

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

SUMMER 2020

campaign



CND staff – like everyone else – have been adapting to the new normal including holding our meetings online – the campaigning continues!

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Difficult times



Dave Webb, CND Chair

HOPE EVERYONE is managing ok during these difficult times. We all (well, the vast majority) have had to make huge adjustments to our lives in recent weeks and in this issue of *Campaign* we will be looking at what Covid-19 means for our campaigning, both in practical terms and in our message.

The government was totally unprepared for Covid-19, even though pandemics have been classed as a tier 1 threat for many years. Instead, they continue to waste billions of pounds on a new nuclear weapons system.

Since the last edition of *Campaign*, it has emerged that

the replacement system will use warheads based on US technology. And this decision was made without any parliamentary scrutiny. Parliament will have an opportunity however to input into an Integrated Review of foreign and defence policy announced by the government.

The Integrated Review is delayed because of Covid-19, but this extra time will hopefully allow time for policy-makers to learn from the experience of this pandemic and plan for a better world. In this issue of the magazine, we analyse how the notion of security needs to be challenged, now more than ever.

Even the military has been affected by coronavirus, cancelling several large-scale exercises (although the global ceasefire called by the United Nations has not been successful). Recent reports have highlighted the significant carbon footprint of the military. Climate change of course remains an urgent topic, which we cover in this edition.

As we slowly emerge from one global catastrophe, it is important that we continue to work together to raise our voices and take action to prevent another one: nuclear war.

Another interesting development in recent months was how some arms manufacturers were able to switch to producing ventilators. Read on for a piece on the possible implications of this diversification.

Other articles in this issue discuss the postponement of the Review Conference for the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the importance of extending the New START treaty.

As we slowly emerge from one global catastrophe, it is important that we continue to work together to raise our voices and take action to prevent another one: nuclear war.

Climate crisis

CND Campaigns Officer **Sara Medi Jones** discusses why it's important to continue the campaign against climate change

THE WORLD is currently reeling from a coronavirus pandemic that has changed our lives. Covid-19 has caused personal devastation and economic hardship for many and it doesn't seem like our lives will return to 'normal' any time soon. But perhaps we don't want to go back to exactly the way things were before.

The climate crisis has not gone away after all, and is indeed worsening. Scientists announced in January that the hands of the infamous Doomsday Clock now stand at just 100 seconds to midnight. They have never been closer because of the two existential threats humanity faces: nuclear war and climate change.

Britain's misguided government remains determined to spend at least £205 billion on a new nuclear weapons system. But the real threat facing us today is the increase in the Earth's temperature caused by humans, which has potentially devastating consequences for our communities.

And Britain's nuclear



weapons system, Trident, contributes to the climate crisis, using a massive amount of energy and resources when one takes into account the research involved, its production and operation, and the eventual waste storage. Scrapping Trident would be a great way to cut the UK's carbon footprint.

It's important to remember that nuclear weapons could cause severe damage to the climate and environment on a scale incomparable to any other weapon if used. Research by the International Red Cross shows the effect of a 'limited'

nuclear war would disrupt the global climate to such an extent that a billion people could face starvation.

CND is proud to stand in solidarity with climate change campaigners. We are proud to be a member of XR Peace (a coalition of peace organisations who are part of the wider XR movement) and have supported the school strikers movement.

We campaign on the basis that Britain needs to reduce carbon emissions. Energy efficiency measures and developing renewable energy are the ways to do it, not by investing in new nuclear power stations. The UK has more than enough wind and tidal power potential to meet our energy needs, but investment is needed. The £205 billion cost of replacing Trident would pay to install solar panels in every home or build enough wind turbines to power all households in the UK.

The science is clear: climate change is real and urgent action is needed. The government must stop prioritising war and weapons over the future of our planet.

Tough choices ahead

Plaid Cymru MP **Hywel Williams** writes for **CND** about the upcoming Integrated Review

THE Integrated Defence and Security Review, now delayed by Covid-19, is a long-overdue attempt by Westminster to get to grips with the UK's expensive and meandering foreign, defence, development and security policies. Yet with Covid-19 still haunting our communities, the Review must accept that national security is much closer to home and depends as much if not more on properly funded public services to save lives as expensive and unusable weaponry.

