



OXFORD CND

NEWSLETTER

March/April 2023



Campaign for Nuclear
Disarmament (CND)
www.cnduk.org

**WAGES
NOT
WEAPONS**



Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Realism for Ukraine

ONE POSITIVE FACT has emerged from the diplomatic to-and-fro around the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It is now clear that China has laid down at least one "red line": as set out in its 12-point statement on the "political settlement" of the Ukraine crisis, "nuclear weapons must not be used and nuclear wars must not be fought. The threat or use of nuclear weapons should be opposed". Since the only person to make nuclear threats (veiled but hard to mistake) has been Vladimir Putin, this is a clear criticism of the Russian president. We may wish that China should condemn his blatant violation of the UN Charter and his war crimes, but its red line does make us feel somewhat safer.

The UN General Assembly vote on 23 February, with almost the same large majority (141 out of 180 voting) as in its resolution a year ago, called on member states and international organizations "to redouble support for diplomatic efforts to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, consistent with the Charter". So, Britain, along with other supporters of Ukraine, is committed to doing just that. Yet among the discussion by politicians and experts on the possible outcomes ahead, the possibility of negotiations is mostly ignored, or tip-toed around as unrealistic, with the insistence that this must be left to Ukraine. Diplomacy is needed most when the situation seems most intractable; it can prepare the way for the time when a stalemate is reached. In spite of optimistic claims both by the aggressor and the defender, that time has already come although neither will yet recognise it. We should also remember that there were negotiations in the first months of the year, when compromises were discussed, and the discussion may still be continuing through secret back-channels.

There is no doubt that a negotiated settlement will be fiendishly hard to achieve, and it is hard for us to chart a plausible way forward, but we should not be deterred by the difficulty. The new UN resolution "welcomes and expresses strong support for the efforts of the Secretary-General

and Member States to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine". Britain has signed up for this too, and the government should be asked what it is doing to support the Secretary-General whose efforts and warnings have been ignored. Since the Security Council is crippled by the Soviet veto, Britain should cooperate in the General Assembly with other member states to devise mechanisms for a settlement. When it comes it will be based on borders, wherever they are located, between hostile forces, that will require international guarantees and UN peace-keeping forces. There is plenty to discuss here already.

And the discussion should start with China: its new proposal is short on detail and seems to lean to the Russian side, but it is an advance on Beijing's ambiguous neutrality over the past year. Instead of dismissing it out of hand – the stock response of the "West's" cold warriors – our diplomats should identify its positive elements and press China further. We also need to recognise the large body of world opinion, mainly in the South, among countries that deplore

Russia's aggression but are alarmed by the insistence of Ukraine's allies on pursuing outright victory. Quite rightly, they point to the wider damage on the global economy and food security caused by the war that has a disproportionate effect upon the South. Countries ranging from Indonesia to Brazil have called for an immediate ceasefire – such calls are barely mentioned in our media.

Perhaps we are in a similar situation to that of winter 1916-17 when serious proposals to end the First World War were made but led nowhere. That is no reason for not trying. Those who advocate a ceasefire and negotiations are accused of defeatism and "giving Putin what he wants", and here UN intervention may help to avoid that outcome. Yet the real defeatism is to engage in wishful thinking, whether in Moscow or London, that one side is going to achieve total victory. As often in the past, realism is more likely to be found in the advocacy of peace. ■

John Gittings



Doomsday Clock signals highest ever peril level

THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK, now set to 90 seconds to midnight, marks how close our planet is to complete annihilation because of man-made actions.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (BAS) said the clock moved, in large part, because of the war in Ukraine. The board stated that the war has raised profound questions on how nations interact, as well as an apparent downfall in international conduct.

“Russia’s thinly veiled threats to use nuclear weapons remind the world that escalation of the conflict - by accident, intention, or miscalculation - is a terrible risk,” it said.

The other threats mentioned this year include climate change, biological threats and disruptive technologies.

“The war’s effects are not limited to an increase

in nuclear danger; they also undermine global efforts to combat climate change,” said the statement.

A pandemic, the board said, is no longer a once in a lifetime risk. ■



Putin’s nuclear threat and NATO nuclear strategy

PUTIN’S THREAT TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS if losing the war in Ukraine parallels NATO’s policy of “flexible response” that dates back to 1968, which similarly included a willingness to use nuclear weapons if losing a conventional war. That policy is not widely understood, yet was and remains a part of US and NATO nuclear strategy, including Britain whether as a NATO member or acting alone. This contrasts with the common view in the public mind that small-scale use of nuclear weapons is not a part of war-planning. In the context of the conflict in Ukraine, Putin’s threat should not be considered absurd and instead it is a powerful reason for seeking a negotiated settlement to the conflict. ■

Paul Rogers – Emeritus Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University.

