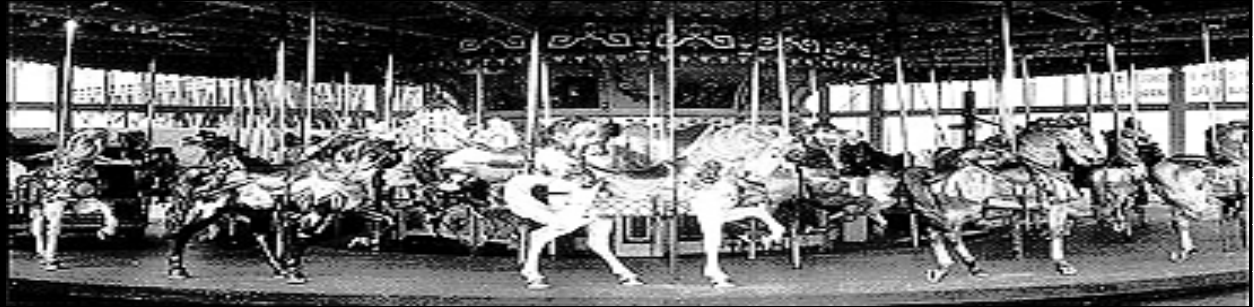


# Broken Promises

Amsterdam ♦ Frankfurt ♦ Paris ♦ London



AIRPORT EXPANSION: EUROPE'S MERRY-GO-ROUND



BUNDNIS DER BURGERINITIATIVEN KEIN FLUGHAFENAUSBAU



HACAN

FRIENDS *of the*  
**earth**  
*for the planet for people*

ClearSkies

LES AMIS DE LA TERRE



  
milieu  
defense

## **BROKEN PROMISES**

*4 Airports, 4 Communities, 1 Environment*

## **EUROPE'S MERRY-GO-ROUND**

*Airports: Competition Or Collusion?*



**AMSTERDAM - Schiphol**



**FRANKFURT - Frankfurt Am Main**



**PARIS - Roissy Charles De Gaulle**



**LONDON - Heathrow**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS**

*From Global to Local*



## **BROKEN PROMISES**

### ***4 Airports, 4 Communities, 1 Environment***

“Air transport must be unfettered and encouraged to grow.”  
Sir Colin Marshall, Chairman of British Airways, November 1995

**M**illions of people across Europe are adversely affected by the daily operations of the airport and air travel industry. And it is not just the people living closest to airports whose quality of life and environment is affected by aircraft noise and emissions and airport expansion plans.

Now, for the first time, communities at Europe’s four main airport ‘hubs’ have come together to act over the industry’s growing impact on their environment and quality of life. *Broken Promises* traces the history of each airport and shows:

- similarities between each of the airport’s tactics for expansion and growth;
- how promises to local communities have been broken time and time again to satisfy expansion demands from airports and airlines;
- the complicity of Governments in those broken promises;
- how airports and airlines receive special subsidies from Governments which directly fuel unsustainable airport expansion and growth in air traffic;
- how communities and citizen’s groups campaigning against the odds to protect themselves from airport expansion have started to have their concerns recognised by Governments.

The experience of communities at Europe’s four main airports is mirrored across Europe. Indeed, as a result of campaigning by citizens’ groups at and around airports large and small, many Governments are beginning to realise the need for firm measures to protect citizens and their environment by delivering meaningful improvements.

People’s concerns and the need for ecologically sustainable development can no longer be ignored and we invite communities across Europe to join us in our efforts to ensure the industry and Governments start acting responsibly, with people’s health and their environment at the heart of all decision making.

June 1999

## **EUROPE’S MERRY-GO-ROUND**

broken.promises@amsterdam.frankfurt.paris.london

## ***Airports: Competition or Collusion?***



### **Competitors or Partners?**

Europe's leading airports want people and politicians to believe that expansion is vital to compete with each other and to stay in the top league of European airport 'hubs'. Heathrow-London, Roissy-Paris, Schiphol-Amsterdam and Frankfurt make it their business to remind people, politicians and the media that they face tough competition from each of the other hubs.

Repeated so often, the 'competition argument' has gone virtually unchallenged especially in political circles. What is not said by each airport operator is that they are all part of the same industry, not simply attending the same conferences on how to run and grow their airports, but having an interest in seeing their 'competitors' expand.

Far from being in competition with each other like horses in a race, each of Europe's four leading airports is a horse on the same carousel - the global airport and air travel industry. The busier and faster the carousel, the more each airport benefits. When one airport expands the others use this to persuade people and politicians of the 'need' for more expansion.

