

Merseyside CND Newsletter



Oct/Nov/Dec 2013

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"Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction" Blaise Pascal 1623-1662

National Conference

Sat/Sun 12th/13th October

Have you signed up for conference yet?

On our doorstep for once so no excuse not to go!

Need to sign up before 4th October—either on line or phone CND office 02077002393

Accommodation:— Some delegates would like accommodation—if you can help please contact MCND office 229 5282

Saturday is the AGM and policy decisions

Sunday workshops "Working with..." with speakers

12 noon **Working with parliamentarians**— Jeremy Corbyn, Laura MacKenzie (researcher for Caroline Lucas)

Working with young people and students—Miriam Dobson and Elva Bathgate (Sheffield Uni. Fund Education Not War Group)

Working with Faith Communities—Rev Chris Howson, Speaker from the Muslim Community (tbc)

Campaigning in Nuclear Hotspots—Richard Johnson (Leicester CND), Tony Staunton, Chair Unite TU branch

2pm **Working with Trade Unions**—Bill Hayes (Gen Sec CWU), Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah (Trade Unionist PCS)

Campaigning through Social Media—Anne Schulthess (CND Youth and Community engagement), Hannah Altendorff (CND Office manager)

Working with Campaigning Organisations—John Hilary, Exec. Director, War on Want, Rebecca Sharkey, UK Coordinator, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

John Hamilton Memorial Peace Lecture

7pm Thursday 3rd October

Quaker Meeting House,
22, School Lane L1 3BT (behind Primark)

**"The growing use of armed
Drones"**

Chris Cole

(Of Drone Wars UK & Pax Christi)

Tickets free via eventbrite.com or Lisa 07501 793342

Vegetarian buffet at 6pm -Booking essential—contact Lisa

See p2 for 'Drones week of action'

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Where are we now?

We've left Mount Pleasant and are now comfortably settled in 151 Dale St. No steps to climb, no birds pecking at the window, bright and airy—come in and see us but it's best to phone first 0151 229 5282. Cross over from the museums and Art Gallery (William Brown St) and we are the first door on the corner at the start of Dale St.

Remembrance Day Monday Nov 11th

Wreath-laying

11am St John's Garden (behind St. George's Hall)

Including peace poems, songs and personal memories of war experiences and resistance

Film Show

Later in the day film-showing of 'Oh! What a lovely war!' Time and venue to be arranged. Info from Merseyside CND office

White poppies

50p from CND office or £1 if needing to be posted to you.

Travelling Light

West Kirby's annual St Martin's/ Armistice Day lantern-lit family walk along the Promenade, with music, songs & refreshments on the beach. A sustainable celebration of community and peace. Bring a lantern or torch & meet in Coronation Gardens at 5.30pm.

Prisoners for Peace Day December 1st

Since the 1950s, 1 December is celebrated as Prisoners for Peace Day, to highlight the plight of those who face imprisonment for the nonviolent actions for peace - be they conscientious objectors or direct action activists. While War Resisters International has a permanent Prisoners for Peace list on its website, we make a special effort to update it for Prisoners for Peace Day, and call on everyone to write cards or letters to prisoners. info@wri-irg.org

Atlantic Cartier

Steaming towards the Port of Liverpool at this very moment is the Swedish owned Ro-ro/container carrier, the Atlantic Cartier.

Questions hang over this ship as to just how safe it is bearing in mind that on May 1st while in the Port of Hamburg it was seriously damaged when it went up in flames.

The ship's cargo included 9 tons of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆), destined for the Areva owned uranium-enriching plant at Lingen, Lower Saxony. Also included in the cargo were four tonnes of explosives, and 180 tons of flammable ethanol. When UF₆ is exposed to moist air, it reacts with the water in the air to produce UO₂F₂ (uranyl fluoride) and HF (hydrogen fluoride) both of which are

highly corrosive and toxic. If the ship had exploded, then a cloud of the uranium hexafluoride might have been released into the atmosphere with all sorts of damaging consequences for the Port workers and surrounding neighbourhood.

Following on from the fire the ship was repaired, and went to the Port of Liverpool and then onto Halifax, Nova Scotia, New York, Baltimore, and Norfolk, Virginia. It docks in Liverpool fairly frequently!!!

We wonder if the Port of Liverpool authorities are aware of the Atlantic Cartier's potentially dangerous cargo and what measures they have put in place to inform and protect the workforce and nearby population. *Press Release sent from MCND office on Aug. 25th* We have been trying to win the support of FBU and Liverpool

Trades Council to oppose the Atlantic Cartier docking in Liverpool until safety concerns have been thoroughly investigated.