Perhaps too ambitious in its remit, the UK government describes the Review as an opportunity to define the UK's place in the world – an outcome that many would argue the UK has failed to achieve for over seventy years. Yet the UK's place in the world could perhaps be better judged by how it responded to Covid-19 than by the number of nukes lurking beneath the waves or the jets roaring above a fractured and failing state.

Throughout Covid-19, Westminster's bombast has focussed on the past.

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Controlling and eradicating Covid-19 is a war. There's the rolling Churchillian phrases, the appeals to the spirit of the Blitz. Be aware! Keep calm! Carry on!

Westminster's spin-doctors seek to distract us from the many faults of the UK government. Yet Westminster failed to contain the outbreak despite being warned of faults in the system back in 2016. There was not enough basic protective gear for NHS and care staff. Ventilators for intensive care were scarce. No matter, sing-a-long a song. A song that actually meant something to your grandparents all of 75 years ago. Something more profound than a response

to a behavioural nudge.

Even if we swallow the war story, we'll still have to face hard truths about this crisis. The war party have always said, buy the best. The latest biggest aircraft carriers, the dearest jet planes, and of course the trophy nuclear deterrent. They wouldn't send our boys, and latterly girls, into battle with pea shooters. But NHS and care staff went into the wards and the day-rooms having scraped together life-saving protective gear.

There are tough choices ahead. Abroad, from Russia to China and to the Oval Office, we face political uncertainty. Scotland builds its case for independence. Re-uniting Ireland looks increasingly like a practical solution as Brexit is bungled. Even Wales is stirring.

So how do we respond?

We need a fair, honest, transparent – and quick – inquiry to find a way forward from Covid-19. A hard-eyed look at the ludicrous Trident and Dreadnought programmes followed by a swift cancellation is an obvious and substantial part of the practical answer.

New warhead, old incompetence

Nuclear Information Service Director **David Cullen** reports on developments with the Trident replacement programme

THE announcement that the UK is planning to develop a new nuclear warhead was made to Parliament in February, but only after the existence of the UK programme was revealed by US President Donald Trump's administration. US sources say that the new UK warhead will be developed in parallel with the W93, which would be the first new US nuclear warhead in decades. No technical details have been released about either weapon, and key design decisions have probably not yet been taken.

The UK's decision to upgrade was largely a formality, with infrastructure planning for the new warhead having begun nearly two decades ago, despite the government's disarmament obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Meanwhile, twin reports from the National Audit Office and House of Commons Public Accounts Committee have highlighted the problems and cost overruns in three of these infrastructure upgrade projects.

Even more worrying than the huge waste of public money (the three projects are



collectively £1.3bn over their original budgets) was the revelation that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is repeating the same mistakes it has been making for decades, dating back to the transition from Polaris submarines to the current Trident fleet: beginning construction before designs are complete, insufficient oversight of contractors, and commercial arrangements where the public ends up paying for mistakes made by private companies.

The MoD is also planning further costly infrastructure projects, which currently don't appear on its balance sheet. Devonport dockyard has begun the planning process for

upgrading an additional nuclear submarine dock for dismantling the current Vanguard fleet. The cost has been estimated at £1bn, but this is almost certainly an underestimate. At AWE Aldermaston, it appears that the enriched uranium plant Pegasus, previously said to be under review, will now be going ahead. In 2016 the planned cost of Pegasus was £634m.

The capacity of the MoD to deliver on its planned upgrades and to keep nuclear weapons permanently at sea over the next decade is further drawn into question by the scale of these additional costs and the history of repeated management failures. Even before the impact of coronavirus, which is known to have affected work at AWE and Barrow, the think-tank RUSI was amongst those sounding warnings. As the government begins work in earnest on building a new warhead those warnings are likely to grow stronger and more numerous.

Time for a new vision

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** looks at how the government's defence policy should be reassessed in light of its failures over the Covid-19 pandemic.

... spending on nuclear weapons: the money wasted on them must be re-allocated to meet our real needs.

WHY did Britain find itself so signally unprepared for the coronavirus, with insufficient equipment, staff and infrastructure to serve – and save – its people? That is the question so many of us are asking, and government does not answer. If the pandemic threat had been completely unexpected then maybe the situation would be understandable. But that just isn't the case.

