

Merseyside CND Newsletter



April/May/June 2013

54 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool L3 5SD 0151 702 6974 mcnd@care4free.net www.mcnd.org.uk

"World leaders have become too focused on the spread of nuclear weapons instead of their dismantling. There are no right hands for wrong weapons"

Ban Ki-Moon

**STOP
FOOLING
WITH NUCLEAR
WEAPONS**



Aldermaston

April 1st

12noon to 2pm

Coach departs 7.15am Mount Pleasant L3 opposite multistorey car park.

8am pick up Chester train station

£20 waged/£10 unwaged

Cheques to Merseyside C.N.D.

0151 702 6974/mcnd@care4free.net

54 Mount Pleasant, L3 5SD



Bruce Kent is coming to Merseyside - April 23rd

His itinerary

1.30pm Birkenhead 6th Form College

2.30pm Upton Hall School

4.30-5.30 Open meeting - The Lauries
Community Centre, Claughton Rd,
Birkenhead

Bring your friends

7.30pm Open meeting - Jack Jones
House, 1, Islington L3 8EG

With other speakers

Bring your friends

See overleaf for further info about the tour

Peace & Ecology Festival Saturday June 29th



Bruce Kent's Scrap Trident Tour

Throughout April Bruce Kent will be hitting the road on behalf of CND, spreading the Scrap Trident message across England.

He's working with a range of different organisations to highlight the wasteful spending on Trident when so much investment is needed to eradicate poverty, boost people-friendly development and make our world a safer and more peaceful place to live. You can help out by asking your MP to sign EDM 96.

Below is his message about why cutting Trident now is so essential

Dear Friends

You may like to hear directly from me about what I am hoping for from CND's national Scrap Trident Tour. It seems to me that we, as a country, are towards replacing - at vast expense - 'our' present Trident submarines and their murderous missiles and warheads with a new generation, planned to last for another 30 years.

Despite majority public opinion against, there is no clearly articulated political opposition to replacement, except from CND and other disarmament groups. So the Government is just attempting to go ahead with its project through a series of small steps - all of which will make it very difficult, if not impossible, to say NO when a vote comes in 2016.

Yet many many groups and organisations strongly oppose

the cuts that will make humanitarian work of all sorts so much more difficult. We are supposed to 'be in this together'. We are not. The cuts will hit the poorest hardest.

But the connection between the £100 billion to be spent on Trident and these savage cuts is not being made even by charities and NGOs that work in hardest-hit sectors. Nor is any link being made with our obligation, as a country, to negotiate the elimination of all nuclear weapons. If we replace Trident, in any shape or form, other countries will take the message from us that we think nuclear weapons improve our security. It's an open invitation to get their own. It's hypocrisy to say we can have them but they can't. I want, through this Tour, to help to make the connection. I hope the petition will go around the country and not only to the places on the Tour. I want Labour Party 'top brass' to realise that getting rid of Trident can be here - as well as in Scotland - a vote winner. I want anti-poverty NGOs of all sorts to join us in opposing this disgraceful squandering of public money which has everything to do with national pride and nothing to do with national security. Nuclear weapons are no answer to any threats we actually face.

I hope that in the places I will visit there will be opportunity for outdoor speaking and petition signing. Opportunity to meet local opinion formers and the media. Perhaps a visit to a sixth form college: plenty of advance publicity; an exhibition in a library; a church gathering or trade union meeting; an indoor meeting at which there will be lots of time for questions and forward planning. The possibilities are endless.

I also hope that others will plan their own No to Trident campaigns this spring or perhaps at some other time this year. In this campaign at least we can be 'all in this together'.

Get active in any way you can.

Greetings

Bruce Kent

Global Day of Action on Military Spending April 15th

In the latest figures, world military expenditure reached an all-time high of \$1.7 trillion. The UK ranked fourth, spending £39 billion each year. The government protects the military budget, while subjecting vital public services to drastic spending cuts. For too long we have lived with the myth that high military spending maintains peace, creates jobs and combats terrorism. The many groups coming together under the GDAMS banner believe that in reality it prevents the money being spent on

tackling real challenges such as relieving poverty, improving health, and protecting the environment. Military responses, with their real and hidden costs, do not help; they threaten human security. Many demonstrations are taking place on April 15th including at nuclear sites.

