

MISS SLOCOCK

3 November 1989

BF for papers
for Porritt
meeting.

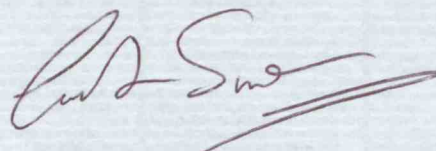
JONATHON PORRITT

Jonathon Porritt is still director of Friends of the Earth. His departure has been delayed from December of this year until June 1990. As you will see from the attached press cutting, the new director designate is David Gee. He is currently working more or less full time in FOE as Jonathon Porritt spends more and more time developing his career in television.

DOE tell me that FOE have been much involved in recycling recently. They are organising a recycling city project in Sheffield funded by DOE.

This does not mean they have abandoned their campaigning activities, to which Jonathon Porritt has devoted much time. They are consistently critical of water standards, often with justification. They remain something of a thorn in the DOE's side, but this has not prevented the development of a reasonably good working relationship.

I am going to see Jonathon Porritt on 14 November. I should then be able to let you have a fuller brief for his meeting with the Prime Minister on 1 December.



CAROLYN SINCLAIR

criticism

By Thomson Prentice and Sam Kiley

Professor Sir Mark Richmond, vice chancellor of Manchester University, is one of Britain's leading microbiologists.

He is an expert in salmonella and other bacteria and has investigated the resistance that some bacteria develop against antibiotics. He was professor of bacteriology at Bristol University between 1968 and 1981 and was a member of the board of the public health laboratory service for 10 years until 1985.

"He is extremely well qualified to chair a committee which is looking at the bacterial contamination of food," a senior microbiologist who has worked with him said yesterday.

Sir Mark, chairman the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals, has been an outspoken critic of the Government's policies for higher education and won key concessions on the issue of academic freedom during the passage of the Education Reform Act 1988.

He has been widely credited with forging the committee into a cohesive political pressure group which is currently involved in negotiations with the Department of Education and Science for extra funds to finance a pay rise for academics.

Experts agree that as head of the Government's new committee on food hygiene and production he is likely to take a "hard headed and independent view" of problems given his commitment to the right of academics to publish their work free from political pressures.

Sir Mark is the "independent and external" chairman which the Government said earlier this month would head the new committee. His key task will be to lead investigations into the scientific basis of the current bacterial contamination of foods.

This will involve examining every link in the food chain, from production to marketing. Senior health advisers, including the Government's chief medical officer, Sir Donald Acheson, believe that there are hygiene problems at every stage which need to be tackled.

Sir Mark is believed to have maintained close contacts with microbiologists and other scientists within the public health laboratory service.

Sir Mark said last night that his appointment required him to take on a "challenging and daunting task".

During the passage of the Education Act he led the

eggs were withdrawn from sale in the store for an hour while the rest were checked. More than 100 other stores in the region made checks and 1,000 Co-op milkmen were subjected to random checks of their egg stocks.

The new telephone "hotline" (freephone 0800 282 407) set up by Asda, Gateway, Morrisons, Sainsbury, Safeway and Tesco, amid fears over salmonella and listeria, will be manned by a panel led by Professor Will Waites, head of the Department of Applied Biochemistry and Food Science at Nottingham University's agricultural school.

their campaign to take advantage of heightened public awareness of food risks. Less than two months ago the ALF claimed responsibility for a spate of fire bomb attacks on fur trade outlets in London and other cities, and the organization is feared to be on a new wave of militancy.

Mr Tom Meffen, assistant chief constable of the West Midlands, said yesterday: "We are taking the matter seriously. There was a similar case in Coventry involving confectionery three years ago and we have had the same thing involving bread."

Taking on green mantle



Mr David Gee, who is to be the new director of Friends of the Earth, in Somerset yesterday where he is to give evidence for the environmental group at the Hinkley Point power station public inquiry today. He will join as campaign co-ordinator in May, and will early next year succeed Mr Jonathon Porritt,

the present director, who is leaving to work in television. Mr Gee, aged 41, is a member of the Labour Party and a consultant to Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. He is a prominent trade unionist and authority on occupational hazards.

Richmond by-election

Poll satisfaction for Owen

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

Dr David Owen predicted yesterday that SLD MPs will force Mr Paddy Ashdown to abandon his strategy of seeking to smash the SDP.

The SDP leader's statement came after a Survey Research Associates opinion poll showing the Conservatives profiting from the bitter struggle between the two centre parties in the in the Richmond by-election. Dr Owen said that

would be a potent force in persuading Mr Ashdown to embrace electoral pacts once the North Yorkshire result had been declared on Friday.

Mr Ashdown said that Dr Owen was becoming over-excited with his talk of candidates standing down in favour of their rivals. The last two days of a by-election campaign were not the time to talk about such "frivolous

third since the general election because of public concern about controversial government policies such as reform of the health service.

He said: "If there is anything poetic in this opinion poll, it is that those who tried to live by opinion surveys now look as if they are about to die by opinion surveys."

Mr Frank Robson, the Lab-

st night: "The eggs in east were marked sufficiently to the person who bought them that they were poisoned."
overtry, two cartons of marked were found by a woman shopping at the Central Midland Co-Op store on Monday.
activists claim they have found eggs in several east London shops but would not say why.
and Yard said last night: "We are investigating an incident in that eggs discovered last

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