HMS Vanguard

HMS VANGUARD – one of four of Britain’s nuclear-armed Trident submarines – has been out of action since 2015 and maintenance work since then has cost at least £500 million. The remaining submarines have been under repeated strain in the years since, with one having to return to port after a fire broke out on board.

Reports are that contractors working on HMS Vanguard used superglue to repair its nuclear reactor and didn’t properly report the incident. Bolts keeping vital insulation attached to cooling pipes necessary for the submarines nuclear reactor broke off, due to over-tightening. Civilian contractors, who work for defence firm Babcock, then used superglue to stick the heads of the bolts back in place, instead of reporting the issue and replacing the bolts. The broken bolts were only discovered when one of the heads fell off during an inspection.

The news comes shortly after The Times reported that three senior MoD officials from the Submarine Delivery Agency – the body in charge of overseeing submarine maintenance – recently received more than £200,000 in performance-related bonuses. ■

In Memoriam Russell Barford

IN MEMORY OF RUSSELL BARFORD, a man who left a lasting impact on those who knew him. Russell's life was marked by a series of events and experiences that shaped him into the person he was. He was born in Sussex in 1958, and from an early age, he had a love for spirituality that would stay with him throughout his life.

However, tragedy struck Russell in his early twenties when he was involved in a car accident that changed the course of his life. After the accident, he relocated to Kings Sutton and became a bus driver for many years but then found it difficult to work due to health conditions and being a single parent for a few years, after some time his health improved to allow him to transition to a lorry driver as his last job.

In addition to his other challenges, Russell was also plagued by lupus, a chronic autoimmune disease that affected him for almost his entire life. The disease caused him considerable pain and discomfort, but he refused to let it define him. Instead, he used his illness as a source of strength and determination, becoming a warrior in the battle against his own body.

Russell's fight against lupus was a testament to his courage and resilience. Despite the constant pain and fatigue, he remained positive and focused on living life to the fullest. He refused to let the disease hold him back and continued to pursue his passions and interests with the same energy and enthusiasm as always.

Russell was also passionate about peace campaigning and was involved with Nuke Watch, an organization that sought to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He also spent a short time in prison for possession of cannabis, but this did not deter him from his activism.

Russell had a love for Rollright Stones, and this was a place he would often go to seek spiritual solace. Although he was not religious, Russell was deeply spiritual and believed in the power of positive energy. In Kings Sutton, Russell had a short relationship with one woman before later breaking up and meeting Diane, with whom he had two children, Rebecca and Jason. They moved to Croughton just before Jason turned

one in 1989. After their relationship ended, a few years passed and Russell met Liz and fathered four more children, Frazer, Harmony, Angel, and Verity. Although they lived separately, Russell and Liz were together for 27 years, and his love for his children was evident in the way he spoke about them.

Russell had a deep appreciation for music, and his taste was eclectic. He enjoyed many genres, but his love for reggae was especially strong. He found comfort and inspiration in the rhythms and lyrics of artists like Bob Marley and UB40, and he often played their music to lift his spirits.

Russell's love for music extended beyond reggae, and he enjoyed listening to bands like The Beatles, Eurythmics, and Dr. Hook, among many others. He appreciated the artistry and talent that went into creating music and was always on the lookout for new artists and sounds to add to his collection.

Russell's love for music was not just limited to listening. He was also a talented singer and loved singing along to all music and was later a part of a group '5 ways', a Barbershop style quartet.

Through his love for music, Russell found a way to connect with others and to express his own emotions and feelings. His passion for reggae and other genres will always be remembered, and his legacy as a lover of music will live on in the hearts of those who knew him.

Russell's love for motorbikes and cars was just one facet of his rich and full life. He was a man who embraced his passions fully and lived life to the fullest.

In the last three years of his life, Russell was diagnosed with cancer, and he fought valiantly against it. He was a man of strong will and determination, and he refused to let his illness define him. Despite his illness, Russell remained positive and continued to live life to the fullest.

Russell Barford was a man who lived life on his terms. He was a caring and loving father, a passionate activist, and a seeker of spiritual truth. He will be remembered for his unwavering commitment to making the world a better place and for the love he had for his family. May his soul rest in peace, and may his memory be a blessing to all those who knew him. ■

Jason Barford

I GOT TO KNOW RUSSELL during our “Block the Builders” direct actions to prevent the construction of the new laser facility at Atomic Weapon Establishment Aldermaston. Russell was our trusted and reliable driver who would drop us at some strategic location, always at the crack of dawn and, it now seems to me, mostly in the dead of winter! We would all pile out of his van and lock on in the middle of the road and Russell would then wait around for hours so that he could support us after any arrests. Russell was key to the success of Block the Builders and although his health was already starting to deteriorate, he was a consistent and reassuring presence who was always kind, encouraging and funny, his dry sense of humour helping us steady our nerves before the most challenging of actions. A “gentle man” in the true sense of the word. ■

