

campaign



WAGES NOT WEAPONS



Sunak updates 'defence' strategy

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** looks at the government's latest policy thinking – as outlined in the recent Integrated Review 'Refresh'.

TWO YEARS AGO, Boris Johnson unveiled his Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. It was designed to project and promote a post-Brexit 'Global Britain' on the offensive, 'projecting force' globally. At the time I described it as an 'attack' document – notorious for announcing an increase in the UK's nuclear warheads and increasing the range of scenarios in which

they might be used.

It included a key strategic shift towards the Indo-Pacific region – described as a 'tilt' with a focus on the Indian Ocean and its two key powers, India and Australia, aiming to build a network of regional allies against China. Two years on we can clearly see how this has played out. We've had the launching of the tripartite AUKUS military pact, centred around the

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



US/UK provision of nuclear-powered submarines for Australia. And now, in last month's 'Integrated Review Refresh' (IRR) – Rishi Sunak's update of the Johnson vision – we see how this controversial initiative is being advanced, much to the concern of many in the region.

As part of the IRR, the government has announced an additional £5 billion of military spending over two years. This

lessons will be learned from the war in Ukraine. Sadly, though, he is not talking in terms of the importance of diplomacy and negotiation, but of the modernisation of Britain's armed forces. His claim that 'we will also support efforts to renew arms control and counter-proliferation', rings hollow when there is no suggestion of reversing Johnson's increase to Britain's nuclear arsenal.

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takes UK military spending up to 2.2% of GDP this year (2.29% if military funding for Ukraine is included), with a 'new aspiration' to reach 2.5%. £3 billion of the increase will go to the 'defence nuclear enterprise', including spending on new submarines and 'supporting the delivery of AUKUS'. The remaining £2 billion is for replenishing military stockpiles and improving the UK's 'munitions infrastructure'.

Sunak claims that these commitments – including going beyond the baseline NATO requirement of 2% GDP on military spending – will 'maintain our leading position in NATO' and that

Once again we see that in spite of the government repeatedly telling us that there is no magic money tree, there is always money found for nuclear weapons; it's spending billions on the military whilst millions of ordinary people are desperately trying to deal with the cost of living crisis. It's also a stark reminder of how little the government understands that the climate emergency is the key security threat that we are all facing. Instead of addressing this urgent problem it is adding to it by spending heavily on weapons which not only kill but have a substantial and unaddressed carbon boot print. Things have got to change!

Spotlight

This month

Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition/CND



Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition/CND was just one of the CND groups which attended the London CND protest against US nuclear weapons coming to Britain. The event – outside the US Embassy – was part of CND's campaign against these warheads returning to RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk and saw CND supporters gather for an evening of protest. London-based groups will now travel together to the base itself for a national protest on 20th May.

If you're a CND supporter based in Wimbledon, why not get in touch with the group to get involved with the campaign? Email info@wdc-cnd.org.uk to make contact.

What links nuclear weapons and climate change?

CND – as part of XR Peace – will be joining XR’s ‘The Big One – Unite to Survive’ action later this month to explain the links between nuclear weapons and climate change. **Angie Zelter**, coordinator of XR Peace explains the connections.

WE KNOW the climate impact of an exchange of just a fraction of the world’s nuclear weapons would cause a ‘nuclear winter’ leading to global famine and the death of two billion people. But nuclear weapons are only the most horrifying part of our militarised capitalist society.

War causes climate change and climate change causes war – a vicious circle that is destroying the biodiversity that sustains life on earth. To understand this, we must recognise that militarism is a central pillar of the carbon intensive exploitative extractive industrial system that is driving the climate crisis.

Around 6% of global carbon emissions are from direct military activity but this does not include emissions caused by the destruction of homes, bridges, dams, power stations and other infrastructure that is turned into rubble and then has to be rebuilt. The weapons themselves contain metals and

rare minerals that are usually extracted from the lands of local people, against their will and by force of arms. The mining devastates the livelihoods of these people, pollutes their drinking water and soils, devastates their forests, leading to eco-system failure and bio-diversity loss. This not only causes climate change in itself but also impoverishes once self-reliant people.

Climate change is a key factor driving the refugee crisis, both from food shortages and climate-induced conflicts as people fight for scarce resources. As the climate crisis worsens, we can see the increasing tension leading to more wars. The war in Ukraine reminds us all how close to a nuclear catastrophe we are, not only from nuclear warheads but also from the bombing of nuclear power stations.

As long as countries continue to prepare for and resort to war as a means of

solving conflict, we will not be able to address climate change. To avert catastrophe, we demand that the government reduce international tensions, avoid war as a method of resolving conflict, end the arms trade, eliminate nuclear weapons, dramatically reduce military spending and redirect resources to address the threat of climate catastrophe that faces all life on earth.

Please join us in London on 21st April and contribute to the discussions on the streets as we present our demands to Parliament with our massive but peaceful presence.

■ Find out more: www.xrpeace.org/the-big-one/.



Faringdon Peace Group

meeting 5 April 7:30pm, online.

■ Contact
steve.jenny@hotmail.com

'The Mistake' – play by Michael Mears 18-22 April

Arcola Theatre, 24 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL.

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org

Abingdon Peace Group

meeting 18 April 8pm, online.

■ Contact
abingdonpeace@gmail.com

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

CND groups workshop: lobbying your MP 9 May

7pm, online.

■ Contact
parliamentary@cnduk.org

Free Palestine – London demonstration 13 May

12 noon, BBC Portland Place, London W1A 1AA

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org

Stop US nukes coming to Lakenheath! – demonstration

20 May 1pm-4pm, RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk

■ Contact
information@cnduk.org



Stop US nukes coming to Lakenheath!



20 May 2023

Join us for rally and entertainment
1pm-3pm, RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk

Visit www.cnduk.org for more information, including travel options to the base.

Scan here



Meet the staff

This month:

**Kate Hudson,
General Secretary**

Being General Secretary is a full-on job! Right now it's 24/7 – with this terrible war on Ukraine, and the increasing risk of nuclear war. At this time our international links are crucial, and working to build solidarity with peace movements in Ukraine, Russia and internationally, is vital.

My role is to oversee and develop our work in whatever political context we are facing – to raise our campaigning priorities and advance the cause of nuclear disarmament at every opportunity.

Usually the public face of CND, I also manage the staff in the national office, have final sight of all our output, and keep in close touch with the elected officers. Never a dull moment!

