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1. The Dermot Finnigan case (news287) may not be entirely over, as he has made complaints to the government department DECC and the Ministry of Justice, and following dissatisfaction with their response, to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, whose response is awaited.
2. Northern Ireland objectors' group SEAT (Safe Electricity in Armagh and Tyrone) report "NIE lodged their planning application on Tuesday 15th (December). Planning assures us that this application will not be processed until the first week of January at the earliest". The succinct press release from SEAT is at APPENDIX A below. The application from NIE is for the NI part of the cross-border 400kV interconnector powerline.
www.seatactiongroup.com
3. An application for the other half of the Irish interconnector is expected to be imminent. Objectors' group NEPP in the Republic note it is "on the cusp of Christmas and the New Year holiday period, serves to significantly shorten the realistic response period available under planning law for NEPP and other interested parties to make submissions on this issue of national importance".
<http://www.pylonpressure.ie/>
4. Picked up from google-adverts on the revolt web page: American Superconductor Company (now called AMSC) announced in October that they are to provide multi-GW capacity high-temperature-superconductor (HTS) underground electricity transmission "pipelines" for the new Tres Amigas SuperStation transmission hub connecting the USA's three major grids.
5. Extract from the AMSC press release 13-10-09: "Superconductor Electricity Pipelines combine conventional underground pipeline construction techniques with two highly complementary electric power technologies: DC superconductor power transmission cables and multi-terminal (voltage-source) AC/DC power converters. The result is a high-capacity electric transmission "pipeline" that is underground, easy to site and access, highly efficient and controllable, offers greater security and avoids complex cost allocation issues for interstate transmission of power than competing technologies".
6. The Tres Amigas hub is only on the scale of miles, though it will be a significant interconnection of USA's grids spanning thousands of miles. The AMSC web site also offers superconductor electricity pipelines on the 1,000-mile, 5,000MW scale.

<http://www.amsc.com/products/applications/utilities/superconductorpipeline.html>

7. Another objectors' group for the Hinkley Point – Avonmouth 400kV proposal is at <http://www.pylonthepressure.co.uk/>

It may be helpful for the various groups (revolt news285.2, 284.1) to work together.

8. The pylonthepressure site also carries links to others, including

<http://www.stourvalleyunderground.org.uk/>

on the Bramford-Twinstead 400kV line in East Anglia, which shows a NG consultation meeting due on Tuesday 5th Jan at Wickham St Paul.

APPENDIX A Press release 18-12-09 from SEAT

SEAT opposition to planning permission.

The decision by Northern Ireland Electricity to press ahead with a planning application for an overhead high voltage North – South interconnector is very disappointing. Despite unprecedented opposition on both sides of the border to this outdated overhead technology, NIE are ignoring the common sense option of environmentally friendly underground cables.

International opinion on overhead power lines has moved on swiftly in recent years. The ruling from the French civil court in Tulle on 28th October 2008, ordering the electricity transmission network RTE to pay Euro 390,648 compensatory damages to a farmer for health problems suffered by his animals living in close proximity to a 400 kilovolt overhead power line, has sent shock waves through the industry. Denmark has reacted by pledging to place all future high voltage lines underground while United States Democratic leader Steny Hoyer has tabled two bills before Congress urging a new safer underground system of electricity transmission. However, the decision makers within NIE have kept their heads in the sand and appear oblivious to this shift in international public opinion.

There are hundreds of peer – reviewed articles in top quality scientific journals worldwide raising serious concerns about the safety of very high voltage overhead power lines. The Draper Report (British Medical Journal, Vol. 330, 4th June 2005) highlighted a clear link between high voltage overhead cables and childhood leukaemia while a study at The Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern, Switzerland (American Journal of Epidemiology, 2009 Jan 15;169(2):167-75), found that living within fifty metres of a 220-380 kV power line for more than fifteen years doubled the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or senile dementia.

An overhead interconnector in Tyrone and Armagh would be a terrible blight on this most picturesque of landscapes. Tourists coming to see the beauty of the Blackwater Valley or the historic Navan Fort, the ancient seat of the Kings of Ulster, would instead be greeted by grotesque grey pylons dominating the skyline.

NIE's application was lodged with Planning Service on Tuesday 15th December. The application will now have to be processed and then there will be an opportunity for those who oppose the proposal to make their feelings known. It is imperative that everyone who wishes to preserve the beauty of our historic natural landscape lodges an official objection with Planning Service to this environmentally destructive proposal. Contact SafeElectricityArmaghTyrone on 07792582838 for more detail. (www.seatactiongroup.com)