Join Merseyside CND

outside the Armed Forces Offices in North John St. central Liverpool at 12 noon - 2pm on 15th. You could dress up as a wounded soldier or carry your own message on a placard. We will have leaflets to hand to passers by. For more info contact Andy in the CND Office:

0151 702 6974 mcnd@care4free.net

There will be a meeting on 15th April in the House of Commons at which Caroline Lucas MP, Kate Hudson and John Hilary of War on Want will speak organised by the Movement for the Abolition of War.

Much more information about the Global Day of Action on Military Spending is available from :

<http://demilitarize.org.uk/>

"The world spends more on the military in a month than it does on development all year, and four hours of military spending is equal to the total budgets of all international disarmament and non-proliferation organisations combined"

Remembering Chernobyl April

26th 1986

**The Anniversary they would rather we
forgot**

Chernobyl devastated Belarus. Half a million people were forced to flee their homes, never to return and thyroid cancer rose more than 100 times in the most affected regions of that country. Today, 27 years later, babies are still being born with cancer or genetic defects.

Governments and the nuclear industry have combined to

minimise the death toll and to discourage proper research into the continuing impact of Chernobyl, just as they have tried to do last year with the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan. And they still haven't found a way of safely storing highly radioactive nuclear waste.

Merseyside CND Film Show

Saturday April 27th 2.00-4.00pm

Venue: 'Somewhere Else' 2nd floor above News from Nowhere, 96 Bold St. (Lift available)

Films to be shown are '*Chernobyl Heart*' featuring Adi Roche - who founded the Chernobyl Children's Project, and '*Seconds From Disaster - Fukushima*'

Fukushima:

The Death Knell for Nuclear Energy?

Ellen Teague

Nuclear energy was described as a 'Pandora's Box' by Columban ecotheologian Sean McDonagh at the November launch in London of his latest book - '*FUKUSHIMA: The Death Knell for Nuclear Energy?*' "The nuclear industry began with weapons of mass destruction", he said, "and I would argue that civilian nuclear power is almost as dangerous". He referred here particularly to nuclear waste, pointing out that, "no place on Earth is considered a safe repository for plutonium, which must be minded for several hundred thousand years". He condemned placing the custodial responsibility of these dangerous wastes on future generations for centuries to come, suggesting that, "we must consider this matter to be an ethical issue".

He called for investment in nuclear power to be diverted into investment into cleaner, safer and more localised renewable energies such as solar, wind and wave power. This would go alongside educational campaigns and technologies to reduce energy

consumption and deal with peak energy periods.

Sean felt that the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan during March 2011 has again shown us that nuclear reactors are fundamentally dangerous. In his view, none of the world's 435 nuclear reactors are immune to human errors, natural disasters, or any of the many other serious incidents that could cause an accident. More than 150,000 people who used to live near Fukushima remain displaced from their homes. However, he felt that, ultimately, economic considerations will be the death knell of the nuclear industry, with the huge expense of setting up new power stations and decommissioning them. In addition, they are uninsurable, so if there are accidents the costs are likely to be met from the public purse. He dismissed nuclear power as a route to reducing carbon emissions in the light of Climate Change. "From mining uranium to decommissioning nuclear power stations the nuclear industry carries an often hidden carbon emissions toll", he said.

Bruce Kent, Vice-President of Pax Christi and of CND, pointed out that, "Britain got nuclear power in order to make bombs". Some nuclear materials, in particular highly enriched plutonium and uranium, may

be used for civil and military purposes, and in all countries possessing nuclear weapons progress in civil nuclear science has benefited arms development, and vice versa. Bruce highlighted the proposed massive expenditure of around £67 billion to clean up Sellafield and £80 billion to renew Britain's Trident nuclear missile system, underlining that nuclear is not cheap. "There is a massive need for public education on these issues", he said, "and for agencies to work together to tackle them".