Often, an airport's case for expansion is linked to the health of the national economy with claims that unless expansion is allowed the economy will suffer along with the nation's image in Europe.

### **Special Treatment**

Although the airport and air travel industry has a high profile in national and global economies its actual economic and employment contribution should not be overstated. It has increased its environmental and social impact often without proportionate increases in employment. For example:

- In the European Union, the industry employs 0.2 per cent of the work force;
- At Frankfurt airport, an increase in the number of flights by over 75 per cent resulted in less than 1 per cent extra employment.

Thanks to growing community concern and to campaigns by environmental organisations, Governments appear increasingly aware of the impact of the industry.

But the official line is still to give airports and airlines special treatment in the form of direct and indirect subsidies.

Perhaps the most significant of the subsidies is the industry's special exemption from paying tax on any of the aircraft fuel (kerosene) it uses. By avoiding paying tax in this way, the industry is given not only a head start on making profits but is able to sell airline tickets at artificially low prices which, in turn, creates more demand for more flights.

Airports and airlines point to this artificially created 'demand' as further evidence of the need to expand to 'compete' and stay ahead of the rest.

In reality, like horses on a merry-go-round, no one airport ever takes a winning lead. The race is the race to expand. To win is to continue to expand - with more runways and terminals leading to more flights, more passengers and more cargo - and so the carousel turns...

### **Enough is Enough**

**C**ompetition has been a convenient but potent argument used by the industry to persuade governments to allow almost uninterrupted expansion for the past fifty years. Now as we enter the 21st century the signs are that Governments are waking up to its use and to the way the 'merry-go-round' works.

Governments appear more willing to listen to communities who have not gained significant protection from airport expansion and aircraft nuisance despite decades of promises. While some communities can point to the introduction of beneficial measures they can equally point out that the benefits have been temporary, often being wiped out by new expansion plans or rapid growth in air traffic, which in Europe is growing by 6 per cent a year.

The impact air travel is now known to have is out of step with the way we all need to live in the 21st century. Constant airport expansion is inconsistent with ecologically sustainable development and the need for human activities, including business, to operate within, not beyond, environmental limits.

**Enough is enough. It is time to end the broken promises.**

## **AMSTERDAM - Schiphol** ***Ambitious and Unlawful***



**S**chiphol has been the fastest growing major airport in Europe doubling in size between 1990 and 1997 to become the fourth largest in Europe. Schiphol's growth and success can be traced to:

- its close relationship with the Netherlands Government;
- its low tariffs including special reduced tariffs for transfer passengers;
- the low cost of aircraft fuel (kerosene);
- low Minimum Connecting Time - because of KLM's extensive network;
- people spending more of their money on flying;
- successful lobbying to become a "Mainport".

**The "Mainport" Lobby** - in the 1980's Schiphol joined the lobby known as 'Netherlands Distribution Country' run by transport companies, the Port of Rotterdam and the road building lobby. The transport and distribution companies involved represented only a small part of the Netherlands economy but managed to convince the Government that their sector was vital to the entire national economy. Building on the country's traditions as a trading nation, the lobby gained much support for the idea that a sector merely moving people and goods from A to B was vital to everyone's interests in the Netherlands.

The lobby introduced the concept of the "Mainport" - an important distribution centre. Behind this image is the drive for unrestrained physical and commercial growth. For Schiphol, this means staying as one of the largest and busiest airports in Europe.

### **Schiphol Factfile**

- 5 runways, 6th runway approved, 1 terminal
- 375,000 flights a year + 34 million passengers a year
- Expansion plans: 6th runway (by 2003)  
600,000 flights + 60 million passengers (by 2010)
- 500,000 people are severely affected by the airport including sleeping problems, higher blood pressure, stress and higher than average incidences of respiratory problems around Schiphol.

Schiphol has attracted a sustained and vigorous campaign against expansion with use of the law as well as active protest to draw attention to the impact of the airport and the lack of action by Government. Actions / manifestations have ranged from occupying the airport tarmac and banner drops to buying land intended for the 6th runway and refusing to sell it to the airport. Campaigners are demanding:

- an end to the privileges the airport currently receives from Government
- a decent set of environmental regulations giving real protection to communities around the airport and to the wider environment. These regulations should be comparable to those applied to other commercial activities and should include noise, air pollution, external safety (third party risk), health effects, smell and emissions and global impacts such as carbon dioxide emissions.

