

# campaign

## Will nuclear tests resume?



CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** analyses the risk of nuclear weapons tests resuming.

**A**S TRUMP plays further havoc with humanity – criminal negligence over the pandemic, abuse of human and civil rights, punitive and brutal sanctions, climate catastrophe, new cold war with China – his latest foray into nuclear matters just adds to the list. It has been reported that US officials have discussed the resumption of nuclear testing – ending a 28 year moratorium – in an attempt to pressure China to join New START replacement talks with the US and Russia. To use a nuclear test as a bargaining chip is a disastrous idea and not surprisingly, concern has been widespread.

A number of distinguished US scientists

with expertise on nuclear weapons issues, many with long involvement in the US nuclear weapons programme, wrote an Open Letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. They urged him to ensure that the US does not resume explosive testing of nuclear weapons and they explained why it would serve no technical or military purpose.

The scientists also take up the US administration's allegation that Russia and China are conducting very-low-yield nuclear tests. They point out that if they are, the yields are so low as to be undetectable by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

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Organization (CTBTO) which operates an extensive array of seismic and other sensors; undetectable tests would be of no military advantage. But in their opinion, “A US explosive nuclear test would severely weaken the nuclear non-proliferation regime – which could lead to new nuclear-armed states.”

Lassina Zerbo, the head of the CTBTO also responded vigorously, warning that a return to testing would be a challenge to global peace and security, constituting a grave challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

The idea has been officially shelved for now, but even floating the idea means that other nuclear powers may start thinking about a resumption – and encouraging states to develop a nuclear weapons capacity. The UK ratified the

CTBT in 1998 but it lacks sufficient ratifications to enter into force. This must now be rectified. The treaty will decisively put an end to testing and ensure that breaches cannot take place. As Mr Zerbo has pointed out, the only way to remove all doubts about secret testing is to bring the CTBT into force – on-site inspections will be allowed at short notice if requested by any state party.

In other words, if the US actually ratified the Treaty and helped bring it into force, it would be able to ensure that on-site inspections in Russia and China took place; much better than flinging around allegations.

Entry into force of the CTBT is long overdue and the peace movement internationally can play a role in securing this outcome. It's time to step up our work on this front.

## Meet the staff

This month:  
**Rob Wells, Office Manager**

“I handle the HR and administrative side of things at the CND office, to keep things ticking over smoothly so that my colleagues who focus on our campaigns and fundraising can work most effectively.

I also help communicate with CND's local groups, and arrange meetings of CND's Council and Conference, which are absolutely the highlight of my job. It's really inspiring to meet and talk to CND members and find out about their campaigning in their local areas!”



## Groups Sp<sup>☰</sup>light

This month:  
**Merseyside CND**



While large national demonstrations may not be taking place in the near future, there are many other ways of campaigning. One way is by getting involved with your local CND group, who arrange their own activities alongside their communities. If you live in the Merseyside area, you're very lucky as Merseyside CND is a fantastic and welcoming group of people! Why not get in touch?

■ Contact 07394 810871 or [merseysidecnd@gmail.com](mailto:merseysidecnd@gmail.com) to find out how you can get involved.

# Johnson's missed opportunity

**Sara Medi Jones**, CND Campaigns Officer, writes about why last week's spending announcement by the Prime Minister was inadequate to deal with the challenges we face today.

**PRIME MINISTER** Boris Johnson last week pledged to spend £5 billion on infrastructure projects, as part of his 'New Deal' plan to rebuild Britain's economy following the devastation caused by Covid-19. Johnson said he wanted to use the coronavirus crisis as 'an opportunity'. But while this investment in public services is welcomed, the government does not seem to be grasping that this is actually an opportunity, not only to build some more schools and hospitals, but to transform our society for the better. This transformation includes re-assessing the security threats we actually face today and subsequently cancelling the vanity project that is Britain's new nuclear weapons.