Meanwhile the issue has been picked up by Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee whose press release highlights safety concerns logged by independent marine radioactivity pollution consultant Tim Deere-Jones. Full details of the breeches of safety regulations can be found on: NFLA website:

www.nuclearpolicy.info or from Tim Deere-Jones: timdj@talktalk.net

'Ship of Fuels' Private Eye: No. 1349 summarises the use of the Atlantic Cartier, which isn't registered as a carrier of nuclear material, in carrying spent fuel from Dounreay to South Carolina. See also: www.theproject.me.uk/?cat=44

Ground the Drones Week

5th-12th October

During Drones Week of Action there will be a touring delegation with an exhibition and a group of activists who can give talks and lead discussions including: Maya Evans and Mary Dobbing from Voices for Creative Non-Violence, who were with peace volunteers in Afghanistan earlier this year Brian Terrell, US peace activist recently released from a 6 month prison

sentence for direct action against drones, Members of the Waddington 6 who will be in court on Monday and Tuesday where they will be putting drones on trial

The Waddington 6

On 3 June 2013, the Waddington 6 cut through the fence at RAF Waddington, near Lincoln, where the UK military are remotely controlling the armed Reaper drone over Afghanistan. Their action symbolically penetrated the wall of secrecy which surrounds UK's killer drones and this was the first mass trespass there.

Monday 7 October, the date of the trial, also marks the 12th anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan! In their defence, the Waddington 6 will be using the recent paper from Public Interest Lawyers on the illegality of the UK's use of drones.

Please attend this historical court hearing to highlight the importance of this issue.

The Waddington 6 are:

Chris Cole, (see front page), Henrietta Cullinan, Rev. Keith Hebden, Susan Clarkson, Fr. Martin Newell and Penny Walker.

Upholding the UK's security in austere times

The following is Peter Wilson's presentation to a debate between himself and the Shadow Sec. of State for Defence, Jim Murphy at a Fabian Society meeting in Liverpool a couple of months ago.

CND's approach to national security is based on certain ethical values and a pragmatic view of this country's position in the world - let's call it ethical realism!

Sustainable Security

Sustainable security can only come from a country's inner strength, socially, economically and culturally. We all know what that means, a secure prosperous people in a green and pleasant land.

It is precisely that inner strength that the coalition is successfully undermining in the name of 'austerity' and which any future Labour Government has a duty to rebuild. (Incidentally, how cynical of the coalition to disguise their ideological warfare as 'austerity' - with George Osborne as a grotesque parody of Stafford Cripps - and how sad that Labour appears to be falling for the lie.)

Yes we need modern adaptable armed forces, but rooted in the values of peace and international justice and a realistic rational view of the limits of our power and influence in a changing world.

Moral Authority

It is exactly that inner strength and cohesion which should give this country the confidence to exercise a constructive and realistic moral authority throughout the world.

Moral authority is not the same as power, or status - indeed, as we have seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, the more we try to re-enforce our perceived status and flex our international muscles, the more insecure we become at home and humiliated abroad.

Our Military Pretensions

To wield a big stick successfully, you need a strong arm - we have a big stick, or at least we borrow one from

the Americans - Trident - but the £100 billion cost is unsustainable. What do we get for all that money? According to former Armed Services Minister Nick Harvey who was sacked for his candour, we get to "patrol the high seas 24/7 wagging our nuclear bomb at - er - no one in particular". Our arm, in other words, our economy, can't sustain this preposterous useless and immoral stick - let's lay it down and use what strength we have to build a better society and rebuild our moral authority throughout the world.

Similarly, our interventionist military pretensions have been cruelly exposed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and no amount of sentimentality about our brave lads fighting in Helmand so that we can walk our streets in safety can, or should disguise this fact. Yes our troops are brave, but what we asked them to do was wrong, futile and, in a tragic irony, placed their families and all of us in this country at greater risk.

It is worth noting a definitive study of suicide terrorism around the world from 1980 to 2003. This clearly shows that the principle cause of suicide terrorism is resistance to foreign occupation, not Islamic extremism. Even where religion matters, it functions mainly as a recruiting tool in the context of national resistance.

Our streets are unsafe, therefore, precisely because of our adventures in Iraq and Afghanistan on the coat tails of the Americans and we do our soldiers and ourselves no service by not admitting this - and by not admitting that, if we are to have money to rebuild our economy, our schools and hospitals, our social cohesion, if we want to minimise the terrorist threat, if we want to become a powerful moral force in the world, we cannot afford either our nuclear or our military interventionist pretensions anymore.

