

Merseyside CND Newsletter



Autumn 2025

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Editorial—MCND CO-Chair, Peter Wilson

**The
Yellow
Peril!**

Back to the Future

Or

When will they ever learn?

**The
Red
Menace!**

Here we go Again

For those of us who remember the first Cold War, with its scare mongering, paranoia and xenophobia, the sight of our Government sleeping walking into a second is profoundly depressing. Having learnt nothing, our leaders are once again reviving the old militarism, renewing the arms race and warning us that, if are not prepared to fight, we might as well start learning Russian!

Peddling a lie

Unforgivably, the Government is also trying to tell us that a third World War is winnable. The UK's Strategic Defence Review promises a "battle hardened nation" capable of sustaining and winning a world war. That it is a lie; in a nuclear age, no world war is winnable. It is criminally irresponsible to meekly follow the US/Nato into an unaffordable and unwinnable confrontation with, Russia, China and Iran while ignoring the real issues that threaten our national security, such as the climate crisis, increasing inequality and the rise of the far right.

There is a better way!

The Peace movement led by CND's Vice President, Kate Hudson has produced an Alternative Defence Review. Learn more overleaf.

In case you thought we were exaggerating...

Nuclear missile 'cover-up' fears as secret pact allows US to bring deadly weapons to UK (Mirror 6April 2025)

America prepares for a new nuclear arms race (Economist September 2024)

Trump directs nuclear weapons testing to resume for the first time in over 30 years. (BBC News October 2025)

Military gap year for UK school leavers to be introduced before general election. (itv News Nov 2025)

Welder army of ex-offenders could help UK ramp up plans for war readiness (the i paper Sept 2025)

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- ♦ A report about National CND's 2025 Conference from Cathy Page MCND (page 7)
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- ♦ Song Of Those Who Died In Vain—Poem by Primo Levi (page 9)

The Alternative Defence Review

Peace and Social Justice not Cold War Paranoia

The Review calls for a major shift in the UK's defence and foreign policy, away from militarisation, and arms exports and towards a peaceful and ethical security strategy, sustained by open public debate and effective democratic oversight.

UK's Present Policies - Immoral and Unsustainable

The Review points out that recent events, such as the war in Gaza, highlight the destructive impact of militarization. The UK's continuing arming of Israel facilitates the genocide there and undermines the UK's stated commitment to human rights and international law. Similarly, supplying arms to Gulf states contributes to serious human rights abuses and destabilises already fragile regions.

Common Security

The Review proposes an approach based on common security, where no country's safety is achieved at the expense of others. Linked to this is the idea of human security, which puts peoples's rights, needs and dignity before military power. Peace, it argues, is best achieved through cooperation, justice and shared wellbeing—not through weapons and alliances that maintain the status quo. The Review proposes five key actions:

1. **Cut military spending** within a framework that ensures a fair economic transition
- 2 **Fully implement global climate change policies**, especially those advocated by the United Nations and Global South.
- 3 **Actively support peaceful solutions** in Ukraine and the Middle East.
- 4 **Resist** the creation of new military conflict zones.
5. **End arms exports** to countries engaged in wars or major human rights violations.

Genuine Security

The Review stresses that genuine security means more than military strength. It requires tackling modern global threats such as climate collapse, pandemics, cyber attacks and growing inequality. The UK's projected spend on

military equipment (at least £288.6 billion over the next decade) should be redirected towards diplomacy, development, healthcare, education and environmental resilience to achieve long term, sustainable and ethical security for the UK.

The Employment Myth

The Review also dispels the myth of the employment benefits of the defence industry and promotes peacebuilding as a chance to transform the UK economy. According to a Scottish Government analysis, military spending has one of the lowest employment multipliers, while health ranks highest and is 2.5 times more effective at generating jobs. Other sectors—such as agriculture, energy, transport and construction—also outperform military spending in job creation.

A practical path to a safe future

The Review supports creating decent, socially valuable jobs; funding strong public services; rebuilding infrastructure; and investing in education and sustainable/green technologies. **A peaceful foreign policy is not a utopian dream—it's the only practical and sustainable route to a fair and safe future.**

Copies of the Alternative Defence Review can be ordered from CND's website cnduk.org



Out and About with MCND

MCND marks the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima

The Shadow Display

Wednesday 6.8.2025, Merseyside CND and supporters marked the 80th Anniversary of the horrendous nuclear bombing of the city of Hiroshima. The atomic bomb struck at 8.15am as people were setting off for work and children were on their way to school, so we set up our display at 8am outside Lime Street Station in Liverpool to meet the commuters entering and leaving the station. The display of paper shadow silhouettes representing bodies of those killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, attracted a lot of attention, and we were able to distribute many leaflets rejecting nuclear weapons.