## Current Expansion Plans

**A 6th Runway** - Since the 1970's Schiphol has pushed for a 6th runway. In the 1990's the idea gained as much political support as it attracted opposition from citizens. After a long conflict, Government again sided with Schiphol but tried to pacify angry citizens with what it called “the double objective” - Schiphol would become a “mainport” with a 6th runway but its environmental and social impact would be reduced. This “win-win” situation went as far as to call the 6th runway an “environmental runway” because it would mean less noise for some people. Noise is just the most obvious problem with Schiphol. In fact, the 6th runway extends current noise problems to new areas while failing to address the social and environmental issues of air pollution, climate change and the extra flights the runway will generate.

Construction has been delayed by a legal challenge and by people buying land where the runway is planned and refusing to sell to Schiphol. The High Court has ordered Government to introduce legal limits for noise, air pollution, safety (third party risks) and smells. These limits will have to fit with earlier commitments by the Government (see **The 1998 Decision** below) to set environmental standards no worse than they were in 1990. These promises made by Government to gain political support for a fifth runway are becoming harder and harder to keep.

**The 1998 Decision** - In 1998 the Government took a decision over Schiphol which, although some saw as approval for more expansion without restraint, included a declaration that future expansion depends on Schiphol operating within environmental limits (such as limits on emissions and noise) not the other way round as has been the case for years.

The Government also stated that environmental problems have to be no worse in the future than they were in 1990. In an attempt to resolve the growing conflict, the Government has asked environmental and citizens' groups to negotiate with the airport and other interest groups such as the municipalities and trades unions about setting environmental limits for the airport.

**“Re-design”** - is the term being used to describe how Schiphol could expand. In practise, “re-design” means a new set of runways and is based on the belief that new technology and new runway layout will allow Schiphol to expand and still reduce its environmental and social impacts.

**North Sea Airport** - One option left to the Government is an airport in the North Sea costing at least 50 billion Dutch Guilders a cost which neither the Government nor the air travel industry seem prepared to pay. A sea airport may solve some local noise problems but still represents the attitude that problems can be solved by pushing them elsewhere. This will not address the basic issue of unsustainable growth in air travel and its huge environmental impacts. Citizens' groups also know that a new airport would mean more growth at Schiphol until the new one is ready.

A North Sea airport would also fuel the claimed ‘competition’ between the main European airports. For example, Frankfurt and Schiphol currently ‘compete’ to have less stringent restrictions on night flights. A sea airport operating with no flight restrictions would build pressure for more night flights at Frankfurt. On the other hand, restrictions at Frankfurt make it easier to introduce restrictions at Schiphol.

BAA, the owners of Heathrow, London also claim to be “alarmed” at the proposal and have use it to demand more expansion to maintain Heathrow's position as the largest international airport.

## Promises, Promises

**Misleading Forecasts** - Schiphol is poor at forecasting flight and passenger growth numbers. Based on Schiphol's forecasts, in 1995 the Government set a legal limit of 44 million passengers a year and predicted that this would not be reached until 2015. At the same time, the Government gave a guarantee that national policy was to reduce the amount of air traffic. However, with Schiphol already handling 34 million passengers a year, the 44 million limit will probably be breached by 2003. It is hard not to conclude that the growth forecasts Schiphol gave the Government were deliberately low in order to gain permission for a sixth runway. Citizens' groups believe that the Government and Parliament were more than willing to be misled as facing up to Schiphol's misleading forecasts would mean having to deal with the whole problem of Schiphol.

**Noise Zones** - promised for 1978, noise zones were legally introduced at Schiphol in 1997 to cut noise nuisance for people living close to the airport. Based on a complex formula to reach an annual cumulative noise figure, the zones offer some relief but not for people living away from the airport. The zones are only legally binding for the 15,000 homes closest to the airport. They also ignore noise below 65 decibels. When Schiphol broke the noise limits in their first year of operation the Prime Minister said, "this is once but never again". In 1998 the noise limits were breached again and the Schiphol looks set to exceed the limits again in 1999. It remains to be seen what action the Government will take to ensure Schiphol respects the law.

## Vital for Jobs?

Schiphol uses the jobs argument to gain or maintain support for its constant expansion ambitions claiming that between 80,000 and 100,000 jobs depend on it. Economic forecasts presented to Parliament before the decision to build the 6th runway predicted 60,000 jobs with the current amount of flights. The reality is that 46,500 people work for Schiphol, KLM and related companies and this figure hardly grows. For example, between 1990 and 1998, the number of full-time staff employed by Schiphol itself grew by 29 from 1,899 to 1,928. In 1990 KLM employed 26,400 people; by 1996 this had fallen to 25,500.

Schiphol inflates its jobs figures by including "forward and backwards employment linkages" - in other words, jobs created by other companies which, Schiphol claim, are in the area mainly because of the airport. This claim ignores that most companies locate in this part of the Netherlands for reasons other than Schiphol: low taxes, the cultural attraction of Amsterdam and the calm labour market.

