

# campaign



## UK breaks law on nukes – again

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** writes about CND's opposition to the government's disastrous announcement on nuclear weapons.

**L**AST MONTH, the government's Integrated Review revealed plans for a 40% increase in Britain's nuclear arsenal.

Today the arsenal stands at around 200 nuclear warheads. Each is about eight times the power of the Hiroshima bomb which killed over 200,000 people. That's a killing capacity of hundreds of millions. How can the government conceivably justify that arsenal, never mind increasing it?

Increasing Britain's nuclear arsenal contravenes our legal obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which

Britain ratified in 1970. The Treaty requires countries that have nuclear weapons to disarm, and those that don't have them not to get them. There is no way in which increasing a nuclear arsenal is legitimate under the Treaty.

But it's not just new warheads that are illegal, it's the whole Trident replacement project as well. When Blair's government was first pursuing Trident replacement in 2005, Matrix Chambers gave a legal opinion which found that the replacement of Trident would be a material breach of

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### Not only are additional warheads illegal, but Trident replacement is illegal, and the failure to disarm our existing nuclear weapons contravenes the Treaty.

the Treaty because it requires 'each of the parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.'

So not only are additional warheads illegal, but Trident replacement is illegal, and the failure to disarm our existing nuclear weapons contravenes the Treaty.

But a warhead increase isn't the only nuclear problem with this Review. It also includes a change in nuclear use posture – now reserving the right to use nuclear weapons not only against nuclear threats but against supposedly comparable threats, such as chemical and biological weapons or 'emerging technologies'. And a further change is an end to the UK's much-vaunted transparency on nuclear weapons – an extension of the policy of deliberate ambiguity and an end to giving public figures for the

'operational stockpile, deployed warhead or deployed missile numbers.'

Johnson's changes in nuclear policy present serious problems. It's not just that we would rather the money was spent on something more useful; or that this flagrant breach of the NPT may encourage others to pursue nuclear weapons; it's a question of what kind of world we want to see, what role we want Britain to play and what it actually stands for. Rearming with weapons of mass destruction is not something that we can accept.

We must find it in ourselves to reject the dangerous humbug the government spouts about nuclear weapons, their claim that 'the UK will continue to work internationally to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict and enhance mutual trust and security'. This is just nonsense and we know it. I urge everyone to lobby the Prime Minister and get active: this is getting out of hand.

■ **Contact the Prime Minister:**  
[cnd.eaction.org.uk/timetoscraptidentnow](http://cnd.eaction.org.uk/timetoscraptidentnow)

## Spotlight

This month  
**Scottish CND**

### SCOTLAND SAYS NO TO NUCLEAR WAR

- ☒ No increase in nuclear warheads
- ☒ Adopt the global Nuclear Ban (TPNW)
- ☒ Nuclear disarmament now

**#NukesAreMyRedLine**

Elections are coming up across the UK in May, including for the Scottish Parliament. Scottish CND is in full campaigning mode, making sure the issue of nuclear weapons is a crucial one in the debate. Along with other Scottish partners, they are organising peace hustings; providing resources; and encouraging candidates to pledge support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. There's even a hashtag - #nukesaremyredline.

■ If you would like to get involved, contact 01413 571529 or email [scnd@banthebomb.org](mailto:scnd@banthebomb.org).

# Defend the right to protest

**Kevin Blowe**, Campaigns Coordinator for the Network of Police Monitoring (Netpol), writes about the new law the UK government wants to push through that would have a severe impact on our right to protest.

**C**LEARLY the Johnson government, in its initial haste to push ahead with the 300-page Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, hoped it could force through, with little opposition, new laws that will profoundly affect our ability as citizens to organise effective protests.

Then came the arrest of a Metropolitan Police Officer for the murder of Sarah Everard, that officer's own force threatening huge fines against the organisers of a memorial vigil on Clapham Common and the courage of women from Sisters Uncut, who refused to back down to threats of arrest and went ahead with a gathering in her memory.

The appalling scenes from the subsequent police crackdown has forced a delay from the government and Labour into opposing the bill. It has also galvanised a growing movement that rejects new police powers and is calling for a greater protection for the right to protest.