Trident and Proliferation

I would like to deal, in a bit more detail, with our nuclear deterrent. No one actually believes, if in fact they ever did, that Trident has any military

or strategic value. The motive for acquiring and retaining 'our bomb' hasn't apparently changed since 1942 when Ernest Bevin, Labour's Foreign Minister, declared that we must have it and with "the bloody union jack on top of it". In his memoirs, Tony Blair admitted that he could clearly see "the common sense and practical argument" against renewing Trident, but thought "giving it up too big a downgrading of our status as a nation".

There you have it, our status as a nation depends on our ability, with America's permission of course, to murder millions of innocent people. And, of course, our willingness to send our troops, inadequately prepared and with no clear objectives into hostile countries about which we know very little. I can appreciate, and indeed expect the Tories to perpetuate that lie, but, naively perhaps, I expect better of the new Miliband branded 'values driven' Labour Party.

Just in case anyone considers the world's nuclear arsenals as a, albeit horrendously expensive, fact of life, with no relevance to the practical politics of today, just look at Iran and the paranoia surrounding their civil nuclear programme. Indeed, Nick Harvey claims he was sacked as Armed Forces Minister because of his opposition to any Israeli/US pre-emptive strike on Iran's nuclear facilities. A shining example of nuclear proliferation in action.

On the subject of proliferation, yes we have signed up to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, *Article VI*: of which binds states to pursue "negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament", and towards a "Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

Some 43 years after the NPT came into force, we still proudly wave our nuclear stick at no one in particular and the world is no nearer effective disarmament plans. It's called lip service!

NATO

Just in case I am accused of being an out of touch idealist or even worse, a 'domestic extremist' - those dangerous people spied on by the police 'National Domestic Extremism Unit' - you know the types, anti-motorway campaigners, climate change activists, anti-war protestors and the Lawrence family - I do understand the perceived link between our bomb and our membership of NATO and our seat as one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council.

To take NATO first - the name should give us a clue as to its origin and purpose, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. An American dominated nuclear armed alliance which, even the Americans are beginning to suspect has outlived its usefulness. According to Admiral James Stavridis, NATO's former Supreme Allied Commander, the US accounts for nearly 73% of total NATO defence spending. The Admiral considers that "unbalanced and sustainable over time" especially as some allies, notably France and Germany, won't always do what the US wants them to do. To America, it is a tool, rapidly becoming unfit for purpose because of their European allies reduced defence budgets. Two quotes:

"Washington likes the partnership with Europe for political legitimacy, which is not a function of its military capacity."

(James Steinberg, former US Deputy National Security Adviser)

A senior NATO official put it more bluntly:

"The European allies may be useless for many things, but they still provide legitimacy and the continent acts as a worldwide operations hub."

Lets get out from under the USA, out of NATO and into a proper, non-aligned, non nuclear European Alliance, perhaps we could call it the European Union.

UN Security Council

Turning to the UN Security Council, CND, and an increasing number of developing world states, believe it is, in its present form, undemocratic,

anachronistic, and impotent. Undemocratic, because of the veto rights of the five permanent members, anachronistic because it does not reflect the global shifts in power and influence since 1945. Indeed the qualification for a permanent seat depends on having 'won the war' and the possession of big enough bombs. Impotent because the 'big power' veto effectively stymies any unwanted initiatives from the other Council members. The UN can work, and should work much more effectively but only if we abolish all permanent seats on the Security Council and introduce decision making by majority vote.

Given the rapidly shifting power structures, and the demands of the developing world states within the UN Assembly, our position as a permanent member, based solely on WW2 and Trident, is becoming untenable. That is not to say we shouldn't have a seat, but that it should be based on different and more sustainable criteria.

Our National Interest

There is, of course the 'vital to our national interest' argument. This apparently justifies finding money, for foreign wars while simultaneously proclaiming the need for austerity and cutting public services, welfare education etc at home. It is interesting that, no matter how broke we are told we are, we can always find a bit of spare cash, in the case of Afghanistan, spare tens of billions, for military adventures.

I would be the first to agree that, if invading Afghanistan had made our streets safer, stabilised that country, helped to defeat terrorism and protected its civilian population, then the money would have been well spent. But it didn't and most of us could see that it wasn't going to. Sir Cowper-Coles, Britain's former ambassador to Afghanistan describes it as *"a war in which almost no-one - certainly not the senior politicians - really believes"*.