## Schiphol and the local community

Schiphol pays for local homes to be sound-insulated although, apart from not dealing with noise problems when outside in the garden for instance, this has been found to affect in-house air quality. Schiphol also funds many community projects, sport events and welfare programmes and distributes a free monthly magazine *Schipholland* to more than a 500,000 households around the airport - 488,000 households more than Schiphol usually claims are affected by airport operations.

Apart from human interest stories about people's holidays *Schipholland* often includes articles on the airport's attempts to reduce its environmental impact. The features often use suggestions from and critiques by environmental groups and they try to show that these are wrong and based on insufficient knowledge of how the aviation industry really works. The magazine also advertises job vacancies at the airport, to reinforce the image of the airport as 'job machine'.

## FRANKFURT - Frankfurt am Main *The "Child" Grows and Grows*



**F**rankfurt airport started in 1934 and became the main airport 'hub' in Germany when, after 1945, the national airline - Lufthansa - decided to make it its base. Other airports had been destroyed during the war and Frankfurt was located at the centre of the three western allied sectors of post-war Germany. U.S. military forces built two close parallel runways.

As Germany's economy grew, so did Lufthansa and Frankfurt am Main. Politicians did everything they could for Frankfurt airport which they regarded as their "child". It seems that everyone had an interest in the airport's growth. Today, the City of Frankfurt, the Hessen Region Government and the Federal Government all have a stake in the airport with noise and the operating license being controlled by Hessen region.

### Frankfurt Factfile

- 3 runways, 2 terminals
- 392,000 flights a year + 40 million passengers a year
- Expansion plans: 4th runway (by 2003)  
600,000 flights + 60 million passengers (by 2016)

The citizen's movement against Frankfurt airport expansion is one of the oldest environmental organisations in Germany. Starting in 1967 against aircraft noise, the movement grew between 1978 and 1981 to more than 150,000 people and became a movement against a west runway. This "Startbahn West" movement occupied the forest where the runway was planned to be built and eventually grew into a protest village with 65 houses.

In 1981 calls for a referendum on expansion increased the pressure on the Government and the airport authorities. Although a final court decision for or against expansion had yet to be taken the Government decided to end the blockade and in 1984 "Startbahn West" was built. Today, the campaign has 32 groups around Frankfurt airport and its satellite airport 13 km away at Wiesbaden-Erbenheim, which has over 80,000 flights.

### Past Expansion Plans

Expansion and new runways were proposed in 1958, 1967 and throughout the 1970's. The 1967 plan to extend the two runways to 4,000 metres was held up by legal challenges until 1978. A third 4,000 metre runway was also demanded and, defended by politicians and police, the regional authorities gained it by 1984. This third runway now handles 60 per cent of all take offs from Frankfurt.

### Current Expansion Plans

**A 4th Runway** - In 1997, Frankfurt and Lufthansa demanded a 4th runway, 2 1/2 km north of the main terminal, in the untouched forest that surrounded the original airport. This would be used for take offs only. Lufthansa which contributes half of Frankfurt's business has threatened to expand its Munich 'hub' at Frankfurt's expense unless the new runway is approved.

**Shopping Terminal** - In the meantime, Frankfurt aims to double its income from “non-aviation business”. This means generating more income from selling goods and running shops. A 300 million DM “shopping terminal” is being proposed just as at Heathrow where the owners have focussed on retail as a source of income and a way of funding expansion.

### **Promises, Promises**

**3rd Runway** - When the third runway was approved in 1981, the Government promised that no more of the surrounding forest would be cut down for airport expansion. However, over 180 hectares of forest, wildlife sites and open, green space has been taken for expansion. Another 158 hectares of forest and undeveloped land was taken for the new high speed rail service linking airports at Dusseldorf, Koeln, Frankfurt and Stuttgart.

**Forecasts** - The number and frequency of flights has increased with aircraft being allowed to take off when the last plane’s tail-fin is just three miles away - the legal minimum gap. Even so, Christian Hafner, Frankfurt’s head of traffic management is working on “closer stacking” to squeeze in more flights.

**Noise** - The cut in the number of noisier (chapter 2) aircraft has meant less noise from individual aircraft but reductions have been temporary, being cancelled out with the increase in the number of flights. Today, large towns over 20 km away suffer noise nuisance 24 hours a day and Frankfurt admits that the measured noise levels will increase rather than reduce.

**Impact Study** - In 1991, the coalition regional Government of Social Democrats and Greens promised to conduct a study of the environmental problems caused by Frankfurt am Main. In 1994, an early draft of the study was found to have been “corrected” to be less damaging to the airport. Communities are still waiting for the full study to be published and believe that delays could be due to a combination of lobbying by the airport, concern in Government that the study reveals problems that are too challenging and a lack of political will.

