

campaign



The Tories are out: what next?

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** assesses last week's General Election result and its implications for CND.

BBRITAIN has a new government. The Tories are gone, after 14 years of misrule, but what comes next? A Labour government committed to a 'triple lock on Trident'. Clearly there is much work to be done, but there is a new and more positive atmosphere.

Not least, enormous relief and happiness that our Vice-President Jeremy Corbyn has been re-elected, as an Independent MP – so

we will have his powerful and principled voice for peace in Parliament. It has been great to see the election of four other independent candidates on the platform of ceasefire in Gaza. Together with MPs from other parties that oppose the genocide, this will be a strong base in parliament.

Clearly there is much more analysis to be done: but Labour has a landslide of

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seats based on less votes than it received in 2019. The right-wing vote has been split between Tories and Reform; they may regroup and attempt a come-back at the next election.

Other issues are raised too. The SNP has been much reduced: what will this mean for anti-nuclear work in Scotland, where the promise of independence had provided an avenue for achieving nuclear disarmament? In better news, the Green Party now has four seats; they are good on many of our peace and anti-war issues, but they have recently changed their policy on NATO, not in a good way. The LibDems now have a much larger cohort of MPs although they have recently changed their policy on Trident for the worse. But they have a strong anti-Trident group of activists with whom we can re-engage. Wales is now a Tory-free zone: are there new possibilities for the peace agenda there?

The Labour government's policies are explicitly pro-nuclear weapons, pro-increased arms spending, pro-war in Ukraine and Gaza, pro-NATO,

and tied into the US ideological and military framework. Much is the same as the previous government's policies, but this is a new situation, and we need to assess our strategic approach to the new government. Labour is expected to undertake a review of Defence policy in its first year. We need to be part of this where possible and raise key issues outside the Labour Party where direct engagement is not possible. In CND, we will be raising crucial issues: not only the urgent issues of the moment – Gaza and Ukraine – but broader underlying policies: nuclear weapons possession; NATO; the return of US nuclear weapons to Lakenheath; the AUKUS alliance; the cold war on China; the British economy and the so-called 'defence' industry and its relations with sections of the trade union movement.

This new post-electoral situation presents us with many challenges, but also opportunities – and hope for the future. Let's make the most of it!

Spotlight

This month Greater Manchester and District CND



CND groups across the country participated in CND's election campaign, highlighting issues of peace and justice with candidates from all political parties. Some groups, including Greater Manchester & District CND, organised election hustings to grill those standing to be members of parliament.

GMDCND will now keep up the pressure on those elected in their region to make sure CND's issues are highlighted in Parliament. If you would like to get involved please contact them on 0161 273 8283 or gmdcnd@gn.apc.org.

And if you think your newly elected MP would like to support CND's work in the House of Commons, please let us know by emailing parliamentary@cnduk.org and we'll make contact!

Eurobomb? No thanks!

IT IS UNDENIABLE that the world is currently a very dangerous place. World leaders should be doing all they can to decrease tensions, particularly when it comes to nuclear threats. But instead, disturbing noises have emerged in some European quarters – notably in France and Germany – urging the development of a European nuclear ‘deterrent’.

This comes in the context of a possible Trump presidency, and therefore the ensuing uncertainty about future US support for NATO, especially with the Russian war on Ukraine still raging.

But CND argues against such suggestions: proliferation is not the answer to European security concerns. We’ll be taking this message with us as we attend the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) PrepCom taking place in Geneva later this month. In fact, CND is organising a fringe meeting on this very theme, bringing together a collection of international experts to counter arguments being made in favour of a ‘Eurobomb’.

The former German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer told Der Spiegel last year: “Should the Federal Republic of Germany possess nuclear

“non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly or indirectly.”

weapons? No. Europe? Yes. The EU needs its own nuclear deterrent.”

One expert, Volkert Ohm, the Co-Chair of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA) in Germany, has said that the call for nuclear weapons for the EU contradicts international law:

“The Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is that even in extreme circumstances of self-defense, states may only defend themselves with weapons that fulfil the conditions of international humanitarian law.”

France is the only nuclear-armed state in the European Union, owning around 300 warheads. Should these weapons be reassigned to a European nuclear force, or if new weapons were to be built, it is likely this would contravene the terms of the NPT, which states that “non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from

any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly or indirectly.”

Germany, France, and Europe at large should not give any more credence to talk of a European nuclear weapons system and concentrate instead on calling for a ceasefire and negotiations towards a peaceful end to war on the continent, as well as getting on the path to a world without any nuclear weapons at all.

- Join CND online for a webinar to discuss why we must mobilise to stop the development of a European nuclear weapons system – 18 July 6:30pm. Contact information@cnduk.org to register.

- If you’re attending the NPT PrepCom, join CND on 23 July 10am to 12 noon, in the NGO room XXIII, UN building, in Geneva for our side event discussing this topic.

Lakenheath Alliance for Peace peace camp

13-25 July RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk

■ Contact lap@gn.apc.org for more information

'Eurobomb? No thanks! Preventing nuclear proliferation in Europe' – CND webinar

18 July 6:30pm, online.

■ Contact information@cnduk.org

Faringdon Peace Group meeting

7 August 8pm, online.

■ Contact steve.jenny@hotmail.com

'The Priest's Tale' performance

8 August 7:30pm

Sands Films, 82 St Marychurch Street, Rotherhithe SE16 4HZ

■ Contact information@cnduk.org

CND Conference 2024

Join us online on Saturday 5 October to have your say at CND's AGM and policy conference.

31 July:

Deadline for nominations for directly elected members of CND Council and officers; deadline for ordinary resolutions.

8 September:

Deadline for amendments and special (constitutional) resolutions.

29 September:

Registration deadline.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki remembered

CND groups and supporters across the country will be commemorating those who died in the nuclear attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August.

If you are organising an event, please email us information@cnduk.org so we can promote, and keep on eye on CND's website for details of your local event.



Meet the staff

This month: Pádraig McCarrick, Press Officer

There is never a dull moment when you're CND's Press and Communications Officer. This summer has been especially busy with the recent general election and ongoing Gaza demonstrations joining CND calendar regulars such as our presence at Glastonbury. Having just returned from Worthy Farm, my focus now is on getting press coverage for the campaign against the return of US nuclear weapons to Britain and promoting the Lakenheath Alliance for Peace's upcoming international peace camp. I hope to see some of you there!

I started working at CND just before the recent campaign against US nuclear weapons at Lakenheath began (they were previously removed in 2008), so working to grow it from a local to national media story has been a very rewarding challenge. This wouldn't be the case without the tireless efforts of so many dedicated CND members across East Anglia and beyond. So thank you for making this campaign possible!

