

# campaign

## New term: new challenges



CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** assesses the challenges and opportunities ahead for MPs as they start a new term.

**A**S MPS RETURN to Parliament this month, they face an agenda shaped by big global challenges. CND Vice-President Caroline Lucas MP tops the agenda with her Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, tabled in Parliament last Wednesday. This coincides with Extinction Rebellion's protests in support of the Bill which calls for urgent action to address climate breakdown and the creation of Citizens' Assemblies to guide the just transition to a zero-carbon society.

Of course, the problems of nuclear weapons and climate change are closely linked. The fallout from a nuclear war would have devastating effects on our eco-system and even a 'small' localised nuclear conflict

would lead to crops failing in dozens of countries — devastating food supplies for more than one billion people. And a nuclear winter would dramatically alter the chemistry of the oceans, probably decimating coral reefs and other marine ecosystems.

The carbon footprint of nuclear weapons is also a big factor. Trident uses massive energy and resources in research, production, operation, dismantling and eventual waste storage, never mind the catastrophe that would be unleashed if it were ever deployed. This is in addition to the environmental devastation wreaked by decades of uranium mining, nuclear testing

and nuclear waste dumping.

Meanwhile, a huge alliance of campaigns and NGOs (including CND) is calling on government to Build Back Better in the context of pandemic-driven social and economic changes. The term was first used by the UN as an approach to post-disaster recovery and was then adopted by many across civil society who said there was 'no going back' to the problems and inequalities of the pre-Covid period. It's a marker of the popularity of the idea that government has now adopted the term. But that just encourages us to give real substance to the call: after seeing nuclear weapons producers rapidly switching to

PPE production during the lockdown, we want that socially useful production built into our economic recovery not nuclear weapons.

So there is much for MPs to grapple with as they return this autumn. This a hugely important agenda that will shape our lives for a generation. One crucial issue which our government refuses to address is global nuclear disarmament: in the next few months the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will come into force. Our work in this parliament includes the central demand that our government must engage with the TPNW. Please help us to achieve that goal.

### Meet the staff

#### This month: **Kirsty Stewart,** **Supporter Database Manager**

My main responsibilities are to oversee the management of CND's database; process and update membership and supporter records; process payments; and produce up to date mailing lists for CND's publications and our groups. I am also the CND contact for all Data Protection matters.

As part of the membership and fundraising team, I provide assistance to process and bank fundraising donations and help prepare budgets. I occasionally work on merchandise stalls at events and for those members that have attended our annual conference, you are likely to have seen me on the registration desk overseeing the delegate packs and voting entitlements.

None of this would be possible without you, our supporters, so thank you!



## Spotlight

### Aberdeen and District CND

A blue square graphic with the text "NHS NOT TRIDENT" in white, with a peace symbol below it.

It has not been a 'normal' year of campaigning for any of us. But that doesn't mean the campaign for a world without nuclear weapons has stopped! CND's local groups need as many members as possible to lend their support and skills as we adjust to the new normal. Do you live in the Aberdeen area? If so, get in touch with Aberdeen and District CND by phoning 01224 586435 or emailing [jhamiltonrussell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jhamiltonrussell@hotmail.co.uk).

And for a full list of CND groups across the country: <https://cnduk.org/local-groups/>.

# Iran tensions

As tensions continue around the Iran nuclear deal, CND Vice-Chair **Tom Unterrainer** analyses the latest developments on this issue.

**T**WO recent decisions return the spotlight to Iran and the nuclear weapon question in the Middle East.

First, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) blocked attempts by the US to ‘snapback’ all sanctions against Iran that were lifted following agreement of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) – or, Iran Deal – in 2015. The ‘E3’ members of the JCPoA – France, Germany and the United Kingdom – opposed the attempt. They noted “that the US ceased to be a participant to the JCPoA... We cannot therefore support this action which is incompatible with our current efforts to support the JCPoA.”

Second, Iran has granted the International Atomic Energy Agency access to two sites which the US and Israel claim are connected to nuclear activities. Permission to access these sites is a major step forward following events at the start of 2020 and more recent incidents.

The assassination of Major General Qasem Soleimani in Baghdad, January 2020, emphasised that the Trump

administration regards Iran as a target. The situation could easily have spiralled out of control.