For some years, pandemics have been designated tier one threats to our security. Successive governments have identified health crises as needing the highest level of concern and planning. In 2005, Tony Blair's National Security Strategy stated: 'The World Health Organisation has recognised the United Kingdom as being in the vanguard in preparing for a pandemic'. But it wasn't just Blair's government that had spotted a potentially massive public health emergency. In

2010, the Coalition Government identified a natural hazard such as an influenza pandemic as a top-level risk to our security and in 2015 again the risk assessment included the tier one category 'Public Health: Disease, particularly pandemic influenza...'

So successive governments have rightly identified the threat which pandemics pose. Yet the necessary level of investment has not been put into preparing for this major risk. After a decade of austerity, we are all aware of the inadequate funding of our NHS; the situation is bad enough in 'normal' times but during the coronavirus crisis it has disastrous consequences.

But we don't have to look far to see what has gone wrong when it comes to security policy and spending. The last two security strategies have designated nuclear weapons as a tier two threat. Yet at the same time the governments that produced those risk assessments chose to automatically pour £205 billion

HMS Vanguard – top candidate for the chop?



into a new nuclear weapons system to ‘meet’ this lower level threat, leaving the health system chronically underfunded.

Out of this catastrophe we need new thinking from the government, to meet the real challenges our society faces. Pandemics will continue to shape and limit our lives; the climate crisis worsens; a deepening economic crisis is unfolding; water and food insecurity – these are all major security problems. But our government’s capacity to deal with them is hindered by massive wasteful spending on nuclear weapons: the money spent on them must be re-allocated to meet our real needs.

And it may be that the economic consequences of the pandemic force the pace of change. The £41.5bn ‘defence’ budget may be hit hard if national output falls by the predicted 10% or more. Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has been appealing to the Chancellor not

to let this happen. But *The Sunday Times* reports that the MoD had been told to wait for a government-wide spending review, expected in November, as ‘everyone is considering the difficult fiscal position’.

Meanwhile the anticipated Integrated Review of defence, foreign and security policies is delayed and there are hints that nothing is sacrosanct when it comes to cuts. According to military sources, ‘A top candidate for the chop is the nuclear submarine HMS Vanguard, armed with the Trident missile, which has been languishing in a dockyard in Plymouth for five years. A project to refuel its reactor is more than a year late after serious technical hitches, raising fears that its £400m budget is out of control and could double’.

It is suggested that Vanguard may be broken up for parts to keep the other three Trident subs going until the replacement comes on stream from 2030.

This means that the UK would have a three-sub nuclear weapons fleet instead of four, a proposal raised by the Lib Dems in the Coalition Government but dismissed by the Conservatives. But what they rejected at that time they may now have to embrace. The MoD has declined to comment on national security grounds but I will be very surprised if Vanguard ever emerges from Devonport Dockyard in one piece.

The last few months have turned the world upside down. The coronavirus pandemic has changed our lives in an unprecedented fashion and it is clear there can be no going back to the way things were before. This is the time for a new vision of society, and nuclear weapons have no part in it.

■ Write to your MP to tell them it's time for the government to wash its hands of Trident so that we can address the real security threats we face: cnduk.org/wash-our-hands

NPT: a delayed chance

Jeremy Corbyn MP examines what opportunities a postponed NPT Review Conference could offer.

THE CORONAVIRUS pandemic has meant many conferences cancelled. One such event was the 2020 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference that was due to have taken place in April, now tentatively rescheduled for next year.

For those of us campaigning for peace and disarmament this is an opportunity.

The coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated many things to the world in a way that years of campaigning could not. It has shown just how interdependent everything and everyone is. It has shown that the poorest people with the worst health care suffer the most. Crucially it has shown how all the weapons in the world are useless in the face of a dangerous virus.

The next NPT will be held within this new reality.

The NPT, ground-breaking in the 1960s, was designed to create, ultimately, a world without nuclear weapons.

Obviously at the grand level of the elimination of nuclear weapons it has not

succeeded but enormous progress has been made.

I was part of a fascinating Zoom conference with the UN Disarmament Commissioner Izumi Nakamitsu and Jonathan Granoff from the American Bar Association in discussion about global security. Jonathan made the point that the NPT of 1968 had succeeded in creating nuclear-free zones in Africa, Latin America, and Central Asia, and many other areas.

It would be a strange sense of priorities for all countries if we had yet another round of re-armament.

Successive disarmament treaties have also resulted in a reduction in nuclear warheads.