The Laying of the Wreath

At 10.45am we assembled in the Peace Garden, St John's Gardens, to remember those who lost their lives, or were injured, in Hiroshima, and in Nagasaki when the US dropped a second nuclear bomb on that city three days later.

In addition to readings and peace songs, the event was attended by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool Cllr Barbara Murray, who addressed the gathering and laid a Wreath of White Poppies in memory of the victims.

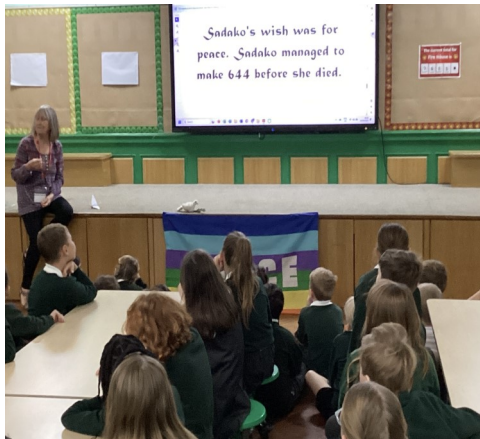




BAE Systems Shipyard, Barrow-Anti Nuke Demo

Joan Goodier and I represented MCND at CND's National Demo at BAE Systems shipyard, Barrow on 22 March. Bright sunny day and there was a 'Colours day' in the town with dancing and maypoles and much cultural activity. We circulated the crowds with leaflets about the Trident system and for a town that makes the submarines there were lots of support and we had many good conversations.

After leafletting we marched through the town to the bridge over the dock where passing traffic honked in support and we had a number of excellent speakers.. Good trip and an encouragement for the Lancs group who organised it. There was a bus load from Yorkshire and another from Manchester. (Cathy Page, MCND)



Sadako's Story - Peace Education in Schools

As part of CND's Peace Education initiative, MCND's Barbara Hardcastle led a Peace Crane making session for 40 children at Liscard Primary School. Telling the story of Sadako Sasaki who set out to create a thousand origami cranes when dying of leukemia caused by radiation from the Hiroshima bomb. Barbara is happy to do sessions in local schools.



Gaza -The Dead Children

As part of MCND's continuing support for the campaign against Israel's genocide in Gaza, MCND took part in a profoundly moving ceremony in Liverpool City Centre, naming the thousands of children murdered in the destruction of Gaza. Each pair of shoes represents a young life lost.



Remembrance Day November 2025

MCND honouring all victims of war, 1914 –2025

The day before Remembrance Day, MCND held a stall promoting the white poppy and its role in the anti-war movement. A very positive response especially from young people prompting many stimulating conversations.



Wreath laying, a minutes silence. readings, Poetry and music at MCND's Remembrance Day ceremony in The Peace Garden, St Georges Gardens Liverpool

Other MCND Activities



Labour Party Conference

MCND helped staff a CND stall at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool this year. Unfortunately, there was very little interest from the delegates, though those we met when we were leafletting outside the Centre seemed more receptive. Inside, however, Starmer rules (OK?)



UNISON National Delegate Conference

Jan Harper, Pax Christi and MCND helping to staff the CND stall at the UNISON (public service union) National Delegate Conference in Liverpool in June.

Again interest was limited but those that stopped at the stall were actually very interested in the Alternative Defence Review and we ran out of copies.

PEACE NOT WAR Liverpool Public Meeting



As part of Lakenheath for Peace's tour, Kate Hudson, CND's Vice President spoke at a MCND Organized public meeting at Friends Meeting House in September.

Kate stressed the dangers of a new Cold War and the folly of the UK's Defence Strategy with its emphasis on militarism, re-armament and increased nuclear arms spending. She promoted the CND inspired Alternative Defence Strategy.

MCND and The Green Party also spoke at the meeting. Attendance was disappointing but a lively Q&A session afterwards.



National Conference 2025

This year AGM and policy conference were online. The AGM was quickly over with all major posts being filled. Sophie Bolt the new CEO of National CND did an excellent presentation of all the events of the past year. National CND really do work exceptionally hard arranging demos, arranging Caroline Lucas and Jeremy Corbett to attend the 80th anniversary of Hiroshima in Japan etc.

