

CND Policy Conference 28th October 2023

Conference motions

1. The increasing nuclear dangers and our work to reverse them

Proposer: Kate Hudson

CND Conference notes:

1. That in June, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute announced that the decades' long trend of nuclear weapons reductions, has gone into reverse. Britain got a special mention, for while it "is not thought to have increased its nuclear weapon arsenal in 2022, the warhead stockpile is expected to grow" in the future. This follows the 2021 decision to increase Britain's warhead limit by over 40 percent.
2. That the British government is increasing spending on the so-called 'defence nuclear enterprise'. As outlined in the government's Defence Command Paper 2023 in July, further to the extra £3 billion over the next two years, already announced in this year's budget, the MoD is receiving "a further £6 billion over the subsequent three years, which will be invested across the defence nuclear enterprise."
3. That the ongoing conflict in Ukraine has increased both the risk of nuclear use and its normalisation in the public consciousness. Inflammatory rhetoric by the Russian president, reported movement of Russian 'tactical' nukes to Belarus, and anticipated movement of US upgraded B61-12 nuclear weapons to Europe – including Lakenheath in Britain – significantly increase these risks.
4. That increasing tensions internationally contribute to global dangers, exacerbated by the AUKUS pact with its widely condemned capacity for nuclear proliferation. Global NATO ambitions, and the assignment of UK nukes to NATO, risk UK involvement in wider conflicts.

In this context, CND Conference resolves to:

1. Increase public awareness of nuclear dangers, the impact of nuclear weapons use, and the impact of public opinion in averting such use.
2. Bring that impact home to our communities, emphasising the return of US nukes to Britain.
3. Oppose the government's role in nuclear escalation, particularly the arsenal increase and increased military nuclear spending.
4. Work to reverse the TUC's position in favour of increased military spending, to restore its support for Defence Diversification, and to provide updated Trident spending figures.
5. Strengthen our movement, rebuild our civil society alliances, and through our new membership strategy – emphasising recruitment, greater member and supporter engagement, to strengthen our activist base.

2. Nuclear and Climate Crisis

Proposer: Labour CND

Conference notes that:

1. In January 2023, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved the hands of the Doomsday clock to 90 seconds to midnight due to the increasing threat of nuclear war.
2. The world has witnessed unprecedented heatwaves from southern Europe, North Africa to Siberia;
3. The UN Secretary General has said the planet is entering an “era of global boiling”;
4. The nuclear power industry is promoting itself as a solution to the climate crisis, and is seeing a worrying renaissance of support particularly in the UK.

Conference deplors the resurgence of nuclear power and its clear links to nuclear weapons and other military uses such as in the AUKUS nuclear powered attack submarines.

Conference believes that any limited job creation arising out of the development of nuclear reactors for whatever their use will not help stop drive to nuclear war or address the climate crisis. Further that the excessive cost of the proposed civilian nuclear programme is more than a financial one given the environmental and health impacts of uranium mining not least on indigenous communities, and the legacy nuclear waste leaves for current and future generations.

Conference resolves to:

1. make clear the links between nuclear power and nuclear weapons
2. campaign against nuclear power as a false solution to the climate crisis
3. support a national campaign against the AUKUS project including with trade unions in the UK and internationally with a particular focus on Derby and nuclear related jobs at Rolls Royce
4. promote a program for defence diversification and transition from fossil fuels as part of an industrial strategy for jobs that address climate change and human need rather than production for death
5. reaffirm that peace is an overriding priority to averting both a nuclear war and accelerating the climate crisis
6. play an active leadership role in the climate and trade union movement to fight for the aims of peace and climate justice, including in wider political campaigning work.

3. Depleted Uranium (DU) munitions

Proposer: Rochdale and Littleborough Peace Group

Conference notes that the UK government has gone ahead with supplying Ukraine with DU munitions and has been training Ukrainian troops to use them

Conference resolves to:

1. Call on the government to make the Ukrainians aware of the UNEP leaflet, 'Depleted Uranium Awareness'.
2. Write to the government Minister of Defence to ask for his response to the UNEP leaflet which outlines the potential dangers to both military and civilians when DU munitions are fired.