During discussion it emerged that the employment in North-West England of many Catholics in civilian and military nuclear establishments has meant that challenging the morality of the nuclear industry has often fallen on unsympathetic ears in Catholic circles. Yet, in the light of the Fukushima disaster, the Vatican changed its policy on supporting nuclear energy in October 2011 when it declared that nuclear power was neither cheap nor safe. Many Catholic bishops' conferences around the world have also rejected nuclear power, including Japan, Korea, Philippines, India, Germany, and Canada.

£10.99 From Columban JPIC Office
on 020 8202 2555. ISBN 978-1-85607-784-2

"There are 437 nuclear power reactors in 31 countries around the world. The number of repositories for high-level radioactive waste? Zero. The typical lifespan of a nuclear power plant is 60 years. The waste from nuclear power is dangerous for up to one million years."

William M. Alley (worked on the US Geological Survey's Yucca Mountain project from 2002 to 2010), and Rosemarie Alley. Both are authors of "Too hot to touch: The problem of high-level nuclear waste". Cambridge University Press

The Children Killed by America's Drones.

"Crimes Against Humanity" committed by Barack H. Obama.

By



Prof Michel Chossudovsky

This is a long list of names of innocent children killed by America's drones (too long to be included here - ed.)

But behind each name there is the face of a child with a family history in a village in a far away country, with a mom and a dad, with brothers and sisters and friends.

Among the list, are infants of 1, 2, 3 and 4 years old.

In some cases brothers and sisters of an entire family are killed.

Four sisters of the Ali Mohammed Nasser family in Yemen were killed. Afrah was 9 years old when she and her three younger sisters Zayda (7 years old), Hoda (5 years old) and Sheika (4 years old) were struck by an American drone.

Ibrahim, a 13 year old boy of the Abdullah Mokbel Salem Louqye family in Yemen was struck by a US drone, together with his younger brother Asmaa (9 years old) and two younger sisters, Salma (4 years old) and Fatima (3 years old)

These children are innocent. They are not different from our own children.

Their lives were taken away at a very young age as part of a military agenda, which claims to be combating "international terrorism"

These drone attacks are extremely precise. We are not dealing with "collateral damage".

Drone operators have the ability of viewing from a computer screen their targets well in advance of a strike.

A family home is referred to as a "structure" or a "building" rather than a house. When they target a home with family members, they kill children. And they know that in advance of the drone strike:

"Bryant saw a flash on the screen: the explosion. Parts of the building collapsed. The child had disappeared. Bryant had a sick feeling in his stomach.

"Did we just kill a kid?" he asked the man sitting next to him.

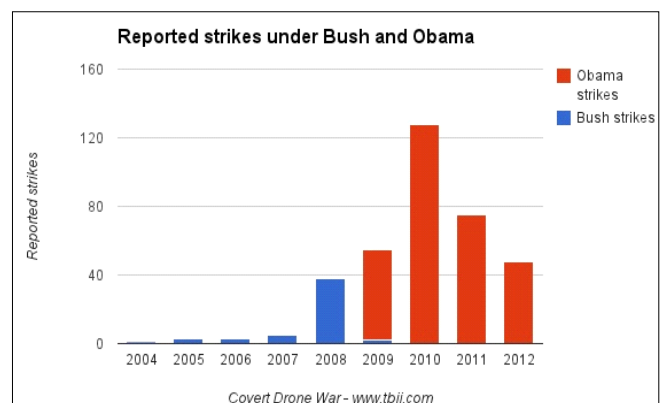
"Yeah, I guess that was a kid," the pilot replied.

"Was that a kid?" they wrote into a chat window on the monitor." (The Woes of an American Drone Operator, Spiegel.de, December 14, 2012)

These children were killed on the orders of the US President and Commander in Chief Barack H. Obama.

The commander in chief sets the military agenda and authorizes these killings to proceed. The killings were quite deliberate. They are categorized as "**crimes against humanity**" under international law.

Those who ordered these drone killings, including the president of the United States, are war criminals under international law and must be indicted and prosecuted. It should be noted that the drone attacks on civilians have increased dramatically during the Obama presidency (see below).



