

campaign



Nuclear subs 'dogged with problems'

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** writes about recent problems with Britain's nuclear weapons system – reminding us why it should be scrapped.

THE GOVERNMENT has announced that work has started on the third Trident replacement submarine. Eventually four new subs will go under the collective class label 'Dreadnought', the first two being 'Dreadnought' and 'Valiant'. The third now under way is called 'Warspite'. All three are named after British battleships launched prior to the First World War that renewed the naval arms race between Britain and Germany – a

key factor in the build up to that terrible war. It's hard to imagine a more inauspicious choice of names but it does accurately reflect the fact that the Trident replacement programme – and the increase in Britain's nuclear arsenal – is part of an escalating nuclear threat.

According to the government, each submarine is around the length of three Olympic swimming pools, will have 26.4

Campaign for Nuclear
Disarmament,
162 Holloway Rd,
London N7 8DQ
020 7700 2393
enquiries@cnduk.org
www.cnduk.org



miles of pipework and more than 20,000 cables stretching 215 miles. When you consider the resources and skills that go into making these submarines - and what could be built instead - it really brings home what a waste such spending is.

Meanwhile, the current Trident subs are dogged with problems. The most recent debacle was the 'superglue' fiasco. *The Sun* newspaper reported that bolts keeping vital insulation attached to essential cooling pipes broke off, due to over-tightening. Civilian contractors, who work for defence firm Babcock, then used superglue to stick the heads of the bolts back in place, instead of reporting the issue and replacing the bolts.

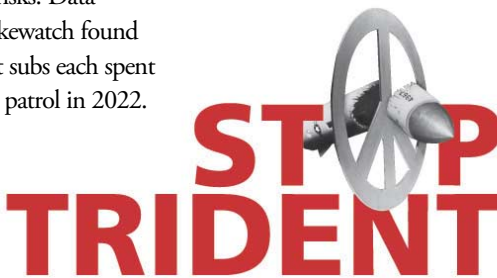
That news came shortly after *The Times* reported that three senior MoD officials from the Submarine Delivery Agency recently received more than £200,000 in performance-related bonuses.

Another recent area of concern has been the news that Trident subs have been going on patrols of record-breaking length. This has prompted fears of increased safety risks. Data provided by Nukewatch found that two Trident subs each spent 157 days out on patrol in 2022.

Former Royal Navy submarine commander Rob Forsyth noted that these patrols are now regularly lasting over 150 days whereas the ones he commanded in the 1970s rarely lasted more than 60-70 days.

Forsyth has also raised issues with crews maintaining discipline and concentration during these extended patrols, pointing to recent media reports of submariners involved in drug use and inappropriate sexual behaviour towards female colleagues.

The deteriorating state of Britain's nuclear subs and the added psychological pressure of crews spending five months at sea should be a massive cause of concern to the government and the public. These weapons are already catastrophically dangerous without the added risks of malfunctioning equipment or personal error. It's time for the British government to put an end to the Trident programme, scrap its replacement, and instead invest in rebuilding our public services.



**STOP
TRIDENT**

Spotlight

This month Leicester CND



Following some tireless work by Leicester CND, Leicester City council last month voted to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons! After a long evening of debate, a passionate speech by one of the councillors about imagining a world without nuclear weapons made everyone sit up and vote in favour. Congratulations to Leicester CND for getting this motion adopted!

If you're a CND supporter in the area, why not get in touch with the group to help with their next campaign? You can phone 0116 259 1053 or email rachelpepa@hotmail.com.

Teachers not Trident

Kevin Courtney, General Secretary of the National Education Union, writes for **CND** about the importance of supporting striking teachers.

INVESTING in our young people's future should be a top priority for any government. But the current government has it all wrong – letting down the next generation by failing to properly fund the education sector, but always finding money for war and weapons.

Hundreds of thousands of teachers have been on strike in recent weeks. Their demands are many, including wanting to be paid a decent wage amid a crippling cost of living crisis. They are also striking to defend the education system as a whole.

Years of decline in the value of teachers' pay has created a crisis, with a 41% drop in applications to teacher training courses. Our members tell us they are struggling to pay for essentials such as energy bills, childcare, and even their mortgage or rent payments.

If you compare this to the billions of pounds the government is spending on a new nuclear weapons system, it's hard not to think that something has gone wrong somewhere along the way.

Imagine what the £205 billion forecast for the new system would mean for education in this country.

Imagine what the £205 billion forecast for the new system would mean for education in this country.

None of our problems can be resolved by nuclear weapons. In fact, investing in education is key to economic growth and prosperity.

The money being spent on new nuclear weapons could build thousands more schools and refurbish current ones. Or how about much-needed investment in early years education. Education provides skills for young people. Spending money on education, here and internationally, is one of the best ways to guarantee peace in years to come.

Also important to note are the attempts by the government to scapegoat refugees and migrants. They think if it continues with its attacks, we might start to blame others – and not the government – for the present economic situation.

But the crisis in our NHS, our schools and other public services isn't caused by those desperate enough to cross the Channel. It's caused by the government not having the right priorities.

We are facing a massive challenge in this cost of living crisis. We can only meet that challenge if we fight as a united movement, and I welcome the support from so many organisations – including **CND** – for our striking teachers.

Currently, within the first five years of teaching, a third have left. This cannot continue and we call on everyone to show their solidarity where they can. Join us on March 15th – Budget Day, to demonstrate in central London for proper pay for teachers, to save our education system. This government must get its priorities straight, and soon.

■ See page 4 for more information on the protest.

SOS NHS demonstration

11 March, 12 noon
Assemble at Warren Street tube station, London.

■ Contact
campaigns@keepournhspublic.com

Save our Schools: Budget Day national demonstration

15 March, 12 noon
Assemble Hyde Park (Speakers' Corner), London.

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org

Wages not War – Manchester public meeting

25 March 1:30pm-5pm
Mechanics Institute, 103 Princess Street, Manchester.

■ Contact gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

CND workshop for groups: introduction to social media

30 March 7pm-8pm; online.

■ Contact information@cnduk.org

Peace and Planet: CND at The Big One

21 April-24 April
Houses of Parliament, London.

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org

100% Renewable UK seminar

22 April 9:30am-5pm
Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London.

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org

Stop US nukes coming to Lakenheath! – demonstration

20 May 1pm-3pm
RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org

Bruce Kent tree planting

CND was proud to join a commemorative tree planting in memory of the late CND Vice-President Bruce Kent in Finsbury Park on Saturday 4th of March. As well as Bruce's family, we were joined by CND Vice-President and local MP Jeremy Corbyn, Friends of Finsbury Park and Welsh poet Mererid Hopwood who had composed a poem dedicated to Bruce.



Meet the staff

This month:
Helen Griffin, Peace Education Officer

One year in, I have so far greatly enjoyed quite a varied role. I have continued to build on CND Peace Education's excellent relationship with university teacher training departments across the country delivering training from Bath Spa to Edgehill in Ormskirk, to mainly secondary PGCE students.

Our Schools Speakers Network work across England delivering workshops to secondary and upper primary pupils and we have taken exhibitions of our teaching resources to various conferences and education festivals up and down the country. If you are interested in volunteering with the peace education team please do get in touch: peaceeducation@cnduk.org.