3. Write to the Leaders of the Labour, Lib Dem and Green Parties requesting their positions on DU munitions.

4. The UK and the Militarisation of Space

Proposer: Dave Webb

CND Conference notes:

1. The UK has recognised space as a new warfighting domain and is working closely with US Space Command.
2. The UK is currently looking to host a powerful radar which would form part of US Space Force's 'Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability' (DARC) system. DARC would also include two other radars sites in Texas and Australia.
3. A possible location for the radar is Cawdor Barracks near Brawdy, in Pembrokeshire.
4. The radar would consist of 27 large antenna dishes and would be used to "detect, track, identify and characterize objects" in Geosynchronous orbit, where a lot of military surveillance and communications satellites are stationed.
5. This would be an enhancement to US Space Surveillance Network (SSN), which includes the missile defence and satellite tracking radar at Fylingdales and would contribute to the US Space Domain Awareness (SDA) programme.
6. SDA is a requirement of the US military's desire to maintain its space technology advantage and to dominate and control outer space.
7. The failed Virgin Orbit launch from Newquay in Cornwall in January was carrying 2 dual military satellite systems.
8. Military satellite launches will soon be possible from a launch site being constructed by Lockheed Martin on the Isle of Unst in the Shetlands and other spaceports are seeking approval.

Conference resolves to:

1. Reaffirm opposition to an Arms Race in Outer Space.
2. Press the UK to uphold the Outer Space Treaty commitment that the "use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and shall be the province of all [hu]mankind".
3. Produce more materials on the role of the UK in a Space Arms Race.
4. Strengthen support and actions at military bases associated with the militarisation of space.
5. Continue to support the Global Network's "Keep Space for Peace" week in October.

5. Peace campaigning at a time of war

Proposer: London CND

CND notes:

1. The war in Ukraine continues, and at a time of war peace organizations must call for an end to the bloodshed and negotiations above all else, rather than analysing the causes of the war or suggesting what outcome the negotiations should lead to.
2. In the world today there are two completing blocks – the "West" with organizations such as NATO, G7, and World Bank on the one hand; and the "East" with organizations such as

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) on the other. The war in Ukraine continues because the governments in both blocks have not agreed to end it.

3. Objectives of CND, including the removal of tactical nuclear weapons from Europe and ultimately world-wide nuclear disarmament, will be achieved only if governments in both blocks accept it. This requires not merely an end to the bloodshed in Ukraine, but trust.
4. Trust is also required to prevent climate change, because the economic transformation necessary is global and will require a redeployment of resources away from weapons and the military by all governments.

CND resolves:

1. To urge the UK government to a) support a ceasefire in Ukraine followed by negotiations; b) not supply weapons which will escalate the war; c) not supply further depleted uranium weapons which will continue to harm civilians long after the war is over.
2. To campaign within the trades union for a rejuvenation of UK's high-tech and manufacturing industries through production of goods that are useful, that people want to buy, and that enable the economic transformation necessary to prevent climate change, and not through the production of weapons, which is funded solely by taking public money away from health, education and infrastructure.
3. Where possible, to participate as CND in lobbying and fringe events that take the message of peace and disarmament to meetings of international organizations whether West or East, for example to both G7 and BRICS.

6. Nuclear exploitation of the global south

Proposer: London CND

CND 2023 conference is aware that in order to develop nuclear weapons:

1. so-called first world states including Britain exploited the human and natural resources of the global south and that this has resulted in long-term detrimental impacts on the communities and ecosystems concerned;
2. exploitation covered parts of Africa and Asia, many Pacific islands, as well as indigenous communities of Australia and New Zealand;
3. activities included uranium mining, atmospheric, underground, and underwater nuclear testing, and nuclear waste dumping; as well as setting up nuclear-capable military facilities and the use of land sea and air space for military exercises with a nuclear component which still continue today;
4. nuclear exploitation has resulted in the destruction of ecosystems and indigenous communities being forced off their land; and
5. indigenous communities have also suffered long-term ill health and disabilities from radiation poisoning, many of which continue into the present.