### **Vital for Jobs?**

Frankfurt is ruthless and selective in its use of the “jobs machine” argument. The airport defends its 100 or so night flights by claiming the need to “compete” and to create employment. And yet only half of the 42 million passengers flying in actually want to go to Frankfurt. The rest are ‘transfer passengers’ heading for the rest of Europe, Asia and the Americas who bring all of the pollution and few of the financial benefits of actually entering Germany.

In 1990 Lufthansa employed 47,600 employees. By 1996, this figure had fallen by 13,400 to 34,200 people.

### **Frankfurt and the local community**

Frankfurt has a specialist marketing department to conduct its lobbying. A special fund gives money to community projects, football teams and cosmetic environmental projects such as a parks, nature reserves and ecology areas at the airport terminals. Public relations cannot hide the minimal commitment to reduce the airport’s real impact or to face up to the need to put an end to non-stop expansion.

## **PARIS - Roissy Charles de Gaulle** ***Not just another Parisian airport***



In 1960, Roissy, 15 km North East of Paris was chosen as the location for a new airport - the seventh in the Paris area. The French Government ignored public opposition to the scheme and built the airport with plans for 5 runways, 4 from east to west and 1 from north to south. The first (northern) runway opened in 1976.

The emergence of Roissy Charles de Gaulle in 1996 as the new 'hub' in Paris was part of a rescue plan to reverse the fortunes of Air France, the state owned airline which had been losing money since 1990. Helped by the airports authority, Aeroports de Paris (ADP), Air France's push for profits and increased productivity meant centring operations at Roissy.

### **Roissy Charles de Gaulle Factfile**

- 2 runways, 2 terminals
- 400,000 flights a year + 35 million passengers a year
- Expansion plans: 3rd and 4th runways (by 2001)  
730,000 flights + 55 million passengers (by 2015)

In 1981, local people formed citizens' associations, among them ADVOCNAR (L'Association de Defense Contre les Nuisances Aeriennes). They demanded:

- a limit on flight numbers;
- a maximum of two runways;
- a cut in the number of night flights;
- flights paths over less densely populated areas;
- flight altitudes over urban areas to be as high as possible

Since Aeroports de Paris (ADP) and La Direction Generale de L'Aviation Civile (DGAC) have been unwilling to consider any proposals that would restrain their ambitions to expand Roissy, campaigners have used a variety of tactics to draw attention to their concerns including national days of action.

### **Past Expansion Plans**

A second runway was opened in 1981 (3 km from the first) and in 1993, ADP proposed further expansion at Roissy with two more coupled runways. Although ADP also proposed cancelling the first (northern) runway, its plans were designed to make Roissy capable of handling 80 million passengers a year - an increase of 58 million over 1993 levels.

### **Current Expansion Plans**

In 1997, the Government approved expansion of Roissy based on a report of a special Government commission, *La Commission Douffiagues*. This looked at how to reduce nuisance from Roissy without limiting flight and passenger numbers and reported that:

- passenger numbers should be limited to 55 million a year;
- only the existing two long runways should be used for taking off;
- to end taking off to the east, the two runways should be lengthened by 700 metres in the east;
- two shorter runways should be used for landings only;

- other airports should be used to take traffic from Roissy;
- consideration should be given to a new airport west of Paris.

The study though unsatisfactory in many ways did at least establish for the first time:

- the logic of putting limits on the use of the airport;
- the need to limit the expansion of Roissy;
- the reality of noise nuisance beyond the existing noise control schemes: Plan d'Exposition au Bruit (PEB) and Plan de Gène Sonore (PSG);
- the need to exert more control over the existing noise schemes.

### **Promises, Promises**

**Impact Study** - Before La Commission Douffiagues an earlier impact study had been conducted following pressure from ADVOCNAR and other citizens' associations. Considering how to limit the impact of Roissy the study concluded that lengthening the runways in the east would help reduce some of the noise nuisance to the west of the airport. The Government rejected the study and commissioned La Commission Douffiagues since when there has been no action from Government. Meanwhile ADP decided to build two new terminals, gaining approval after the Government had made the following promises:

- annual passenger numbers would not exceed 55 million a year;
- annual noise would not be any worse than 1997 levels;
- night flights by noisier (chapter 2) aircraft would end;
- an independent commission would control noise and implement the Government's 'promises';
- the PSG would be modified;
- there would be a lower psophique level;
- an 'environmental charter' and a 'code de bonne conduit' would set rules of behaviour for pilots and airlines

Community groups have welcomed the new commitments and the special commission to make sure the promises are kept, but cautiously point out that these measures will only control the current nuisance of the airport and airlines. Substantial action to prevent future increases in nuisance still needs to be discussed.