The Policy conference is to decide what are the main priorities for campaigning in the next year.

Policy 1 – Aimed at campaigns halting Britain's nuclear expansion with Starmer's plan to buy nuclear capable F35 aircraft at vast expense which will cut into all social, education, health, justice systems spending. These will focus particularly on F35s at Marham air base and USA nukes at Lakenheath.

Policy 2 was about the militarisation of Space – talk in the USA of a missile defence shield (Bush tried one years ago) but more and more the US is planning to make space the next battlefield. American Company Lockheed Martin has suggested missile defence screen for UK. One of the big problems of militarisation of space will be all the satellites which we rely on now for our defence but also for the internet which is used worldwide for weather, trade, flying aircraft, driving cars etc. CND resolved to persuade our government to work to strengthen the Outer Space Treaty; oppose missile defence; oppose military bases associated with this e.g. DARC in Pembrokeshire, and support 'Keep Space for peace.'

Policy 3 – Concerned European rearmament to please Trump and in opposing Russia in the never ending war in Ukraine. UK talking of being war ready and spending billions more on armaments rather than finding a diplomatic solution to the problem. At base it is a problem founded on NATO expansion into Eastern Europe which threatens Russia's security. (cf the Cuban missile crisis which threatened US security). CND to campaign against the increase in Armaments and putting UK on a war footing.

Policy 4 – Building, together with a number of other movements inc. Trade Unions, to form a combined movement 'We Demand Change'. Other groups involved are Peoples Assembly, Peace and Justice Project. Disabled people against cuts, Palestine Solidarity, Strike Map, Fuel Poverty action, Greener jobs alliance; Campaign against Climate change, Stand up to Racism. CND resolves to support the We Demand Change movement

Policy 5 – CND and the TUC have produced a booklet The Alternative Defence Review (ADR) – At the TUC conference recently the TUC resolved to support campaign against nuclear weapons. The governments defence review sets out war preparations, pretending that Armaments factories make more jobs – (but Green technologies make many more jobs). Militarisation of Education including cadet corps in state schools etc. CND resolves to raise awareness in Unions about the ADR and work to increase awareness in the general public, to link more tightly with unions re nuclear disarmament.

Policy 6 – Was to hold more demonstrations at embassies of nuclear armed nations. This was only partially accepted as CND did not have the staff to run these sorts of demos.

Policy 7 – Concerned promoting the ADR which was already covered in a previous policy

Policy 8 – The threat posed by Reform and the Fascist far right. Associated with racism, white supremacy, CND proposes to oppose far right policies and work with 'Stand up to Racism' and Stress 'welfare not warfare' and the link between services depletion and rising military spending.

Policy 9 – The implications of the Israeli /US bombing of Iran. CND resolves for progress on a Nuclear Free Zone in the Middle East, noting that Israel is the only nuclear state in the Middle East and that Iran has signed the NPT which Israel has not .

Report by CathyPage, MCND

WARS DO NOT BENEFIT ORDINARY PEOPLE!

By Neville Grundy, MCND

Whipping Up Fear

Most ordinary people do not want war and do not want to kill people they don't know with the risk of being killed themselves, until some ruthless, power-hungry demagogue deliberately whips up mass fear and hatred in order to satisfy his or her (usually his) thirst for power, domination and control.

Benefitting Ordinary People?

War does not benefit ordinary people. In 1918, the spending power of the pound had halved compared to 1914. In 1945, the spending power of the pound was two thirds of that in 1939.*

After the wars, ordinary people suffered from the Great Depression (after WW1) and from Austerity (after WW2). Both recessions didn't seriously affect the rich very much, but they reinforced widespread poverty for many years after the end of the conflicts. The famous 'Roaring Twenties' passed most ordinary people by.

Betraying our heroes

All this, despite the promise of a "Land Fit For Heroes", but no matter because the soldiers had served their purpose and the Establishment had no further use for them; consequently many were shunted into low wages, poverty, unemployment, poor housing with all their attendant problems.

* Calculated using the Bank of England Inflation Calculator



Thoughts From The Trenches

The last word should go to Harry Patch, the last British soldier from WW1

"I could never understand why my country could call me from a peacetime job and train me to go to France and try to kill a man I never knew".

"Politicians who took us to war should have been given the guns and told to settle their differences themselves, instead of organising nothing better than legalised mass murder".

