

CAMPAIGN

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Labour conference 2024: our work for peace continues

CND General Secretary Kate Hudson looks ahead to Labour Party conference.

This month sees Labour's first conference as a party of government since 2009. As we headed down to Brighton that year, to run the CND events, little did we guess that we would soon be entering a disastrous period of Conservative-led government, lasting 14 years. Many of us will remember the agonies of austerity

inflicted on the country by Chancellor George Osborne; the nonsense that we were 'all in it together' while the rich got richer and everyone else got poorer.

And over time, things got worse. Hard-Toryism, emboldened by Brexit, gave us the chaos and brutality of Boris Johnson, Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak, underpinned by fantasies of 'global Britain' based on military might and pastiche imperial-themed grandeur. And many didn't survive



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this terrible period, victims of the government's facile approach to COVID, its failing health and social care, and its infliction of poverty and hunger on millions.

And we saw increasing militarisation from the Tory government, increasing support for nuclear weapons, for NATO and for war. CND played its part in opposing all these developments, fighting for the NHS not Trident, for peace and planet, opposing war and NATO expansion.

So now, at last, we have a new government. Can we hope for something better? Certainly when it comes to our issues, the answer is a resounding NO. We have heard Labour's commitments, to Trident replacement, to NATO, to war, to increased military spending. We see, with grief and rage, the government's refusal to stop arms shipments to Israel, as it perpetrates genocide in Gaza. What we have is a continuation of Conservative policies, carried out shamelessly by a party that was founded to do so much better.

The original values of Labour, for peace and socialism, are long gone.

But our struggle continues: for a

nuclear-free Britain, and a nuclear-free world, based on peace, justice, equality and sustainability.

And we will continue that work unremittingly, whoever is in government.

We have two events at this year's Labour Party conference in Liverpool, that everyone is welcome to attend. They are outside the security zone.

1. The next National Demonstration for Palestine, 'End the Genocide – Stop Arming Israel', takes place on Saturday 21st September. Assemble at 12 noon at St George's Plateau (outside Liverpool Lime Street Station).
2. CND's Labour Party fringe meeting, 'A new agenda for peace: what we want from Labour's Defence Review', at 4pm on Sunday 22nd September, at The Hilton Hotel.

We will also have a stall inside the conference centre, so if you are a delegate, please come and speak with us.

Let's work together to change this Labour government's policies: away from war and weapons, towards a society that meets all our communities' needs.

Spotlight

This month: Yorkshire CND



Yorkshire CND have been as busy as ever this summer, starting the season at Glastonbury festival and spending the last few days of August promoting the campaign at another one - Shambala. In between they've hosted many Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemoration events, making sure to sign up more councillors in Sheffield to the campaign for a world without nuclear weapons at the same time.

The group was also thrilled to attend the re-opening of The Peace Museum, which is now based locally in Saltaire and has a particularly great showcase of CND memorabilia.

If you would like to get more involved with Yorkshire CND's fantastic campaigning, why not get in touch? Phone 01274 730 795 or email info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk.

TIME TO CALL A HALT TO WAR IN UKRAINE

CND Vice-Chair Carol Turner examines the escalation in the war between Russia and Ukraine.

As summer draws to a close, the rapid escalation of the war in Ukraine is bringing the world another step closer to nuclear war. On 7 August, Ukraine launched a ground offensive inside Russia for the first time, after the US gave the go-ahead for weapons supplied by the allies to be used against military targets. Ukrainian forces struck bridges in the Kursk region, took prisoners of war, and 122,000 Russian civilians are reported to have been evacuated.

Russia has retaliated with one of its biggest air attacks of the war. Now President Zelensky is headed for the USA with a proposal for further incursions, including using Anglo-French Storm Shadow missiles – long range, low-observable, air-launched cruise. President Biden is said to be 'cautious', but Prime Minister Starmer is reportedly keen to up the ante, and meeting President Macron in Paris with defence high on the agenda.

Both Labour and Conservative governments have emphasised their commitment to NATO and Ukraine, talking up the Russian threat. Starmer has emphasised a change in government does not mean a change in support for Ukraine.

The UK plays a major role in the war, supporting escalation and helping arm Ukraine. Britain is the third biggest Ukraine donor after the US and Germany; has supplied Challenger 2 tanks used in the Kursk offensive; was the first country to sign



a bi-lateral security agreement with Ukraine, in January this year; and is a one of six European countries to host NATO nuclear facilities.

This feeds nuclear tensions which have grown ever higher during the conflict, with the increasing risk of the war escalating into a conflict between nuclear-armed NATO and Russia. Between them, they have around 12,000 nuclear weapons – some of them are 100 times the power of the Hiroshima bomb. Urgent steps must be taken to prevent this war going nuclear.

Comments over the weekend by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov suggest that Russia will make changes to its doctrine on the use of nuclear weapons to lower the threshold for use.

At this time of great nuclear danger, the call for ceasefire and negotiations could not be more urgent.

■ For a more detailed discussion of the war in Ukraine, check out Carol's guest blog on www.cnduk.org/category/blog/

What's on: For a full, updated list of events, see cnduk.org/events/

Faringdon Peace Group meeting

4 September 7:30pm, online
■ steve.jenny@hotmail.com

National march for Palestine: Stop arming Israel!

7 September 12 noon
Assemble central London
■ information@cnduk.org

John Ainslie and the anti-nuclear movement in Scotland

12 September 4:30pm-7pm
National Library of Scotland, 92 Cowgate, Edinburgh EH1 1JN
■ scnd@banthebomb.org

Movement for the Abolition of War conference

14 September 10:30am-4pm
Sands Films, 82 St Marychurch Street, Rotherhithe SE16 4HZ
■ info@abolishwar.org.uk

Yorkshire CND regional campaigners' meeting

18 September 6pm, online
■ info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

National demonstration for Palestine: End the Genocide

21 September 12 noon
Assemble St George's Place, Liverpool
■ Contact
CND office on 020 7700 2393

West Midlands CND meeting

24 September 7:30pm, online
■ Contact:
wmcndall@gmail.com

Oxford CND meeting

26 September 6:30pm
Oxford Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1BX
■ Contact
nualayoung@hotmail.com

CND Conference 2024

Join us for both parts of CND's annual conference:

5 October: AGM and policy conference, online.

12 October: 'A new agenda for peace and justice' public conference, London

Contact: conference@cnduk.org for more information



Meet the staff

This month: Dylan Lewis-Rowlands, CND Cymru

"Shwmae (Hello, how are you), everyone! In my dual role as CND Cymru's National Secretary and Press and Communications Officer, my work is, of course, focused on Wales.

Over the past few months, our major campaign has been the 'PARC against DARC' campaign - working with local communities to oppose the installation of a Deep-space Advanced Radar Capability initiative in lovely west Wales. We have also been continuing our work opposing the ongoing genocide in Gaza (including on the successful Senedd vote calling for a ceasefire); and opposing nuclear power development, alongside our partner organisations CADNO and PAWB. We have also been proud to support the work of the Lakenheath Alliance for Peace.

If you ever have any questions about our campaigns here in Wales, please feel free to get in touch!"



Lakenheath Alliance for Peace vigil 28 September

12 noon-2pm
Main Gate, RAF Lakenheath, Brandon Road, Lakenheath
■ vigils@lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk

Film screening of 'Threads'

3 October 6pm-9pm
Cross Street Chapel, Cross Street, Manchester M2 1NL
■ Contact:
gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

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