CIA Drone Strikes in Pakistan 2004-2013

Total US strikes: **362**

Obama strikes: **310**

Total reported killed: **2,629-3,461**

Civilians reported killed: **475-891**

Children reported killed: **176**

Total reported injured: **1,267-1,431**

US Covert Action in Yemen 2002-2013

Total confirmed US operations (all): **54-64**

Total confirmed US drone strikes: **42-52**

Possible extra US operations: **135-157**

Possible extra US drone strikes: **77-93**

Total reported killed (all): **374-1,112**

Total civilians killed (all): **72-177**

Children killed (all): **27-37**

US Covert Action in Somalia 2007-2013

Total US strikes: **10-23**

Total US drone strikes: **3-9**

Total reported killed: **58-170**

Civilians reported killed: **11-57**

March and Rally at RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire, Saturday 27th April 2013
Assemble: 12 noon at Lincoln station
March to rally at 2pm at RAF Waddington – the UK's new Centre of Drone Operations

Governments justification for use of Drones

The letter below from The Rt Hon Andrew Robathan MP, Ministry of Defence, London, dated November 2012, was sent to Gordon Nash via his MP Angela Eagle after Gordon wrote to her expressing his concerns about the increasing use of drones:

Thank you for your letter, dated 17 October, on behalf of your constituent, Mr Gordon Nash of 44 School Lane, Wallasey, Merseyside who has expressed concerns at the use of military drones.

The UK operates a range of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System which are predominately used for surveillance and reconnaissance tasks and they provide vital intelligence in support of our forces on the ground. Reaper is the only armed Remotely Piloted Aircraft System used and it has a vital role to play in military operations giving our ground forces the vital information they need to stay one step ahead of the enemy. Whether for targeting the Taliban or supporting troops on patrol, their ability to loiter over and survey areas for enemy activity and then feed back images and videos in real time means they are an invaluable asset to our commanders on the ground in Afghanistan. Contrary to

popular belief, these systems are not pilot-less, they are operated by highly professional pilots who happen to be on the ground and not in the air. The UK Reaper system does not have the capability to fire weapons autonomously and can only fire its weapons when commanded to do so by the fully trained and qualified flight crew.

UK forces in Afghanistan operate in accordance with International Humanitarian Law and UK Rules of Engagement, and under the command of the NATO International Security and Assistance Forces (ISAF). This command applies to ground and air forces, including the UK Reaper Remotely Piloted Air System. The policy governing the use of Reaper is identical to that for conventionally piloted combat aircraft operating in Afghanistan. Military lawyers are based in Afghanistan and advise on all aspects of operations including the selection and prosecution of all ISAF targets.

Any weapon released by Reaper is precision-guided and every effort is made to minimise the risk of collateral damage, particularly civilian casualties, which includes in some circumstances

deciding not to engage the target. There are strict procedures rigorously enforced and kept under review, intended to both minimise the risk of casualties occurring and to investigate any incidents that do happen. UK and ISAF both conduct investigations into any allegations of civilian casualties, but for operational security reasons, do not routinely divulge detailed information on these investigations.

RAF 39 Squadron is currently based in the United States. However, following a comprehensive review, the Ministry of Defence is preparing to transfer the RAF crews who operate Reaper from their current base in the USA to RAF Waddington. As your constituent has noted, this means that Reaper aircraft will be operated and flown remotely from the UK, with the aircraft remaining in Afghanistan to support UK and Coalition Forces. Co-locating all the Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition & Reconnaissance (ISTAR) facilities at RAF Waddington, will achieve greater efficiency and reduce costs. It will also ensure greater oversight by the chain of command and enhance the checks and balances in place which allow Reaper to be operated in a safe manner.

Labouring for Peace - A history of the campaign inside the Labour Party for international peace

by Grace Crookall-Greening and Rosalie Huzzard, 2011.

Until I saw it a few weeks ago in the bookcase outside News from Nowhere I didn't know that this was the book I had been looking for since I started working for Merseyside CND. It is a history of Labour Action for Peace since its beginnings as the Labour Pacifist Fellowship in 1940.

It tells the story of the times we have lived through and the campaigns that we, as activists for peace and

disarmament, have taken part in in the seventy years since the end of World War 11.

It is not a nostalgia trip, it is an essential record, clearly and simply laid out, of the battles we have fought and still have to fight.

