On 28th February, 1957, the Cabinet approved a programme to provide 5,000 to 6,000 MW of electricity by 1965, subsequently amended, at the time of the credit restrictions in the autumn 1957, to 1966 (C.C.(57) 14th Conclusions, Minute 5). The following stations have been ordered:

- Berkeley 275
- Bradwell 300
- Hunterston (Scotland) 350
- Hinkley Point 500
- Trawsfynydd 500

1,925 MW

2. An application from the Central Electricity Generating Board to put down a power station at Dungeness in Kent has been the subject of a public enquiry by Inspectors from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and the Ministry of Power and a report was made to me on 9th March, 1959, recommending that I should give my consent to the building of a power station at Dungeness of 500 MW capacity.

3. From the technical point of view it is a good site, capable of further expansion; but there are both considerations of amenity and problems of nature conservation involved. I have considered the matter jointly with the Minister of Housing and Local Government and with the Lord President of the Council who is responsible for the Nature Conservancy. On balance, they are prepared to support my intention to give consent to the building of this station but they have suggested that I should bring the matter to the notice of my colleagues before giving consent because of the objections which are likely to be raised in Parliament and elsewhere when the report and my letter of consent are published.

4. These objections will come from those who wish to preserve employment in the mines at any cost and would prefer to see the nuclear power programme reduced or abandoned. It is stated in the Inspectors' report, which will be published, that part of the case made by the Generating Board was that, on the assumption that the demand for electricity will double itself every ten to twelve years, home-produced coal would not be able to keep pace with the demand for power. In view of the present large surplus of coal this will probably be questioned. Objections will also come from those concerned with amenity and with the scientific aspects of nature conservation.
5. The other nuclear stations were approved before the consumption of coal began to fall off in a serious way and considerable stocks began to accumulate. We can, therefore, expect political attacks on the part of the Opposition and criticism by the miners' leaders. But in my view we should stand up to these in the same way as we must stand up to moves to get us to abandon the free use of oil in industry.

6. I believe that the precise size of the programme is irrelevant to the question of a station at Dungeness. The capacity of the stations approved to date at 1,925 MW is not much more than one-third of the lower end of our target. It is only by proceeding with the construction of new stations that we can keep in being the scientific and technical staffs which have been built up at great cost and effort, and which are able to develop the plans of the Atomic Energy Authority and of the Industrial Consortia to assure us a reducing cost of electricity and a hoped for valuable export trade.

7. It is still expected that in the long run nuclear power will be needed to meet our requirements of electricity in addition to all the coal fired stations which can be brought into commission.

8. As regards the criticism from those concerned with amenities and with nature conservation, their case was fully argued and considered at the public enquiry and the inspectors decided on balance against the representations put forward by them.

9. I propose, subject to the Cabinet, to issue my consent and I trust that after considering the probable reactions the Cabinet will endorse my proposal.

M.

Ministry of Power, S.W.1.

19th June, 1959