The 2021 Conference will face huge issues. These will include how we move towards a nuclear-free Korean peninsula, the need for the denuclearisation of India and Pakistan alongside a genuine peace process for Kashmir, and the need to move towards a nuclear-free Middle East by

supporting the multilateral agreement with Iran.

Significantly, a strong declaration on the need for progress in establishing a WMD-Free Middle East is required, building on the conference held last November.

Article VI of the NPT requires the five declared nuclear weapons states to take steps towards disarmament. The UN General Assembly has voted by a huge majority on the principle of ridding the world of nuclear weapons. The baton now passes back to the five permanent members of the Security Council.

All face huge economic issues, as does the whole world, post Covid-19. It would be a strange sense of priorities for all countries if we had yet another round of re-armament.

Poverty, human rights abuses, environmental destruction and disease are all security threats. The wars of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria have spread terrorism and danger. None of those issues can be solved by nuclear weapons or the threat of their use.

The end of arms control

Dr. Joseph Gerson, President of the Campaign for Peace, Disarmament and Common Security, examines how US President Trump continues to sabotage international nuclear agreements.

LOST in his “America First” illusions, before assuming office, President Trump asked why, if we have nuclear weapons, can’t we use them? He has since called for an arms race, sabotaged the INF Treaty, violated the Iran agreement, and rejected extension of the Open Skies Treaty. He has announced that the only way he will support extension of the New START Treaty, scheduled to expire in February, is if it is renegotiated with China included. That’s a non-starter, given that China’s minimum deterrent nuclear arsenal is one fifth the size of Washington and Moscow’s.

Under growing political pressure and his need to demonstrate at least one diplomatic achievement in the run-up to November’s election, and not wanting to upset his pal Putin in Moscow, it is now reported that Trump is considering a short-term extension of New START, while continuing the charade of attempting to renegotiate the

Treaty with China.

Hanging over the political theater is the reality that sabotaging the Treaty would result in the collapse of the arms control regime negotiated over the past sixty years, further fuelling the dangerous arms race that has already begun.

Russian officials have repeatedly appealed to the US to extend New START and Open Skies treaties, which is also scheduled to end next year. The Trump Administration would be fully to blame if they are consigned to history.

The first START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), negotiated in the aftermath of the Cold War, limited each of the powers to 2,200 strategic nuclear weapons – each capable of destroying an entire city.

Beginning in 2009, US–Russian negotiations resumed. The treaty went into force in 2011 for a period of ten years and limited each of the powers’ arsenals to 1,550 strategic warheads. More important than reducing the sizes of the arsenals were the treaty’s

confidence-building verification provisions.

In the face of opposition, President Obama agreed to massive spending to upgrade the US nuclear arsenal in order to win the Senate votes needed for treaty ratification. The price: \$185 billion.

New START expires in February 2021, just weeks after either Joe Biden assumes office or Trump begins a second term which would consolidate his proto-fascist tyranny.

Beyond this particular treaty, in the face of an extended economic recession or depression, the political struggle over post-pandemic national budget priorities is already underway. Be it Trump or Biden, what was formerly the world’s largest economy may not be able to afford an unrestricted nuclear arms race. Social and political movements are building to demand healthcare not warfare, and a just recovery rather than reinforcement of the plutocracy and military-industrial complex.

CND's trade union volunteer **Annie Tunnicliffe** gives an update on the conversion of defence jobs

WHENEVER anti-nuclear campaigners try to advance the idea of defence jobs conversion, we are told it would be far too complicated, would involve massive job losses and is just not viable. The idea is always kicked into the long grass.

We now have a stunning example of what can be achieved when the political will and overwhelming public interest come into play.

From April 2020 an Airbus factory in North Wales normally manufacturing aircraft wings will instead produce thousands of government-approved ventilators. Defence firm

Babcock will also manufacture 10,000 ventilators.

What is not acknowledged is the huge part the 400 workers and trade union organisations have played in this development. They are very well-organised, highly-skilled and committed to making production as speedy and efficient as possible.

The unions are in general an important part of the fight against Trident replacement and in supporting defence job diversification. We now know that with the political will and with workers and unions involved, diversification is both possible and desirable.

The Nuclear Education Trust produced a report about

international case studies on defence diversification in 2018. It concluded that it would be possible to disarm the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system without massive job losses. The full report is well worth reading: www.nucleareducationtrust.org/.