"Why should the British government call me up and take me out to a battlefield to shoot a man I never knew, whose language I couldn't speak?".



Wilfred Owen Memorial

Song of those who died in vain

Sit down and bargain

All you like, grizzled old foxes.

We'll wall you up in a splendid palace

With food, wine, good beds and a good fire

Provided that you discuss, negotiate

For our and your children's lives.

May all the wisdom of the universe

Converge to bless your minds

And guide you in the maze.

But outside in the cold we will be waiting for you,

The army of those who died in vain,

We of the Marne, of Montecassino, Treblinka, Dresden and Hiroshima.

And with us will be

The leprous and the people with trachoma,

The Disappeared Ones of Buenos Aires,

Dead Cambodians and dying Ethiopians,

The Prague negotiators,

The bled-dry of Calcutta

The innocents slaughtered in Bologna.

Heaven help you if you come out disagreeing:

You'll be clutched tight in our embrace.

We are invincible because we are the conquered,

Invulnerable because already dead;

We laugh at your missiles.

Sit down and bargain

Until your tongues are dry.

If the havoc and the shame continue

We'll drown you in our putrefaction.

Primo Levi (1985)

Primo Levi (1919-1987) was a Jewish Italian chemist, partisan, survivor Of Auschwitz Concentration Camp and writer.

The poem is powerful anti-war statement, reflecting his own experience as a Holocaust survivor.

The poem is written for the conquered and the slaughtered of all wars. For Marne, Treblinka, Dresden and Hiroshima, substitute Vietnam, Afghanistan, Gaza, Sudan, Bosnia and Ukraine and it is as relevant and powerful as the day it was written.



Birkenhead CND

Haven't been meeting except at stalls. We held a May Fair in Ashton Park, West Kirkby and Cool Heswell Fair in June. August we had a stall in Birkenhead for Nagasaki Day. In November we held a stall in Birkenhead for Global Climate Action Day reminding people the vast increase in defence spending not only has a large carbon footprint but breaks the NPT Treaty.

If you would like to help, please contact
cath.page@phonecoop.coop

Wallasey CND

Wallasey CND as a group have not met for a couple of months, but members have supported all the events organized by MCND. The Wallasey CND AGM will take place on Sat 24th January at 2pm at 4 Taunton Road Wallasey, followed by drink and nibbles. All welcome. Call Barbara on 07907-022467

Merseyside Pax Christi

Meets on the second Thursday of the month at 2pm at the Quaker meeting house School Lane
Next meeting December 12th

Merseyside CND 50 Club

£5 per month; £50 monthly draw, Annual draw £250, £100, £50. April, Rita Walker; May, Lorna Froome; June, Lyn Henry July **Annual Draw** Hardcastle £250, Angela Lansley £100 and £50 Terry Irving donated to Wallasey CND; July, Lyn Henry; August, Angela Wylie; Sept, Ruth Mullins; Oct, Alan Derick

Contact CND for details
Merseysidecnd@gmail.com
151 Dale St. L2 2AH

Quotation Corner

Voltaire - An Enlightened Sceptic

Voltaire (1694-1778) was a French Enlightenment writer philosopher satirist and historian. Voltaire championed reason, tolerance and freedom of speech and was therefore persecuted by the French Establishment and the Catholic church.

Here is a selection of his more cynical aphorisms.

God is a comedian playing to an audience that is too afraid to laugh.

If there is life on other planets, then the earth is the Universe's insane asylum.

Those who can make you believe absurdities, can make you commit atrocities.

No opinion is worth burning your neighbour for.

Beware of the words "internal security" for they are the eternal cry of the oppressor.

It is difficult to free fools from the chains they revere.

Prejudices are what fools use for reason.

MERSEYSIDE CND MEMBERSHIP FORM

To receive regular newsletters please complete form and return to address below.

Name..... Phone.....

email.....

Address.....

I/we wish to *join/ rejoin Merseyside CND.

Subscription rates: *waged-£5/ family-£6/ unwaged or youth (under 22) £2.

I/we *would/ would not also like a new member's pack at a cost of £1.

I/we understand that Merseyside CND needs funds for its campaigns and donate £____

Total Enclosed £..... (Please make cheques payable to Merseyside CND)

Signed..... Date.....

(* Delete as appropriate)
Merseyside CND, 151 Dale St, Liverpool L2 2AH

MCND Co-ord:
usually meets first
Wednesday of each
month.14:00 at the
MCND Office 151
Dale St. L2 2AH
All members
welcome