Giulia Gigliotti

FOR MANY YEARS RUSSELL CAMPAIGNED FOR PEACE, to free us from nuclear weapons and was a nukewatcher, tracking and monitoring the transport of nuclear warheads and special nuclear materials across the UK. He was the ‘nukewatcher extraordinaire’ from the beginning of nukewatch, and was intuitive and determined. He also lived near USAF Croughton and helped organise the annual marches and rallies at that base. We will miss his experience, advice, commitment and his good humour, but keep our good memories of him. ■



NUKEWATCH

A NUCLEAR WARHEAD CONVOY travelled from AWE Burghfield to RNAD Coulport and returned during February.

Nukewatchers monitored and tracking this convoy as it travelled back and forth across Britain, passing close to towns and cities, schools, hospitals and many communities. The nuclear warhead convoy of 20 or more vehicles regularly criss-crosses the UK by road and has logged 40 safety incidents in the last three years, according to official figures. In response to a request under freedom of information, the MoD released short summary logs of incidents involving the convoy during 2019, 2020 and 2021. The dates are blacked out and no locations are given.

Of the 40 incidents, 22 are categorised as “operational” and 18 as “engineering”. Convoy vehicles have crashed twice and got caught up in other road accidents five times. They have suffered

multiple brake faults, breakdowns and power losses. The convoy has also caused the closure of roads or motorway lanes 11 times and been delayed by lorry fires, a spillage and two outbreaks of Covid.

This is the most dangerous cargo on our roads. ■



40th anniversary at USAF Upper Heyford

BETWEEN THE 31ST MAY and June 3rd 1983 one of the largest ever set piece civil disobedience demonstrations took place at USAF Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire. This was then home to six F1-11 planes armed with live nuclear weapon always on standby in what was called the Quick Response Area (QRA).

Organised by the Peace Camp that was set up in 1982 to support the women’s camp at Greenham Common by providing a site for mixed NVDA, more than 5,000 people took part in trained affinity groups in six shifts over the four days. At its conclusion 752 people had been arrested – one of the highest numbers of people ever detained at a peace protest.

As we know the airbase has since been mothballed – USAF Lakenheath being the preferred F1-11 base in the 1990s when the ‘peace dividend’ meant one of the two were to be shut. However, the spirit of idealism and protest, which the camp represented, and the message that peace is always the preferable option, very much remain relevant.

With the current nuclear sabre rattling by Putin, nuclear rearmament taking place across the five Nuclear Weapons States and the Doomsday Clock advancing to 90 seconds to midnight, these imperatives will be remembered and discussed on June 2nd and 3rd. In particular, what can be

done to get the world back on the path to nuclear disarmament rather than rearmament?

A number of activities are planned by former peace camper Steve Barwick, now Chair of the Nuclear Education Trust, and some of the peace camp’s former supporters including Annie Tunnicliffe, a previous Chair of Campaign Atom (Oxford CND). Please do join them:

Friday 2 June

- 12 noon – walk the perimeter of the fence (7.5 miles) starting at Ardley – meet outside the White Lion pub just off Junction 10 of the M40. NB please contact the organisers if you require directions and/or help with transport.

Saturday 3 June 2023

- 10:30 for 11 – reunion and meeting “Looking back, looking forward” at site of old Peace Camp (Portway, off Camp Road) – please bring chairs.

- 12 noon – walk to Heritage Centre which includes some displays about the camp (arrive 12:30 and leave 13:30).

Steve is also planning to launch an archive website about the former Upper Heyford Peace Camp on June 3rd. If you have any old photographs or written material please email him at the address below. For more information please contact:

SteveBarwickPC@outlook.com

CND and XR Peace support Extinction Rebellion April action

Friday, April 21, 2023

Start: 9:00 AM Central London

Houses of Parliament, London, SW1A 0AA GB

Contact Info: information@cnduk.org

CND, ALONGSIDE OTHER PEACE GROUPS in the XR Peace collective, will be supporting an Extinction Rebellion action in London taking place from April 21st. **We will be standing up for the planet and against nuclear weapons.**