### **Vital for Jobs?**

ADP claim that each million more passengers creates 1,000 more jobs, claims that have never been verified. Jobs have certainly been created from the transfer of activities from Orly to Roissy although these are not new jobs, simply replacement jobs for those already lost. In 1990, Air France employed 39,800 people. By 1996 this had fallen by 3,300 to 36,500 people.

### **Roissy and the local community**

ADP publishes and distributes a magazine, *Entre Voisins* (Between Neighbours) focussing on Roissy's efforts to reduce its impact and giving much statistical data. It also has a visitor centre, *Maison de l'environnement*, where visitors can see what the airport is doing to protect the environment and use *Sonate*, a computer which records details of each take off and landing.

## LONDON - Heathrow A Terminal Disaster



**H**eathrow is the world's busiest international airport. Built in 1947 in London's Green Belt on high-grade farmland and using wartime regulations to avoid public scrutiny of the plan, a local newspaper wrote at the time: *"An atomic bomb dropped at Heathrow could not spread devastation more widely than the disruption caused by the construction of an airport on this spot."*

Thanks largely to Heathrow, the West London area is the most congested part of South East England with constant development pressure on land and other resources and growing air, water and noise pollution. Although this pressure is felt most by local communities, people living in parts of London and the South East previously unaffected by Heathrow now feel its effects.

### Heathrow Factfile

- 2 runways, 4 terminals
- 440,000 flights a year + 58 million passengers a year
- Expansion plans: 5th terminal (by 2006)  
453,000 flights + 80 million passengers (by 2016)
- 500,000 people are affected by aircraft noise

Concern about Heathrow's impact has grown far beyond the communities immediately surrounding the airport. In the past the main noise disturbance has been felt by people living in West London and west of London areas. But now communities as far away as the East and North of London are routinely disturbed by noise. Heathrow also generates a lot of traffic which spreads its congestion and pollution effects across London and the South East of England.

Plans to expand Heathrow with a 5th terminal (T5) have met with stern opposition. Local community groups attended every day of a marathon public inquiry, presenting evidence and cross-examining BAA and their supporters on every aspect of the scheme. Without doubt unless community groups had been prepared to dedicate their own time and money to present a case there would have been very little scrutiny of BAA's scheme.

Community groups are confident that they put forward a good case but they know that the T5 public inquiry may be irrelevant. The Government showed reluctance to scrutinise BAA's scheme at the public inquiry and the feeling is that the Government has already decided to approve T5 whatever the inquiry inspector recommends. A decision will follow the next General Election.

### Past Expansion Plans

Since 1947, Heathrow has expanded to 4 terminals and 2 runways with roads, car parks, freight and service areas now covering close to 1,200 hectares. The tarmacked area alone is equivalent to 200 miles of 3 lane motorway. The last major expansion was in the late 1970's when Terminal 4 (T4) was built following a public inquiry.

## Current Expansion Plans

**New Terminal or New Airport?** - BAA plc, owners and operators of Heathrow, want to build a fifth terminal (T5) which, if approved, would actually be the third largest airport in Europe after Frankfurt and the rest of Heathrow. Between 1995 and 1999 a public inquiry was held into BAA's scheme which would:

- double the size and operations at Heathrow;
- add at least 30 million more passengers a year bringing the total to at least 80 million a year;
- add up to 40 per cent more flights leading to increased pressure for more night flights;
- increase pressure for a 3rd runway;
- generate 49,000 extra car trips every day;
- be the largest structure ever built in London's Green Belt.

**Air Quality** - Heathrow and the high volume of road traffic it generates have made the West London area an air pollution hotspot. BAA's own figures show that a fifth terminal would routinely breach the Government air quality standards intended to protect people's health. BAA admit that even without T5 air quality standards are likely to be exceeded in the Heathrow area at least until 2016. With T5, 17 people a year are likely to die as a result of the extra air pollution.

**Shopping Terminal** - BAA has designed T5 with more shopping space than the nearest large town. This is because BAA makes most of its profits from retail and duty-free sales, profits that help BAA to promote more expansion at Heathrow.

**3rd Runway** - Building T5 will be only one step away from building a 3rd runway. In 1995, BAA told the T5 public inquiry, *"We could not rule out the option of considering Heathrow when another runway is required... We could not give a guarantee about seeking further expansion."* BAA's refusal to rule out a third runway from the start of the inquiry was a major weakness in its case for T5. Instead of signing a legal agreement with the local authorities to ensure no more runways, BAA asked the Government to rule out more runways. Community groups believe that by passing the buck to Government BAA can lobby Government for a new runway in private while in public pretending to do all it can to have more runways ruled out.