In 1954 Philip Mitchel, a conscientious objector member, speaking at a tribunal in Birmingham, ended saying, "I look for the day when the Labour Party will rediscover socialism and inspire the people of the world with a message of peace through universal socialism."

In these pages you will also find how peace and disarmament motions fared at Labour Party Conferences and how they were adopted, or not, by the Party in Parliament.

Though the book is two years old the story and the message it brings are right up-to-date. We must highlight "the obscenity of Britain's huge military spending at a time when peoples' lives are being devastated by the Coalition Government's cuts in social spending."

There is also an excellent foreword by Tony Benn which summarises the book;

And Appendix 1, which sets out LAP's Mission Statement for 2002, "Make Labour the Peace Party", gives a clear statement of what I believe we should all be working for.

'Labouring for Peace' is still in print and costs £5.

Roger Stephenson

"The Spirit of '45"

The latest Ken Loach film revisits the year that Britons turned to socialism and ushered in the NHS, public ownership and the concept of public (not private) good.

In 1945, the generation that lived through the war wanted to rebuild a battered Britain. They had won the war, now they aimed to win the peace. They set about building a fairer, socialist Britain.

The film features Sam Watts a stalwart member of Merseyside CND.

Showing at FACT and other alternative cinemas

The Threading Dreams Exhibition

Monday 8 - Saturday 13 April 2013 11- 4 each day
Silk scarves cards and other gifts for sale all proceeds to the 600 children and 150 mothers who live at Sreepur
Pop in buy a cup of tea have a chat would love to meet you all. Just returned from a wonderful visit to Bangladesh

St Barnabus Church Penny Lane 8 - 13 April

Blackburn House 16 April - 30 July

Liverpool Town Hall 19 August - 1 September

St Barnabus Church Penny Lane 21 - 26 October

Thank you for your support for Sreepur

Ruby Porter MBE rubina44@btinternet.com

Maghull and Lydiate

Contact: Sylvi: 526 7293

Birkenhead CND

Next meetings :Tues 9th April ,14th May at 8.15pm at **Shirley's, Flat 2, 14 Beresford Rd.**
See local news sheet for June
Stalls – April 6th 10.30-3.30 Milton Square

Wallasey CND

Planning Meetings: 3.15pm Thurs. April 4th, at Barbara's, 4 Taunton Rd., Wallasey. May & June see local news sheet.

Stall in Wallasey: Sat. April 13th 10.30 –12.30am

WEN Swap Day: Sat. April 20th Bidston Recycling Centre

Tea in Central Park: Sun. April 21st. May 19th , June

16th 1.30-4.30pm dates to be confirmed

April 23rd 4.30pm The Lauries – meet Bruce Kent – please can you help us promote the meeting –

Contact Barbara 638 3967 or Janet 677 1133

Merseyside CND 50 Club

Recent winners: Dec. draw: No 31
Birkenhead CND, Jan. No 29 Loretta Humphreys, Feb. No 35 Hope Warner
Thanks to all members of the 50 Club for your continuing financial support. If you'd like to join the 50 Club @£5.00 per month with a monthly prize draw £50 and annual prize draw £250, £100, £50 ask Janet for a membership form

Huyton CND

Stalls: April 23rd 7.30pm - Bruce Kent meeting at Unite Building 1 Islington and June 29th Peace & Ecology Fest.

Contact: Sean through MCND Office

Peace & Ecology Festival 2013

Saturday June 29th 12 noon to 6pm at St. Bride's Church, Catherine St/Percy St. If you or your group would like to help organise, raise money for or join in on the day please contact Kai or Janet 0151 702 6974 mcnd@care4free.net

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-£4/ family-£6/ unwaged or youth (under 22) £1.

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, 54 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool L3 5SD

MCND Co-ord:

next meeting: Wed.

April 3rd 2pm in the
MCND Office, 54 Mount
Pleasant All
members welcome

*If you receive a separate
renewal form with this
newsletter it means your
subs are due – Thankyou.*

This edition of the
newsletter run up by
Cathy Page and Janet
Laycock. Printed thanks
to Barbara Hardcastle of
Wallasey CND