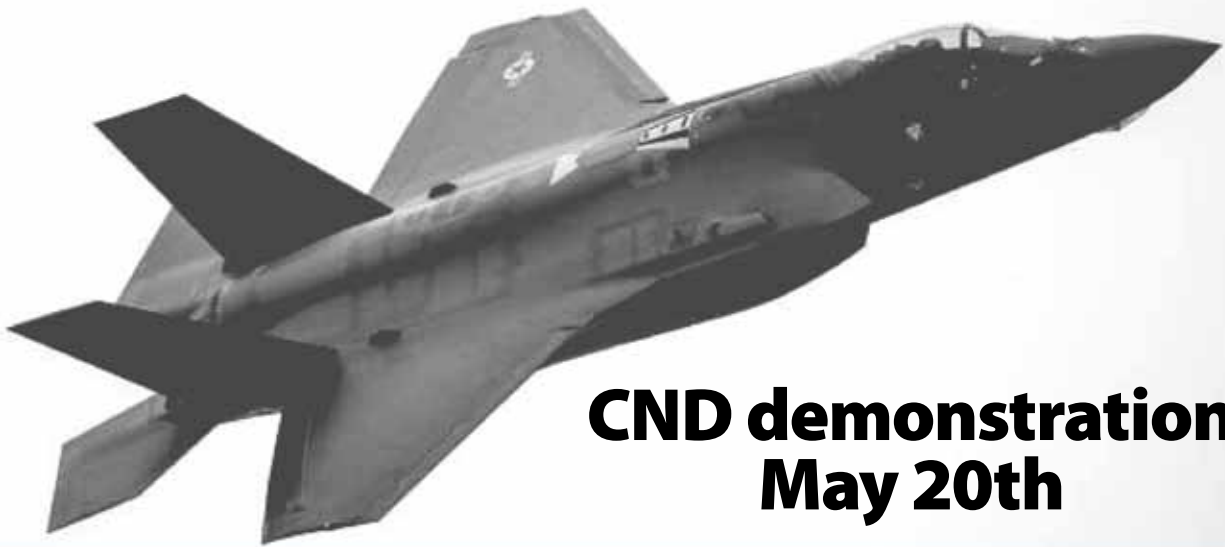
The protest will take place outside the Houses of Parliament in London. The exact form of the action is to be announced, but expect traditional protest, creative action, workshops and vigils.

CND has set up a link for anyone interested in joining XR Peace's bloc from April 21st to sign up for more information: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/cnd-and-xr-peace-supports-extinction-rebellion-april-action>

RAF Lakenheath

US NUCLEAR WEAPONS LOOK SET TO RETURN TO RAF LAKENHEATH, a base in the UK that is run by the US.

The US Department of Defense has added the UK to a list of NATO nuclear weapons storage locations in Europe being upgraded under a multi-million dollar infrastructure programme. This means that US nuclear weapons will be coming to RAF Lakenheath.



**CND demonstration
May 20th**



**Stop US nukes
coming to Lakenheath!**



Diary

March

Wednesday 1st – Faringdon Peace Group
– New Year Party – 7.00pm.

10th-11th – Aldermaston Women’s Peace Camp
– Nuala 01865 749459.

Tuesday 21st – Abingdon Peace Group meeting
8.00pm.

April

Saturday 1st – CND Council meeting.

Wednesday 5th – Faringdon Peace Group
meeting – 7.30pm.

7th-8th – Aldermaston Women’s Peace Camp
– Nuala 01865 749459.

Tuesday 18th – Abingdon Peace Group – 8.00pm.

Friday 21st – XR Peace / CND demo Parliament,
London.

Best list of news items, webinars etc:

https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/news_items

<https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/events>

<https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk>



Latest News

Sunak to announce £5bn military spending boost

PRIME MINISTER RISHI SUNAK will announce an extra £5 billion in military spending ahead of March’s budget announcement, despite expectations that cost-of-living support measures will be cut back and any public sector pay-rises fail to match inflation. Sunak is expected to announce the boost during a trip to Washington for a summit with US President Joe Biden and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese over the future direction of the AUKUS military pact. The pact centres on provision of nuclear-powered submarines for Australia as well as cooperation on a vast number of military capabilities including advanced cyber, AI, undersea, electronic warfare and hypersonic weapons.

OXFORD CND IS PLANNING to have a Facebook Peace Page. Do you have the skills to design and organise such a page for the group? If you do, or know someone else who has the skills and would be willing to help, please contact: **Oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop** or **01865 248357**

Membership subscriptions 2023 Please pay your subscription soon!

If you pay your subscription by cheque please can you pay us as soon as possible. Oxford CND needs that money to campaign and send you information and newsletters. We are also very grateful for extra donations.

Subs are very reasonable – £10 or £5 low wage, but are essential for us to continue to campaign. Standing orders can continue as before. Make cheques for 2023 payable to Oxford CND and send to: Membership, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP.

Oxford CND Newsletter by email

Some members already receive the Oxford CND newsletter only by email. If you would also like to receive it only by email, contact: **oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop**

Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

3 Harpsichord Place, Oxford, OX4 1BX.
01865 248357 or oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop
www.oxfordcnd.org.uk

Contributions to the next issue...

Please send letters and items to:
Newsletter, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP
No later than **Sunday April 23rd 2023**