## Promises, Promises

**The Final Expansion?** - *"I am strongly of the opinion that all possible steps should be taken to satisfy those living around Heathrow that this is the last major expansion..."* This was the recommendation of the inspector running the public inquiry into a 4th terminal in 1978. The Government also stated that T4 would be the final expansion.

Within a few years of Terminal 4 being built talk of a fifth terminal had started. And after the Government had sold the British Airports Authority the new privatised BAA plc demanded a fifth terminal. Despite earlier promises, BAA's application for a fifth terminal was taken seriously and at great expense the T5 public inquiry was held.

**Misleading Forecasts** - BAA told the T5 public inquiry that there would be 50 million passengers a year at Heathrow by 2016. Yet Heathrow already handles 60 million passengers a year and this is growing fast. BAA refused to alter its forecasts which many saw as a major cause of delays at the public inquiry. Campaigners could find no reasonable explanation for BAA's miscalculations other than an attempt to mislead the public inquiry by giving deliberately low forecasts.

**BAA's Pledges** - BAA made many pledges to impress politicians and persuade them to approve T5 - on the amount of car parking, no more night flights, no third runway and rail links. Community groups believe BAA would never had made such pledges had they not been put under pressure at the T5 inquiry but suggest that given BAA's track record and previous broken promises the pledges are easy to make and just as easy to forget.

Significantly, BAA's pledges all depend on the Government allowing T5 and there are no substantial commitments to reduce Heathrow's current environmental and social impact, no pledges to ensure that Heathrow meets the Government's air quality standards and no measures that would significantly outweigh the impact of building what is, in effect, a brand new airport.

**Government Support** - the Government has said it is neutral about whether T5 should go ahead and will wait for the inspector to submit his report. During the inquiry however, the Government used the same witnesses and the same evidence as BAA and broke its pre-election promise not to widen the London orbital motorway (the M25) which BAA needed to have widened to make its plans for T5 viable. Ministers have also criticised the length of the inquiry and made speeches claiming that objectors were causing delays to the inquiry.

### **Vital for Jobs?**

BAA and British Airways (BA) say Terminal 5 is vital for jobs and the economy and have told local people and their workforces that the area will decline and jobs will be insecure without continued expansion. Yet a study of local employment found that even without T5 there will be a steady increase in jobs in and around Heathrow. The study reported that in 1991 there were 93,000 jobs linked to the airport and that by 2016, this figure would rise by 6,000 to 99,000 - even without T5 (BAA claim T5 will create 6,000 jobs). The study reported that Heathrow will remain the busiest international airport without T5. Furthermore, with T5 likely to cost in the region of £1.8 billion, each of the 6,200 jobs BAA says will be created will cost £290,000 - perhaps the most expensive jobs ever to be created in Britain.

For their part, British Airways are alone among the four national carriers to show a modest (1,700) increase in employment between 1990 and 1996 (55,300). BA has, however, threatened to leave the UK if the Government does not allow T5.

### **Heathrow and the local community**

Like the other airports, BAA believe continued expansion is possible without causing harm to people and the environment. BAA has said, "If the British aviation industry is to maintain its leading position in the world, it must not be at the expense of the communities that surround our airports. We must manage our growth in a sustainable way..." The evidence is that when it has to choose between expansion and protecting people's health BAA chooses expansion. At the T5 public inquiry, BAA told the inspector that although the Government's air quality standards would be breached if T5 is built, people's health would *not* be affected and that the inspector had to decide which was more important: people's health or more jobs.

BAA gives up to £1.5 million a year to community, education and health projects, has given £3 million to the UK's Millennium exhibition and has a fund for environmental projects which, at £250,000, is less than half the salary of BAA's Chief Executive. *Heathrow News*, in which BAA presents its opinion as news or fact, is delivered direct or included as an insert in local papers.

## ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS

### *From Global to Local*



#### **Global Climate Change**

Air planes burn kerosene and this results in the emission of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other polluting and climate changing gases. At high altitudes these pollutants contribute to the “greenhouse effect”.

In April 1999, The United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) adopted a report, “Aviation and the Global Atmosphere” in which the world’s leading climate scientists conclude that:

- air traffic already contributes 3.5 per cent of global warming
- if current forecasts for the growth in air travel are realised, this figure could grow to 15 per cent by the year 2050.

Strangely, greenhouse gas emissions are still not part of the binding international agreements on climate protection.

