically for gold mining. The residents’ attempts to find out more about exactly what is going on have failed and the Irish Government have clamped-up over this potential money-spinner.
BP deal boosts Indonesia's coal role

By John Murray Brown in Jakarta

INDONESIA IS set to become a leading player in Asian coal markets. A BP deal announced yesterday with British Petroleum and CRA, the Australian minerals group, to start coal production at the US$800m mine project in Kalimantan, Borneo.

Officials confirmed that the open-cast mine will reach full capacity in 1990, producing 15 million tonnes of high-grade steam-coal, all of which is destined for export.

The deal, struck after more than two years of talks, is much larger than initially envisaged, reflecting in part the improvement in steam-coal prices and also the decision to upgrade the mine facilities to handle ships of 180,000 tonnes capacity.

Kaltim Prima Coal (KPC), the joint venture company established by BP and CRA, said talks were under way with China Light and Power, the Hong Kong utility, GKE of The Netherlands; and Chugoku, a public utility in Japan.

The project is part of BP's strategy to expand its operations base, both in production and marketing in a region where it has traditionally had a small presence.

The company is discussing terms with Pertamina, the Indonesian state oil company, for a US$800m oil-refinery project, producing 100,000 barrels a day for export to Japan. BP recently agreed to build a petrochemical plant on Java.

BP Minerals is also close to production at an alumina deposit, and has a concession to develop a hard-rock site, both in Kalimantan.

Kaltim Prima is the only one of 10 foreign coal ventures, signed in the early-1980s, to have reached commercial production. An official said: "We are fortunate because we do not have to rely on the local market to establish the viability of the project."

Other operations, with less high quality deposits, are looking for base-load contracts with PLN, the state utility, and local cement companies.

PLN last year rejected a trial coal consignment from Atlantic Richfield and Utah International because of high ash content.

KPC says the coal is high quality and will be particularly attractive to utilities concerned about environmental impact. There is a low ash content, between 3 per cent and 5 per cent; low moisture, less than 10 per cent; and a calorific value is about 6,750 cal per kg.

The company has had problems agreeing tax treatment. The question of how to assess future benefits remains unresolved. Under the contract, Batubara, the Indonesian state coal company, will take a 13 per cent royalty either in coal or revenues.

Tax on net profits - after costs are recovered by the joint-venture - will be charged at 35 per cent for the first 10 years.

The project, sited in north-east Kalimantan, will include construction of a 17km conveyor, wharf and small 10MW coal-fired power unit.

The mine, a series of open pit sites, is to use truck and shovel technology, without dragline or bucket-wheel methods.

Up to 20 per cent of the capital costs will be for mining equipment, with another 47 per cent absorbed in infrastructure costs, officials said.

BP and CRA will provide equity finance, the rest being suppliers' export credits.

Mining Lunacy....

Alan Bond, who is currently trying to take over British conglomerate Lonrho, is an Australian corporate high flyer who is second only to Rupert Murdoch in his rapaciousness - is all set to divide Western Australia's "Golden Mile" between his own company (Gold Mines of Kalgoorlie) and the notorious Homestake Co. of the USA.

Homestake is the main beneficiary of the century old theft of miners from Lakota land in South Dakota (remember Colonel Gustav's last stand?) It was more or less Homestake's first.

The Golden Mile is, itself situated on land stolen from Aboriginal people, who have been forced into poverty and despair as "fringe-dwellers" (our friend Jan Roberts and Bob Bropho's film Mundu Nyuringi, recently shown at the National Film Theatre in London, graphically depicted their plight and continuing resistance).

Now Bond intends to merge existing mining operations on the Mile into what he calls a "super pit" which is likely to be visible from the moon. (Financial Times 17/1/89).

APOLOGIES

The article which we promised on "The Lancet" report, which links Alzheimer's disease to aluminium in the water supply, is not ready for this issue. The findings of this report, and its implications for the Anglesea Aluminium smelter will appear in the next issue of PARTING COMPANY.

We also apologise for the absence of our usual book review pages, which will return in the next issue.
red alert!!

At this moment a cargo of deadly uranium is heading towards Britain. It originates from the Roxby Downs mine in South Australia, and has been the cause of protests in Britain and Australia. This mine, with the biggest reserves of uranium discovered on this planet, has been built on the traditional lands of the Kokatha people. Its airplane runway cuts right through their ancestors' graveyard. The Kokatha people had been living on their land for 50,000 years until they were disrupted, first by the British government, who carried out nuclear weapons testing at Maralinga, and now by WMC/BP and their mining.

A group of activists intend to stop this first shipment of Roxby Downs uranium from ever leaving the ship it was brought on. Hopefully we can encourage the unions that they should treat this cargo in the same way that they treat Namibian uranium shipments, and get them to refuse to unload it.

BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!!! At the beginning of February we can expect that cargo to arrive at virtually any port in the British Isles. Right now we need people to pledge that they will be prepared to be actively involved in leafleting dockers and picketing, so that when the ships arrive is announced a dedicated group of activists can react quickly. If you think you can become involved then please write to PARTIZANS by return post, at 218 LIVERPOOL ROAD, LONDON N1 6LE.

If you are not already a Partizans supporter, we'd like to hear from you, even if you are...

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Please also send us further details of RTZ's operations (and opposition to them) in the following areas: Canada (uranium), Australia (bauxite), Australia (uranium), Australia (diamonds), New Zealand, Chile, Brazil, U.S., Anglesey, Avonmouth.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: Partizans, 218 Liverpool Rd., London N1 6LE (tel: 01-609 7452)

PARTING COMPANY is the newsletter of Partizans. It is published 6 times a year. Some back issues are available also more copies of this one. Please contact Partizans.