

campaign



Unmitigated disaster

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** looks into the many reasons British intervention in the Middle East has been catastrophic for the region.

AS THE RISK of wider war in the Middle East escalates, and our government's support for the Israeli state's onslaught on the Palestinians continues in the face of international law, Britain's long-running role in the region demands greater scrutiny.

British – and French – intervention in the Middle East long predates that of the US, motivated by resource interests and strategic geopolitical positioning. It really is

a shocking catalogue, from the Sykes Picot Agreement of 1916 – the Anglo-French agreement to divide up the Ottoman Empire after the First World War; to the Balfour Declaration of 1917, supporting a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine without guaranteeing the political and national rights of the communities already living there. Then intervention in Iraq and Iran, notably the

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US/UK coup in Iran in 1953, overthrowing the democratically elected prime minister, Mossadegh, and the imposition of the brutal and corrupt Shah.

More recently the war on Iraq in 2003, in which Britain played a major role, against the expressed will of so much of its population, resulting in countless deaths and unleashing region-wide instability and violence.

One of the great dangers of the current war on Gaza is regional escalation leading to the use of Israeli nuclear weapons. Israel possesses a significant nuclear arsenal – in addition to its extensive and sophisticated conventional forces, outside of all international scrutiny or regulation.

Yet it comes under no sanction or condemnation from major powers, indeed its nuclear weapons have been enabled by the US and UK and their possession is condoned in a way that no other system outside NPT and IAEA scrutiny would be tolerated.

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attack by Israel inhibits the actions of other states, enabling it to continue its onslaught unimpeded.

A further destabilising factor has been the US withdrawal in 2018 from the Iran Nuclear Deal, negotiated by President Obama and President Rouhani of Iran in 2015. This ensured inspections of, and limits on, Iran's nuclear power programme in exchange for the lifting of sanctions on Iran. All was going well until Trump stepped in. He claimed the withdrawal was to prevent Iran getting nuclear weapons – clearly nonsense, as that was what the Deal was doing! Trump walked away because he wished to reimpose sanctions on Iran – its economy was recovering and he wanted to weaken Iran, with the long-standing goal of pursuing regime change.

The intervention of Britain and its allies in the Middle East has got to stop. It has been an unmitigated disaster for over a century and now risks a widening conflagration. It's time for a nuclear weapons-free Middle East, based on sovereignty, justice, and peace.

Spotlight

This month Youth and Student CND



Youth and Student CND members gathered in the Houses of Parliament in London last week for an invigorating day of discussion. Following a tour of the historic building and a drop-in session with MPs, YSCND discussed how best they could contribute to the student-led movement for peace taking place at the moment.

Many ideas came up of how they could ensure the campaign for a world without nuclear weapons is heard on campuses across the country. If you're a CND supporter aged 25 and under, or are a full-time student, please get in touch with YSCND to be involved in all the action – yscnd@riseup.net.

Britain on the nuclear frontline

CND Chair **Tom Unterrainer** calls on our supporters to get involved in the campaign against US nuclear weapons coming to Britain.

CND calls on our members, supporters and friends to join us in raising the alarm on plans to once again station US nuclear weapons in Britain. Local CND groups are organising stalls, leafleting sessions, protests and stunts for the Day of Action on May 11th.

US nuclear weapons were stationed at the Lakenheath air base in Suffolk until they were removed in 2008 after a spirited and determined campaign led by CND. Following careful examination of US Department of Defense budgets, it was revealed that Lakenheath was again added to the list of US nuclear storage facilities. There has been very limited scrutiny of this decision in the British Parliament and no real opportunity for accountability. Government ministers have repeatedly responded to questions with the phrase, “we do not comment on US decisions”.

Yet the plans involve ‘RAF’ Lakenheath: an airbase that

could be mistaken for a British military installation. The reality is somewhat different. Lakenheath is a US installation, equipped with US aircraft and personnel. It now looks set to become a US nuclear installation once again.

The secrecy and subterfuge around this development should be of concern to anyone who takes democracy seriously. Our day of action will be an opportunity to expose the reality of US nuclear plans. This is an urgent matter, but it is not the only one.

The likely deployment of new, enhanced, US nuclear bombs at Lakenheath and the already-deployed nuclear-capable aircraft puts Britain on the nuclear frontline. Such a deployment raises multiple risks: the risk of nuclear accident, the risk that genocidal nuclear attacks could be launched from the base and the fact that Lakenheath and the region around it are now a prime target for nuclear assault.

For all these reasons CND, its members and supporters are determined to mobilise, organise and campaign to prevent US nuclear weapons from returning. But there’s more: 2024 is an election year in both the US and in Britain. US and British governments have been united in cruel complicity with Israel’s genocide on Palestine.

Yet things could get worse. The prospect of a second Trump Presidency means that US nuclear weapons would be under his command. The official ‘Opposition’ in Westminster is bending over backwards to demonstrate a perverse commitment to nuclear weapons and the nuclear-armed NATO alliance.

We cannot and will not be complacent. We will campaign to halt any US nuclear deployment at Lakenheath.

Join us on May 11th.

Nuclear power: a harmful distraction to climate change? Labour CND webinar

13 May 7pm-8:30pm, online.
■ To register contact labourcnd@gmail.com

Conscientious Objectors Day – Manchester event

15 May 12 noon
Manchester Peace Gardens,
Lincoln Square, Manchester
■ Contact gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

Nakba 76: End the Genocide – national demonstration

18 May 12 noon. Assemble outside the BBC, Portland Place
■ Contact CND office on 020 7700 2393

Peace and Plant fair – Sydenham 18 May

12 May 12 noon-4pm, Grow Mayow, Mayow Park, London SE26 4JA
■ Contact goteamgini@hotmail.com

West Midlands CND meeting

21 May 7:30pm, online.
■ To register, contact wmcndall@gmail.com for link

Abingdon Peace Group meeting 21 May

8pm, online.
■ To register contact abingdonpeace@gmail.com

Faringdon Peace Group meeting 5 June

7:30pm, online
■ To register contact steve.jenny@hotmail.com

Lakenheath Alliance for Peace peace camp

13-25 July
RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk
■ Contact lap@gn.apc.org for more information

Don't put Britain on the nuclear front line: Day of Action 11th May

Join the Day of Action against US nuclear weapons coming to Britain – events are taking place across the country, including a protest at the Lakenheath base and outside the US Embassy in London – www.cnduk.org

■ Contact information@cnduk.org with any queries.

CND General Election Campaign 2024

At such a dangerous time in both global and British politics, it is important that we use the upcoming general election – whenever that takes place – to vote for candidates who support peace and disarmament.

This can be a crucial moment for CND to raise awareness of our campaign for a world without nuclear weapons, so this month we've launched our general election campaign and are asking you to get involved! Can you help us by contacting parliamentary candidates to find out their views on Britain's nuclear weapons and other crucial peace issues, then reporting them back to us? We've created a campaigning guide to support this and other election-related work.

■ Find out more by visiting CND's website – www.cnduk.org

Meet the staff

This month: Kate Hudson, General Secretary

"Being General Secretary is a big responsibility, and it's also a great privilege – to represent CND in so many different contexts, and make the case for peace and nuclear disarmament. This has never been more important, with the ongoing terrible conflicts - and risk of nuclear use – in both the Middle East and Ukraine, the increasing and modernising of nuclear arsenals, and escalating rhetoric towards war. At this time our international links are crucial, as well as our alliances at home.



My role is to oversee and develop our work whatever 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!"

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