Meanwhile, air traffic is growing at a rate of between 5-6 per cent each year in Europe. This means that the volumes of air traffic will double in only fifteen years. More planes mean more pollution and environmental effects. Though technical improvements such as cleaner engines have reduced the amount of pollution per plane and operational improvements in the industry such as fuller planes mean less pollution per passenger, the IPCC report concludes that these measures alone are not enough to stop an increase in emissions. In effect any technical and efficiency improvements are being, and will continue to be offset by the sheer growth in air traffic. Additional policies are needed which will curb growth.

#### **Near airports**

Airports are responsible for massive land take often involving destruction of significant wildlife habitats. The operation of airports also causes routine local pollution of air, soil and water. Europe’s four main airport hubs, like the majority of European airports, are located in or near urban areas. This means that there are millions of people live near airports and who regularly suffer from air plane noise, stench and increased third party risks.

Airport neighbours are disturbed in their sleep at night and there is growing evidence that living near an airport causes higher incidences of heart and vascular diseases, bronchial disorders and stress. Apart from the people living close to airports there are millions more living further away whose quality of life is now being degraded by the growing impact of airports.

#### **Who is paying the bill?**

Expansion of airports is literally at the expense of the public as taxpayers’ money goes to support the air transport industry. Financial support is given through a variety of direct and indirect financial subsidies. Current tax exemptions include:

- no excise duties on kerosene
- no VAT on tickets and, until July 1999, duty-free sales

It is estimated that the total amount of financial support to the airport and air travel industry amounts to more than 45 billion Euros each year. This is money that could be invested elsewhere - or even used to subsidise other commercial activities. The airport and air travel industry tries to justify the money it receives by pointing to its contribution to employment and economy. Both are clearly overrated. In Europe, the industry currently contributes to 1 per cent of the GDP and 0.2 per cent of EU employment.

### **Enough is enough**

Environment and citizens' organisations are not against flying as a mode of transport. They are against growth that knows no limits and that takes place at the expense of the environment and those living near airports. Current policies for air travel basically cater to growth and, seemingly, growth without limits.

International co-operation is needed on issues such as a kerosene tax or technical standards to prevent competitive distortion. Action at the international level does not excuse inaction at other levels and national and local governments should put policies in place to solve local problems as well as policies that act as an incentive to policy initiatives at the EU and global level.

The stories of Europe's four main airports show that the balance between the industry's interests and those of the communities living near airports is heavily tipped in favour of the industry. Air travel policies need to be developed which take full account of communities, their health and their environment as well as industry's interests. These can be reconciled. And everyone has a role from Government, communities, environment groups and the industry. Above all, Governments need to take a lead.

### **What needs to be done?**

Governments must recognise the need for a change in their policies towards the airport and air travel industry and, in doing so, indicate to the industry that it act with more responsibility to protect the environment. As a first step action should be taken on the following points:

- Give the aviation industry a financial incentive to reduce its emissions by introducing a charge on aircraft emissions;
- Let aviation pay the full price of its activities by lifting tax exemptions on aircraft fuel (kerosene), tickets, planes and abolishing other direct and indirect subsidies to the industry;
- Ensure that airport neighbours have a good nights sleep by introducing a ban on night flights;
- Promote the use of environmentally efficient alternatives to air transport such as high speed trains by discouraging short haul flights (under 750 km);
- Integrate environmental aspects into air transport policies introducing a European policy for aviation and environment;
- Limit air transport growth by co-ordinating airport development and expansion and controlling the number of flights.

*If we don't expand we'll lose out to Schiphol*  
they say at Heathrow, London

*We have to expand to compete with Heathrow*  
they say at Frankfurt

*We must keep growing to compete with Frankfurt*  
they say at Roissy Charles de Gaulle, Paris

*Expansion is vital to keep up with all of them*  
they say at Schiphol, Amsterdam

**Vereniging Milieudefensie**  
Damrak 26, 1012 LJ Amsterdam

**Bündnis Der Bürgerinitiativen Kein Flughafenusbau**  
Tanusstr. 17, 64546 Mörfelden-Walldorf

**Les Amis De La Terre**  
53 Rue Ramus  
75020 Paris

**ADVOCNAR**  
Association De Défense Contre Les Nuisances Aériennes  
B.P. 54, 95210, Saint Gratien

**Friends of the Earth London**  
26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ

**ClearSkies**  
13 Stockwell Road, London, SW9 9AU

**Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise - HACAN**  
PO Box 339, Richmond, Surrey, England, TW9 3RB



[broken.promises@amsterdam.frankfurt.paris.london](mailto:broken.promises@amsterdam.frankfurt.paris.london)