

campaign



TUC is voting for war not peace

Sam Mason, member of CND's Trade Union Advisory Group, reports back on a motion adopted at this year's TUC conference which advocates war rather than peace.

AT THE ANNUAL TUC Congress in September, a motion was passed on solidarity with Ukraine. Internationalism and solidarity are at the heart of the trade union movement. Therefore, there should be little controversy in supporting a motion that seeks to show support for our working-class sisters and brothers who, as the motion rightly said, suffer most in times of war.

But unfortunately, the motion was not solely about supporting the Ukrainian

trade union movement. We are wholly behind their industrial fight with an anti-trade union government that is taking advice on this from the UK government no less. This motion was also about supporting war.

In moving the motion, GMB President Barbara Plant said that our [TUC] policies demand that we work to support peace. But there was no reference to actually de-escalating the war in the motion. Instead, the TUC

appears to be attempting to set the terms of peace negotiations.

The motion passed was a composite of separate motions from the GMB and ASLEF unions. The final version removed the original GMB demand calling for “the continuation and increasing of moral, material, and military aid from the UK to Ukraine.” But, as the FBU speaking in opposition rightly pointed out, the undertones of UK military intervention and escalation of war remained.

However, the FBU were a near lone voice of opposition as the space for debate has been shut down. Part of that debate concerns the inherent contradictions in supporting a pro-war military agenda and increased defence spending, as the TUC did in 2022, while our health service and schools, literally in the latter’s case, are collapsing. We are facing a national care emergency, and despite a period of industrial struggle, workers are still facing a cost of living, and energy, crisis.

Climate change is impacting every part of the globe. As we saw with the horrific collapse of the dams in Libya and subsequent loss of life, militarism further undermines a nation’s ability to cope with extreme weather.

More jobs in manufacturing weapons, including nuclear weapons, and the wider infrastructure of war are not the answer to these crises. Indeed, arms manufacturers are raking in record profits as of course, war is their business, and it is perhaps of some irony that GMB members at a British weapons plant producing missiles for Ukraine are themselves striking over pay with the Ministry of Defence.

As trade unionists, we need to be opposing our government’s support for the continuation of the war, and fighting for work and an industrial strategy rooted in peace, sustainable and socially useful production. Using all means possible to fight for peace should be at the heart of our message of solidarity.

To find out more about CND’s work with the trade union movement see cnduk.org/campaigns/trade-unions/ and to get involved contact tradeunions@cnduk.org

Spotlight

This month

Lewisham and Greenwich CND



Thank you to all the CND campaigners who were out and about in their communities last weekend for the day of action against US nukes returning to Britain (see a full round-up of the day on www.cnduk.org).

Lewisham and Greenwich CND had a great response to the campaign in Greenwich, handing out hundreds of flyers to supportive local residents. The group want to build on the success of the day and arrange further events over the coming weeks. If you live in the area, why not get in touch? They would be delighted to hear from you.

Contact 07707 026926 or LewishamGreenwichCND@gmail.com.

New treaty for peace in space

Bruce Gagnon is coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space. Here he writes for *CND* on why a new treaty is urgently needed.

THE 1967 United Nations Outer Space Treaty prohibits 'weapons of mass destruction' in space or on 'celestial bodies' like the moon. But virtually all warfare on the planet is now directed by space technology. Thus filling up the increasingly limited parking spaces in various orbital regions will determine which nation has an advantage.

Elon Musk's SpaceX makes rockets and satellites for Starlink, a broadband internet system that once completed will cover the entire planet. SpaceX has put 12,000 satellites into orbit and has plans for 40,000 satellites in low-Earth orbit (LEO), occupying 80% of this space.

The Pentagon funds Starlink to use its military capabilities. Starlink satellites are being utilised by the Ukrainian military to communicate as well as to guide drones, artillery shells, and missiles into Russian positions and at civilian targets.

In early 2023, China announced that it was preparing to launch 13,000 satellites into LEO in a move to counter

Musk's SpaceX network. China stated that they intended to 'ensure that our country has a place in low orbit and prevent the Starlink constellation from excessively pre-empting low-orbit resources'.

NATO in 2019 announced a new doctrine calling space a 'fifth operational domain'. NATO maintains that the US-led bloc will use commercial satellites as a military booster.

During recent years the numbers of satellites orbiting the earth has grown dramatically. Thousands more satellite launches have been approved by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) despite legal action by a coalition of groups (including the Global Network). The FCC is violating environmental law that requires impact studies before satellite launches.

Space orbital parking lots are thus getting dangerously crowded risking cascading collisions (Kessler Syndrome) which could become so severe that space flight would be impossible due to the orbiting field of debris. If this was to

occur, much of life on earth would go dark as much of our daily activities – such as navigation, internet banking, phone signal to name but a few – are enabled by satellites.

Each launch releases toxic agents into the upper atmosphere which are destroying the earth's ozone layer. In addition, when satellites fall from lower earth orbit, and burn-up on re-entry, they release a deadly stew of electronic particles into our atmosphere.

Because of the massive escalation of satellite launches, astronomers are complaining that we are losing the night sky.

Currently, 'weapons of selective destruction' fall outside of the Outer Space Treaty. Russia and China have been leading efforts at the UN to create a new treaty to ban all weapons in space for many years. But the US and Israel have been blocking such a step. The official US line through Republican and Democratic administrations is 'there is no problem in space'.

But this is not true and a new treaty is urgently needed.

'The Mistake' by Michael Mears – see the play on tour Ongoing - 30 October
Nationwide
■ information@cnduk.org

Yorkshire CND presents: catbat and friends
5 October, 7pm. Belgrave Music Hall & Canteen, Cross Belgrave Street, Leeds LS2 8JP
■ info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

Protest and Survive: CND AGM 2023 7 October, 10:45am-12:30pm, online.
■ kirsty.stewart@cnduk.org

Rally at Croughton USAF base 7 October, 12 noon, RAF Croughton, Brackley NN13 5XP
■ oxonpeace@yahoo.co.uk

'Crowded space' – CND webinar 12 October, 7pm-8pm
Online, to register contact:
■ information@cnduk.org

'No need for nuclear: renewables can do it' conference 14 October, 10:30am-4:30pm
The Mechanics Institute, 103 Princess Street, Manchester
■ gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

Working with the climate movement – CND groups workshop 16 October, 7pm-8pm, online; to register contact:
■ information@cnduk.org

West Midlands CND AGM 26 October, 7pm-9pm, online
■ Contact
wmcndall@gmail.com

CND Policy Conference 2023 28 October, 10:30am-3pm
Online and in-person at Methodist Central Hall,

Manchester, M1 1JQ
■ kirsty.stewart@cnduk.org

Festival for Survival 4 November
The Renfield Centre & Adelaide Baptist Church, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4JP
■ campaigns@banthebomb.org

CND Conference 2023

Join us online on Saturday 7 October for CND's AGM, to review the past year and elect our leadership, and then to set CND's direction for the year ahead at our Policy Conference on Saturday 28 October at Manchester's Central Methodist Hall.



Meet the staff

This month:
Rob Wells,
Office Manager

"I look after admin and HR at CND, as well as being responsible for the CND office. But the real pleasure of my job is talking to CND members and supporters, hearing about the work of CND groups, and meeting people from all walks of life united for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Our Policy Conference is taking place in person in Manchester this year and I hope to see lots of you there!"