Conference recognises that:

1. the overwhelmingly majority of those affected are people of colour;

2. nuclear proliferation cannot be separated from racism; and
3. nuclear exploitation is an area of concern in the Black Lives Matter movement.

Conference decides that CND will help highlight nuclear exploitation of the global south by:

1. seeking to work with appropriate partners in Britain and internationally to highlight this aspect of nuclear weapons;
2. holding a webinar on nuclear exploitation;
3. producing a briefing outlining the ways in which nuclear weapons states have exploited the global south and continue to do so;
4. including global south speakers in CND webinars, meetings, and events as appropriate; and
5. encouraging CND groups to work with local partners on this issue.

7. Opposing the push by the US and Britain into nuclear armed bloc confrontation

Proposer: CND International Advisory Group

Conference notes this year's:

1. Britain-Japan agreement, potentially involving British forces directly in a clash between Japan and China over disputed islands (11/1/23); and the UK-Japan-Italy Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) to build 6th generation fighter jets (15/3/23), both abetting Japan's repositioning as a major military power;
2. AUKUS summit (13/3/23) agreeing the supply of nuclear-powered submarines to Australia 'built to a UK design' in violation of the NPT;
3. Integrated Review Refresh (13/3/23) revised to counter the 'strategic threats' from Russia and China, with corresponding military budget increases, including £3bn to modernise nuclear capabilities and support the delivery of AUKUS; and £2bn to GCAP to 2025 (14/4/23);
4. new Atlantic Declaration (8/6/23) consolidating the US-UK alliance, advancing cooperation in artificial intelligence;
5. NATO summit (12/7/23) casting China as challenging its security, and advancing a new Atlantic-Pacific partnership.

Conference considers that:

1. whilst the Ukraine war destabilises Europe, the US and Britain are also using the situation to actively destabilise the Asia Pacific driving a New Cold War bloc confrontation.
2. this confrontation stands in the way of climate control cooperation; driving up the arms race, and pushing the arms control and non-proliferation system towards complete collapse;
3. Britain now may be drawn directly into conflict with Russia and China, risking widening wars and conflict between nuclear-armed states;
4. opposition to these dangers, especially from countries of the Global South, is growing.

Conference resolves to:

1. reach out to appropriate groups from the Global South, as well as Japan and Australia in international campaigning (i) for a ceasefire and peace negotiations in Ukraine; (ii) building opposition to AUKUS; (iii) to counter Cold War confrontation through the development of the common security agenda;
2. ensure that the nuclear threat of a New Cold War - the role of the UK government, the cost of strategic weapons, the jeopardising of international climate cooperation - are linked firmly into CND's trade union and grass roots campaigning.

8. CND should challenge the UK government for its failures to comply with International Law**Proposer: East Lancashire CND****Conference notes:**

1. The failure of nuclear weapons states to engage with the initiatives that have been taken by the United Nations General Assembly towards the abolition of nuclear weapons such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
2. Nuclear Weapons States try to stop other states from acquiring nuclear weapons while they proliferate themselves.
3. The UK maintains a threat of a first strike policy in relation to nuclear weapons.
4. A threat to launch a nuclear attack contravenes the Principles of a Just War.

Conference further notes:

1. Nuclear weapons are fuelling a growing arms industry and heightening worldwide militarisation.
2. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has at the start of 2023 set the Doomsday Clock at 90 minutes to midnight, the closest we have ever been to a global catastrophe.

Conference asserts:

1. All Nuclear Weapon States have a moral and legal obligation to comply with International Law.
2. The only solution that will ensure the safety of our planet is to ban all nuclear weapons and phase out nuclear power, as chemical and biological weapons have been banned.