Some warned that this event might trigger the start of a ‘nuclear arms race’ in the Middle East. The Iranian government is fully aware that both Iraq and Libya renounced

**One such decision could include military action. If it does, then the fact that Iran is already in the cross-hairs should put the peace and anti-war movements on the alert.**

their nuclear weapons programmes and that following this, both countries faced onslaught from the US military. The twisted ‘logic’ of nuclear deterrence suggests that possession of a nuclear weapons capability ensures against such a prospect.

Two days after Soleimani’s killing, Iran announced that it would no longer abide by JCPoA rules. The US, which had already withdrawn from the JCPoA, intensified lobbying for a sanctions

‘snapback’ from this point.

Despite US pressure, other parties to the JCPoA continued to work within the framework of the agreement. Following Iran’s announcement, the E3 triggered a ‘dispute resolution mechanism’ which could have forced the complete collapse of the JCPoA. However, the framework has not collapsed and Iran continues to engage. For serious progress to be made, incentives rather than sanctions and aggression must be offered.

Whilst we support all diplomatic efforts to avert the breakdown of the JCPoA, we should remain alert to the risks of further unilateral action by the United States.

The weeks running up to the US Presidential election will likely see Trump take dangerous steps in an attempt to distract from the failures of his government and to mobilise opinion behind him. One such decision could include military action. If it does, then the fact that Iran is already in the cross-hairs should put the peace and anti-war movements on the alert.

Due to the coronavirus crisis, most in-person public events have been cancelled for the next few weeks. But you can join CND, and our groups, for virtual events. Keep checking our website for online activity.

### **Defence Diversification: Its time is now – CND's TUC Congress fringe**

**15th September**, 3pm

Speakers: Sam Mason (PCS Policy Officer), Hilary Wainwright (*Red Pepper*, participant in original Lucas Plan initiative) and Bert Schouwenburg (former International Officer GMB). Chaired by Kate Hudson (CND General Secretary). Via Zoom.

■ To register contact: enquiries@cnduk.org

### **Leeds CND online meeting**

**16th September**, 5pm.

Local organising meetings for Leeds CND currently meeting are now on Zoom. Meetings are kept to an hour and have been super productive with much progress made on the ICAN Cities Appeal locally, as well as organising other events.

■ To register contact 01274 730795 or leedscnd@gmail.com

### **Christian CND Annual General Meeting and annual conference, 3rd October**

11am-3pm. Guest speakers will include Nick Megoran, lecturer in political geography at the University of Newcastle, specialising in geopolitics, religion and the war on terror. Nick is also co-convenor of the Martin Luther King Peace Committee. Taking place online.

■ To register contact: christians@cnduk.org

## **TUC Congress: CND to hold Defence Diversification Fringe Meeting**

As the pandemic hit hard in the early stages of the lockdown, government urged rapid changes in industrial production. Many companies, including those that make parts of the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system, switched to making ventilators, protective visors and other NHS and PPE requirements. This experience shows it can be done – and it has never been more urgent to produce for the public good.

As part of CND's campaigning, CND works with many trade union groups to achieve our shared goal of scrapping nuclear weapons. Trade unions are an important part of the fight against Trident replacement and supporting defence jobs diversification.

CND regularly attends trade union conferences to further these conversations and we were sorry they weren't possible this year because of the pandemic. So we're delighted to play a part in the online TUC Congress taking place this month. Details of our fringe meeting in the events section opposite.

### **Global war – fighting starts here Oxfordshire Peace Campaign webinar**

**3rd October**, 2pm.

Join the Oxfordshire Peace Campaign to discuss the role of USAF Croughton in drone warfare, as well as wider strategic issues. Via Zoom.

■ To register contact: oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop

### **CND AGM & Policy Conference: Campaigning in a Post-Virus World, 10th October**, 10.30am.

### **Real Security after Covid-19, hosted by London Region CND, 18th October**

■ See: cnduk.org/conference



### **We Want to Live**

CND supporters (including Calder Valley CND, pictured) have been supporting XR's autumn rebellion to highlight the crucial links between climate change and nuclear weapons – the twin existential threats that we face. For the future of us all, the solution to climate change must involve global nuclear disarmament.