As its title indicates, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill is wide-ranging. Netpol has focused in particular



on attempts to restrict protests that are too 'disruptive', too noisy or that challenge corporate or government interests, based on subjective grounds such as 'serious annoyance' or 'serious unease'. Alarmingly, Home Secretary Priti Patel will have powers to define what these terms mean, without needing to consult Parliament.

From challenging the arms trade to government inaction on climate change, protesting remains one of the few options available to campaigners without access to power. However, the new bill will increase the risk of further criminalising demonstrations that involve direct action and civil disobedience – something the peace movement has a long and proud tradition of organising.

In parallel to the bill, the

police have also indicated an intention to ramp up surveillance on protesters.

But Netpol, and a coalition including CND and Scottish CND, thinks it is time senior officers committed to respecting Britain's existing international human rights commitments by adopting our new Charter for Freedom of Assembly Rights – or explain why they refuse to do so.

The Charter calls for proper protections – not more restrictions – for the right to protest. This includes an end to treating civil disobedience as an excuse to shut down protests completely. It also includes calls for the police to justify unrestrained surveillance on campaigners.

The government wants protests that cause no disruption – but making sure our voices are heard will always inconvenience or annoy someone if it is making an impact. That's why it is so important that we resist the bill and demand a rethink on the way protests are policed.

■ Find out more about the Charter for Freedom of Assembly Rights at [netpol.org/charter](https://netpol.org/charter)

### Yorkshire CND regional strategy meeting

**7 April** 6pm; online.

■ [info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk) or 05603 640753

### Faringdon Peace Group meeting with guest speaker Fabian Hamilton MP

**7 April** 7:30pm; online.

■ Contact 01367 710308 or [steve.jenny@hotmail.com](mailto:steve.jenny@hotmail.com)

### The treaty to ban nuclear weapons - CND Cymru and UNA Cardiff webinar

**21 April** 7pm; online.

■ [brian.jones@phonecoop.coop](mailto:brian.jones@phonecoop.coop)

### Bradford candlelit vigil to mark TPNW entry into force

**23 April** 8:30pm

Join the walk at the Norman Arch at the bottom of Emm Lane, Bradford.

■ Contact [bradford@cnd.rock](mailto:bradford@cnd.rock)s

### International Day of Action against Foreign Military Bases:

protest at Menwith Hill 30 April, 2pm  
Assemble outside Menwith Hill, Harrogate.

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

### Working for Peace in the Middle East - CND conference

22 May 1pm-4:10pm; online

■ [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org) to register.

## Nurses not Nukes

Anti-nuclear bloc at People's Assembly national demonstration **26th June 2021**

**Join CND** and others at the anti-nuclear bloc at this national demonstration. We'll be protesting against the government's decision to increase its nuclear weapons while denying nurses – and other public sector workers – adequate pay.

**Assemble** 12 noon at Portland Place, London, before marching to Parliament Square.

■ Contact [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org) with any queries.

## Meet the staff

This month: **Michael Muir, Press and Communications Officer**

"Having been a supporter of the peace movement for a number of years, I'm absolutely delighted to have started to work for CND as its new Press and Communications Officer. 2021 is already shaping up to be an important year for CND and the wider anti-nuclear movement, with both the terrifying UK warhead increase and the upcoming COP26 summit offering opportunities for CND to speak to huge audiences.

Local CND groups and activists do incredible work, and it's my job to make sure that gets the press attention it deserves. If you or your CND group are working on a campaign that requires dealing with the press or even if you just have an idea you'd like to flesh out, please do get in touch at any time via [PressOffice@cnduk.org](mailto:PressOffice@cnduk.org) or on 07968 420859."



## Covid-19: office update

Please note that, following government guidelines, the CND national office in London remains temporarily closed, but we are hoping to reopen soon. Staff are currently working remotely, and all should be able to get back to you on email. To contact the office staff, please email [enquiries@cnduk.org](mailto:enquiries@cnduk.org) or phone 07891 870732 and you will be re-directed to the right person.

The office closure means that we are unable to guarantee that we can send materials or shop orders.

We are not currently receiving post, so please be patient if you are awaiting acknowledgement of a donation made by post.