Conference resolves to instruct National Council to consider legal initiatives, challenging the British Government for:

- a. its failure to comply with the conditions of the Non Proliferation Treaty which it signed in 1968, for example by proceeding with the Trident Replacement Programme and through its recent decision in the Integrated Defence Review to increase UK nuclear weapons stockpiles.
- b. its failure to engage with the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which was established with the participation of 137 countries at the UN General Assembly in 2017, and which came into force as a legally binding Treaty in 2021.

c. its failure to comply with International Humanitarian Law under Article 2, paragraph 4 and Article 51 of the United Nations Charter which came into force in October 1945 after six catastrophic years of World War II and the detonation of two atomic bombs on Japan.

Conference further resolves to work with like-minded organisations to identify a financially sustainable programme of work in this area.

Proposer: CND's International Advisory Group
Title: Building opposition to NATO expansion

Conference notes that:

1. NATO's continued expansion, with Finland joining in April, Swedish membership imminent and Ukraine's still being pursued.
2. The increased military budgets of NATO states across Europe, reaching €316 billion in 2022.
3. Poland's repeated calls to host US nuclear weapons.
4. The authorisation by the US to start delivery of B61-12 bombs to NATO bases, thought to include Lakenheath.
5. Russia's stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus in July.
6. The failure of NATO's summit in Vilnius to offer any peace initiative to resolve the Ukraine conflict, instead reasserting its global expansionist policy and the central role of British and US nuclear weapons in the alliance.

Conference further notes:

1. Large scale protests in February across Europe, including Italy and Germany, against the escalating war in Ukraine and defence spending increases.
2. Polling in June showing 79 per cent of the Finnish population oppose the hosting of US nuclear weapons in their country.
3. Plans for large-scale protests in New York in 2024 at NATO's 75th anniversary summit.

Conference welcomes:

- The launch of new alliance in the run up to the NATO summit, Global Women United for Peace Against NATO, which organised three days of debate and protest in Brussels, home of NATO's HQ, bringing together women from across the world.
- The repeated calls for peace and dialogue by UN General Secretary, the Pope, initiatives from political leaderships in the Global South, including Indonesia, China, Brazil, and a peace delegation of African leaders.

Conference resolves to:

1. Reaffirm our opposition to NATO expansion and for the withdrawal of all NATO nuclear weapons from Europe, and all Russian nuclear weapons from Belarus.
2. Strengthen our coordinated actions with peace and anti-nuclear campaigns against NATO across Europe.
3. Promote and mobilise for the international protests in New York in 2024 as part of our work to strengthen the international movement against NATO.
4. Continue to build links with peace movements and progressive leaderships in the Global South offering an alternative to war and NATO's expansionist nuclear threat based on peace and global cooperation.

Proposer: Labour CND

Title: Military spending and the cost of living crisis

CND conference notes:

1. the cost of living crisis is worse in the UK than most other developed economies, with inflation at its highest for 40 years; and
2. the UK is set to be the worst performing of all G20 economies according to the International Monetary Fund, shrinking by 0.3% in 2023 compared to US and Euro-zone growth of 1.6% and 0.8%.

3. the Chancellor's Spring Budget announced an additional £2 billion in 2024 and further £3bn in 2025 for the Ministry of Defence's inflation-proofed budget, much of which will go to nuclear;
4. in addition to current investment levels, Defence Command Paper 2023 published in July provides for a further £6 billion over the three years from 2026 which will be invested in 'defence nuclear enterprise', comprised of Trident nuclear weapons system and nuclear-powered submarines ; and
5. Britain was the fourth largest military spender in 2021 according to SIPRI, and is the highest military spender in West and Central Europe.

At a time when public sector pay increases are set well below the rate of inflation, Conference:

1. regrets the Labour leadership's support for the increase in military spending;
2. welcomes Labour CND's campaign to reverse this;
3. applauds those local Labour Parties which have opposed increasing military spending;
4. welcomes the launch of Labour CND's lobby against increases in military spending; and
5. calls on CND regions, areas and groups to draw attention to this lobby.