CND works closely with many trade unions. If your union is not affiliated to CND, please do what you can to persuade them.

Any further suggestions or information from individuals or branches on how we can work together would be very welcome.

■ Please email me at tradeunions@cnduk.org.

Cartoon by Richard Alcock



Adapting to the new normal

DUE to the coronavirus crisis, in-person public events have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. This means that CND groups are not able to go ahead with their usual activities. Many wonderful occasions have been cancelled, such as **Yorkshire CND's Day of Dance and Sydenham & Forest Hill CND's annual Spring plant sale.**

But the pandemic and ensuing lockdown and social distancing guidelines have meant we've all had to be a bit more creative with our campaigning, and this can sometimes result in unexpected advantages. CND has organised numerous online webinars since March, and 6000 people viewed our meeting on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is a lot more than would be able to attend in person!

Many groups have organised online events and **Leeds CND** quickly moved to a monthly organising meeting on Zoom. If you're a CND group and would like support with setting up a webinar or online meeting, let us know: enquiries@cnduk.org

London CND has gone a step further and has been training its supporters and other CND colleagues over the past



few months. The region holds weekly training sessions for those who would like to get to grips with social media campaigning. Covering Twitter, Facebook and creative content, the sessions take place every Wednesday at 11am. Email ahead to join – info@londoncnd.org.

Other groups continue to keep in touch with their members by sharing newsletters.

Labour CND launched an online action to pressure the candidates for new Labour

leader and deputy leader to commit to retaining the position of Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament, a front-bench position which Jeremy Corbyn created. The specialist section devised a lobbying tool for activists to quickly email all candidates, and their Labour MP if they had one. Eventual Labour leader Keir Starmer did indeed announce that Fabian Hamilton MP would continue in this role. Congratulations to all involved in a successful campaign!

Not already involved with your local group?

While most of us are spending a lot more time at home during the coronavirus crisis, this could be a good time to further support the campaigns and organisations we care about. One way to get more involved in CND is by supporting your local group.

There are CND groups located across the country, and they would love to hear from you so that you can join the next action. Why not get in touch?

Black Lives Matter

In recent weeks we have seen a global uprising sparked by the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Within days 'Black Lives Matter' protests spread across the globe. In the UK a spontaneous movement of tens of thousands of young people has taken to the streets opposing racism, police brutality and calling for social justice and social change.

This is a moral issue and a human rights issue and our communities must stand together, work together to bring change: to end racism, oppression and discrimination and ensure that a better life for all is won, out of the suffering and tragedy of the times we are living through.

Read more in CND General Secretary Kate Hudson's blog, cnduk.org/black-lives-matter/

Build Back Better

The coronavirus is still affecting all our daily lives, but talk has also started on the kind of recovery and the world we want to see post-pandemic. CND believes that out of this catastrophe we need new thinking from the government, to meet the real challenges our society faces.

As part of this work, we're delighted to be working with Build Back Better, a coalition which campaigns for a new deal that protects public services, tackles inequality in our communities, provides secure well-paid jobs and creates a shockproof economy which can fight the climate crisis. Another world is possible.

CND Conference 2020 Campaigning in the post-virus world

Join us online for CND's first entirely-remote Conference, which will be held on Saturday 10th October and Sunday 18th October (on separate weekends). CND's AGM and policy conference will take place on Saturday 10th October, while on Sunday 18th October London Region CND will host the second day of the conference focusing on the theme of real security after Covid-19.

Please join us!

23rd July:

Deadline for nominations for directly elected members of national council and officers.

23rd July:

Deadline for ordinary resolutions.

4th September:

Deadline for amendments and special (constitutional) resolutions.



NHS not Trident

We have had many requests for NHS not Trident posters from supporters who would like to display these in their windows during this pandemic crisis. Many had them on show them during the weekly Clap for Carers on a Thursday evening. You can now download these for printing at home by visiting cnduk.org/NHSnotTridentPoster.

CND would like to add our thanks for the tireless work of NHS staff and all other frontline workers at this difficult time.



Magazine packaging

You may have noticed that this edition of the magazine came in packaging different from that used for previous editions. Following feedback from many of our supporters, we have consulted with our mailing house and are now using more sustainable packaging.

We thank those that got in touch. And remember, you can also sign up to receive this magazine online-only if you wish, just email membership@cnduk.org with your