Replacing Trident – Britain's current system – will cost at least £205 billion, 41 times as much as last week's spending announcement. Even by the Ministry of Defence's standards, this is an astronomical amount of money. The National Audit Office claimed in February

that the MoD's ten-year spending plan is 'unaffordable'. And now there have been reports that defence cuts are looming in the wake of an expected economic crisis.

So when will defence chiefs address the elephant in the room and actually question whether spending billions on new nuclear weapons is worth it? Even former Prime Minister Tony Blair has admitted that he was never sure if the country actually needed nuclear weapons, but thought we should have them for 'status'. The government's own National Security Strategy fails to list a nuclear attack as a tier one threat to our security. Instead, it quite sensibly identifies health crises, terrorism, cyber-attacks and natural hazards such as flooding as the main dangers the government should address.

Security needs to be rethought in a different way. Guaranteeing people's safety means making sure our NHS is funded properly; it means providing high-quality education for all; safety means a warm and

secure home for everyone. It does not mean arming ourselves with a weapon of mass destruction that would kill hundreds of thousands if used.

The coronavirus crisis has certainly made some governments re-assess their priorities. Italy has re-allocated its new arms spending for 2020 into healthcare and South Korea has cut its military budget to pay for measures to deal with coronavirus. Of course, these steps could be temporary, but they do provide a glimpse of what is possible.

As well as readjusting their priorities to guarantee sufficient public services for all, the government should ensure any recovery plan is deeply rooted in the need to make sure Britain is meeting its commitment to cut carbon emissions.

We need new thinking to meet the real challenges we face. This pandemic has shown that this government – and the ones before it – got their priorities wrong. We cannot let this happen again.

### Leeds CND meeting

**15th July**, 6pm-7pm

Via Zoom.

■ To join, contact  
[leedsrnd@gmail.com](mailto:leedsrnd@gmail.com)

### Bradford: 75 Years is Enough! flashmob

**16th July**, 12:15pm

Centenary Square, Bradford.

■ Contact  
[info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk)

### The End of the Nuclear Age: webinar

**23rd July**, 7pm-8pm

Via Zoom.

■ Contact  
[info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk)

### CND poster competition

We are delighted to announce the winners of our poster competition, in conjunction with artist Peter Kennard.

**Winner** (13 and under category): Daniel Fisk, aged 6 years, living in Bridgend

**Winner** (all ages): Gemma Power, living in Mexico City.

Peter Kennard sends his congratulations to all who took part: "It was great to see the artwork you sent in expressing such powerful and passionate condemnation of nuclear weapons and the arms race. It showed that we must use our creativity to campaign ever more furiously against these obscene weapons of total destruction."

## Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The 75th anniversaries of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be marked slightly differently from usual.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, fewer in-person events will take place but the range of online events will allow even more people to get involved than in previous years. It will also allow us to connect to others marking this day across the world, most notably in Japan.

CND will be launching our online display to mark the occasion on July 16th, so please take a look at our website on that date.

Some in-person events are taking place as usual; please let us know ([information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org)) if you are arranging one so we can promote it. So far, we know of activities taking place in Bradford, Leeds and Oxford.

However we commemorate the 6th and 9th of August, let's remember the victims and redouble our efforts to campaign for a world without nuclear weapons.=



## Cranes for Peace

As part of CND's work in commemorating the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we have launched the CND Peace Crane challenge – will you take part?

We're asking supporters to get sponsored by family and friends to fold origami peace cranes, to raise money to help our campaign against nuclear weapons. Everyone can take part, and you don't need any previous experience of origami – we have a variety of guides available to help you.

■ Find out more: <https://cranes-for-peace.raisely.com/>

To see and download the winning posters, as well as the runners-up, go to [cnduk.org/cnd-poster-](https://cnduk.org/cnd-poster-competition/)

[competition/](https://cnduk.org/cnd-poster-competition/).

■ You can also download our NHS not Trident posters at: [cnduk.org/NHSnotTridentPoster](https://cnduk.org/NHSnotTridentPoster).