

WINFO

Newsletter of Women in Nuclear WIN No. 6 (2/94)

General Assembly 1994

WIN's first general assembly, held in Bonn in May, attracted some 50 members from 11 countries. During the assembly the Charter was amended to extend membership to men who support WIN's objectives.

The structure of WIN was debated. It was agreed to improve information exchange with the national groups by developing the international framework.

WIN is grateful to Informationskreis Kernenergie for the organisation and hosting of the general assembly. The assembly heard reports from ten countries and one new regional grouping. The next assembly will be in **Göteborg, Sweden June 15/16th, 1995.**

Belgium – Born to Inform

WIN Belgium was formed in October 1993 following much work by Cécile Bruwier, now the first president of the national group. During 1994 the group plans two information sessions to introduce and explain the presence and objectives of WIN to the Belgium nuclear community. A visit is also scheduled in November to the radiation and nuclear waste exhibition, *Isotopolis*, which has proved a major PR hit.

Finland – Channelling its Efforts

Anneli Salo from Finnish WIN, known as the Energy Channel, reported on the group's valiant, if unfruitful, efforts in the Finnish parliament during the debate for the country's fifth NPP. Meanwhile, the group organised a number of outside speakers to its meetings as well as visited members' organisations, such as the research centre where the Triga experimental reactor is housed. The group now plans a circular letter offering speakers to women's organisations. The group will also begin to brief existing politicians and candidates in the run-up to the Finnish general election in March 1995.

Hungary – A Doctor Calls

The assembly heard from WIN member, Biborka Bodor, a doctor who has worked at PAKS NPP since 1982. WIN Hungary has been active with plant visits for women and journalists. Ms. Bodor also reported on World Health Organisation recommended research that she has been involved with at PAKS. The frequency of congenital deformities and the rate of childhood cancer at the plant, and within a 30 km radius, was studied over time. All data were lower than the national average.

UK – After Battle Victories



Kieran Wilson, tutor at Nuclear Electric's Agecroft training centre, with his daughter Rebecca on Britain's Take Our Daughters to Work Day.

Elizabeth Morgan-Lewis reported to the assembly about the long public relations battle for THORP and the run-up to the long-awaited government review of nuclear power. Nuclear Electric (NE), the UK's largest nuclear generator, has taken corporate membership of the organisation *Women in Management* and has eight representatives on its sites. NE published paid-for editorial in women's magazines about its women engineers and sponsored the final of a schoolgirls' debating competition. The utility also supported the *Take Our Daughters to Work Day* throughout the country and has set-up a Women's Network at all sites. In line with its successful *Come and See* campaign Scottish Nuclear has now targeted women's groups to visit its two power stations.

Japan – Blossoming One Year On

A member of the Women's Energy Network (WEN), currently living in Germany, Yuko Shima, presented Japan's report. Commenting on public perceptions, she reported that attention is more on Japan's new government than the country's expanding nuclear programme which includes fast reactors. In January WEN established a secretariat within the Japan Atomic Energy Relations Organisation. WEN issue a regular newsletter, named *Nadeshiko* which is a flower's name, and they plan to publish a book on energy for the general public within a year. A first anniversary symposium is planned in June and will attract around 150 participants.

Sweden – A Risky Gender Gap

Hella Krook from Ringhals NPP explained that while some recent opinion poll results showed a decline in the support for nuclear, a study conducted since 1987 by the Stockholm Centre for Risk Research showed an improvement in trust by both sexes in state and industry experts. The results also underlined the differences between men and women's opinions. Compared to men, women were still more negative to nuclear and perceive it as higher risk. Women are less trusting of state and industry experts but more trusting of anti-nuclear experts.

As 83% of women are professionals, projects have been started countrywide to improve the relationship at work between the sexes. One such project at a regional university was attended by Ringhals NPP staff and led to many sub-groups at Ringhals to continue the work.

Norden – WIN's First Regional Group

Sweden also reported on the activities of the new regional group WIN Norden, comprising Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Formed in December 1993, the group plans two meetings a year. The chairwoman is Agneta Rising. Its first meeting in March this year, hosted by utility IVO in Finland, attracted 24 women.

Switzerland – A Ripple on the Lake

Irene Aegerter, president WIN International and member of the Swiss women's energy group, Frauen für Energie (FFE), opened the Swiss report and FFE president, Katharina Lauterburg, continuing said: "All is calm on Lake Nuclear, but it may be the calm before the storm." Her comments refer to the end of the Swiss nuclear moratorium in 2000. Good news came from polls which showed, over a four-year period, a 16% increase in the acceptance of the perceived risks of nuclear. The Swiss gender gap closed a little to 9% – but women continue to perceive higher risk. FFE was also active in Berne to defeat a water-protection initiative which would have prevented future hydro-stations.

The annual meeting of the Swiss Nuclear Forum in August 1993 was addressed by Colette Lewiner, chairwoman SGN France, and generated excellent press coverage.

Penly's First Lady

France has done it again. Not only was France the first country to appoint a woman as manager of a nuclear unit when Martine Griffon-Fouco took over at Le Blayais but now it has appointed a woman station manager. Congratulations to long standing WIN member Catherine Gaujacq, the new director of the two-unit Penly NPP on France's north coast. Mme Gaujacq, 37, joined utility EDF in 1980 and has worked at the plants of Fessenheim and Cattenom as well as in central offices in Paris.



Russian Round Table

An afternoon session within a recent three-day seminar on public opinion in Moscow considered the women's view. Introductory speeches by joint-chairwomen Irene Aegerter, WIN International, and Galina Dvorina, president of the dynamic women's group within the Nuclear Society International, Moscow, led to a lively discussion. Women think more strongly about safety. They admit there is no absolute safety and therefore demand rigid controls. There was a call for a greater involvement by women in the safe operation of NPPs. Opinion polls show that 30% of Russian women support nuclear energy, 43% prefer solar, 7% favour oil and a tiny, 4% opt for coal.



Women's group Nuclear Society International, Moscow

Pacific Overtures

Colette Lewiner, chairwoman and CEO of SGN addressed the 9th Pacific Basin Conference held in Sydney in May.

Speaking on *Why are women a target public for energy communication?*, she explained that women are more likely to mention the problems associated with nuclear power than the benefits. She highlighted generalised gender differences: women have less technical training, less identification with economic growth, less interest in energy; women are more receptive to the dangers of radiation, more concerned with the environment, more concerned for future generations. Polls demonstrate that women are less positive to nuclear than men. These factors combined mean that it is necessary to develop specific communication with women. Women identify with women. Many women feel that men simply lecture to, not communicate with, women. Therefore women are effective communicators to women. Mme Lewiner went on to describe the WIN organisation, its objectives, successes and its plans.

Taipei Ties the Knot

WIN is delighted to welcome as new groups not only Belgium and Norden but also Taipei. Founded in April, WIN Taipei has 55 members from the local nuclear community mostly from the power utilities, universities, research institutes, regulatory authorities and service organisations. Contact Jessie J.Chiu, Atomic Energy Council, tel+886 2 3634180 fax+886 2 3660149.
