

Not the right image, Charles

By **Richard Palmer**
Royal Correspondent

IT LOOKS as though Prince Charles's efforts to tell us about using the earth's resources wisely have just been a waste of energy.

For one of the worst offenders for leaking heat is his mother's main home, Buckingham Palace.

The sovereign's official London residence topped a list of the environmentally-damaging buildings on the day Prince Charles arrived in Brazil to urge the world to do more to combat global warming.

Thermal imaging shows heat pouring through the windows, roof and even wall cracks of the 775-room palace, built in 1703.

The historic landmark, which scored nought out of 10 in an efficiency report, was described as "the biggest central heating radiator in the capital" as striking infra-red pictures captured the huge amount of energy escaping into the night sky.

Energy expert Ivan Lucas of green energy company Navitron, who helped carry out the survey, was astonished by the scale of the heat leaks.

He said: "Clearly the windows are single-glazed and I suspect that it would not be acceptable to replace with double-glazing."

"However, improvements in draught-proofing on the windows, and perhaps adding secondary glazing would significantly reduce heat losses and bills."

Historic

The Queen, who spent £2.2 million on her energy bills last year, has pleaded for more taxpayers' cash to deal with a £32million backlog of repairs to the palace.

But aides insist it is difficult to make the building more energy efficient because of its historic nature and the lack of cash.

A courtier said: "This is something we are aware of but we are restricted by our budget."

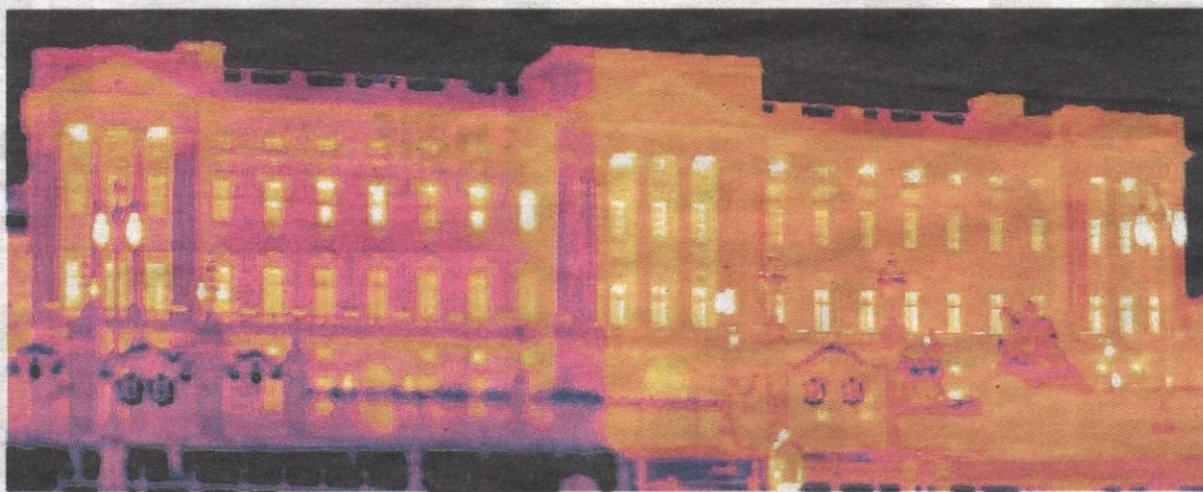
Energy waste has also embarrassed Prince Charles, who is touring South America warning that nations have only 100 months to save the planet from irreversible climate change.

St James's Palace, to which his London home Clarence House is attached, came 12th in the list of leading polluters with a score of five out of 10.

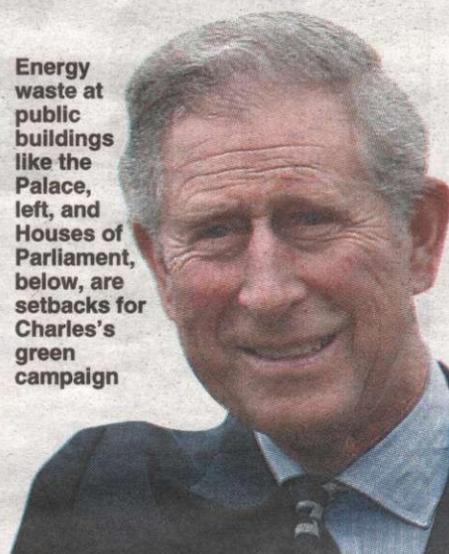
Five Government buildings, including the Department of Energy and Climate Change - the people who are supposed to set us an example - also appear on the 12-strong list.

The others are the Treasury, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and the headquarters of MI6, built in 1994.

They are joined by Portcullis House, opened in 2001 to house offices for MPs.



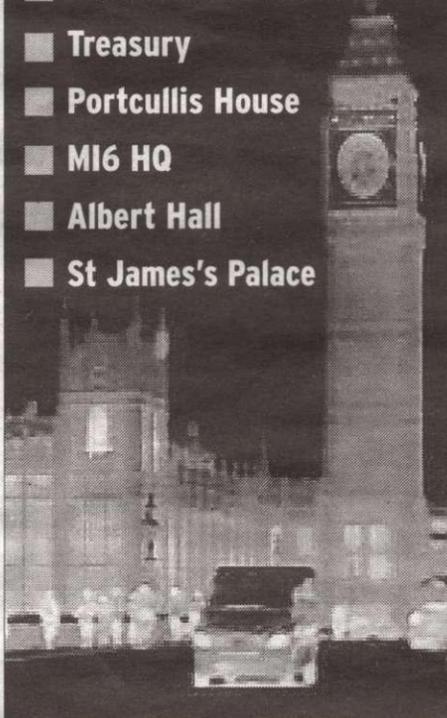
Energy waste at public buildings like the Palace, left, and Houses of Parliament, below, are setbacks for Charles's green campaign



DIRTY DOZEN

From analysis of the measurement data taken from more than 170 locations surveyed across the capital, the list of the most energy-inefficient buildings is:

- Buckingham Palace
- DECC (Defra)
- Ministry of Defence
- Horse Guards Barracks
- Shell Building
- Home Office
- Houses of Parliament
- Treasury
- Portcullis House
- MI6 HQ
- Albert Hall
- St James's Palace



Croc kills canoe girl

A CROCODILE bit the head off a 10-year-old girl after tipping over her canoe.

The 10-year-old and a classmate had been on their way to their floating school on Mihaba lake in the Philippines last Saturday when the 23ft creature bumped their boat, causing it to turn over, according to a local police officer.

Rescuers found the girl's headless body floating in the lake, on the southern Philippines island of Mindanao, on Tuesday.

Roel Hipulan, head of the private group that runs the school the two girls attended in the remote town of Bunawan, said the victim's classmate

had been rescued by a man escorting the pair in another boat.

Mr Hipulan, who has seen the creature, said: "It's a monster."

He added that salt water crocodiles, some longer than a bus, are known to inhabit the lake, although attacks on humans are rare.

But he added that Mihaba's waters have been swollen for the past several months, causing fish to scatter to other parts. With little to feed on, the crocodiles have become aggressive.

The attack has prompted the temporary closure of the school and the evacuation of about 100 people who live in houses perched on stilts on the lake.

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