

5. The Ministry's plans for the production of fissile material (plutonium or U 235) in quantity are under the direction of Lord Portal of Hungerford, formerly Chief of the Air Staff. A plant is now in operation at Springfields, near Preston, Lancashire, for the refining of uranium from ores and the manufacture of canned uranium slugs. In the autumn of 1947 work started on the site of the former Royal Ordnance Factory at Sellafield, Cumberland, where large-scale reactors are being built for the production of plutonium from the canned slugs manufactured at Springfields. Construction of the Sellafield factory (now known as Windscale) is well advanced.

6. Ancillary to its production programme, the Ministry of Supply, with the assistance of the Geological Survey, conducts an Empire-wide search for new sources of radioactive ore. New types of prospecting counter have been developed at Harwell and issued to Colonial Surveys. In March last the Ministry offered a ten-year guaranteed minimum price for all uranium ores, containing over 10 per cent uranium, produced in the Colonial Empire.

7. As to the alternative end-uses of atomic energy, the Minister of Defence told the House of Commons in May 1948 that all types of modern weapons, including atomic weapons, were being developed. He declined to give further information about the development of atomic weapons on the ground that this would not be in the public interest.

Several alternative plans for the design of power-producing reactors are being developed at Harwell.

B. Excerpts from British Statements Regarding the Atomic Energy Programme.

1. Prime Minister Attlee Announces Setting up of Atomic Energy Research Establishment (Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, October 29, 1945, col. 38)

The Prime Minister:

"In accordance with a recommendation which has been received from the Advisory Committee on Atomic Energy of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir J. Anderson) is the Chairman, the Government have decided to set up a research and experimental establishment covering all aspects of the use of atomic energy. Accommodation is being provided for the establishment at Harwell airfield near Didcot. I am advised that the danger to surrounding areas from the experimental station is negligible. It has further been decided that in view of the importance of this work to the Service Departments, responsibility for research on this subject which has hitherto rested with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research should be transferred to the Ministry of Supply. The Tube Alloys Directorate (which is the name by which the technical organization dealing with these matters has hitherto been known) will accordingly become a part of that Ministry. The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research will, however, be represented both on the Advisory Committee and on some of its technical sub-committees."