Military Intervention

Finally, the issue of when it might be acceptable to intervene militarily. This is of course a function of how we see

ourselves and our role in the world. We have intervened militarily, as part of international efforts, on humanitarian grounds in the past, but these have been far outweighed, in cost and the lives of our soldiers and our international reputation, by our recent futile interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We intervened in these instances, at the behest of the Americans with no clear independent objectives and on the assumption that our perceived power and status gave us the right to. But the kind of power and status that successive governments have relied on, has proved illusory. We need to replace it with the kind of moral authority that provokes international respect for our commitment to international development, human rights and peace.

How do we achieve moral authority, rather than a specious status - the status a weak child achieves by siding with the biggest bully in the playground. We do so by trying to become a force for international good, through international policies designed to help the vulnerable to help themselves and by having an international development policy which is about enabling the developing world in a framework which respects their autonomy and ensures that they have a voice in decision making.

Yes we should take a leading role in preventing conflict, but you don't do that by exporting arms or our version of democracy at the point of a gun, as Robespierre said: *"no-one likes an armed missionary"*.

Yes we should try to protect civilians threatened by conflict but you don't do that by supplying arms to what you see as the 'less bad side' in a bitter civil war. Try co-operating with other countries to democratise the UN, to strengthen the International Court of Human Rights, to promote human rights and international law and to promote international agreements to tackle the real threats to our security, climate change, poverty, resource scarcity, famine, environmental devastation, inequality both internationally and within societies.

Lets take a giant first step by dismantling Trident and by recognising that, for our national security in the modern world, the Department for International Development is at least as important as the Ministry of Defence.

Labour Defence Policy

Now Mr Murphy has recently outlined in some detail, how a future Labour Government sees its world role. He has identified the threat to this country as one of Islamic extremism, and our role as one of what he calls 'preventative intervention' to enable governments of at-risk nations to defeat these extremists. He stresses that such interventions must be based on adaptable forces, superior

intelligence and civic capacity building. We must learn much more about the culture and internal dynamics of these at-risk countries - what he calls cultural embedding - and enable indigenous solutions.

Sensibly he admits that we can't do this alone, but then asserts that the policy would only work as part of a unified NATO effort. Oh dear, we have been here before! Given that America regards NATO as a tool for advancing its national interests, how would a Labour Government educate them into accepting this radical new approach - perhaps we could sell it to them as invasion, but in a culturally sensitive manner.

This talk of Islamic extremism, of preventative intervention appears to me to be a variation of the old futile 'war on terror' - a war that was always 'unwinnable', and which has inflicted terrible suffering on millions of innocent people. Einstein defined insanity as *doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results*'. I hope a new Labour Government will not repeat the mistakes of the past two Governments and will establish a radical new approach to our national security needs - one based on ethical realism rather than the myths and mistakes of the past.

Peter Wilson—Merseyside CND Co-chair

Introducing the New Kid on the Block

New Build and Fukushima

For the last few years I have been active within Kick Nuclear (KN) in my native Cockneyland. During most of this time KN has been active in campaigning against nukiller new build. It has also been very active in campaigning about the continuing disaster at Fukushima.

New Build

At present EDF (Electricity deFrance) are planning to build two new reactors — at Hinkley in Somerset, and Sizewell in Suffolk. Kick Nuclear activists have been working to stop them being built as part of the Stop Nuclear Power Network. The group has participated in both protests and Nonviolent Direct Action (NVDA) outside of EDF offices in London, and their existing plants at Sizewell & Hinkley.

EDF are in negotiations with DECC (the Department of Energy & Climate Change) upon just how much money, or ' strike price', they will get for building these new plants. This in turn has resulted in protracted negotiations between DECC and the Treasury. This 'Strike Price' was supposed to be announced with the introduction of new energy bill this spring, but rumour has it that the Treasury is opposed to the high price

which EDF has been asking for. There is a lot of speculation as to just how long these negotiations will go on for, but EDF have given some indications that they will not build the plants if they don't get the very high price that they want. Thus KN have been working to make sure that EDF does not get the high price which it has been demanding. As part of this campaign KN have regularly leafleted civil servants and government ministers outside of both DECC and the Treasury.

Fukushima

The other major KN activity has been a weekly picket of the Japanese embassy, and the London offices TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company) which owns the Fukushima plant. This picket has been going on for four and a half hours every Friday morning and early lunch hour since the start of last August. The picket is held at the same time as similar demonstrations are taking place in Tokyo and throughout Japan.

Despite the continuing disaster taking place at Fukushima, the Japanese government is currently planning to reopen some of the countries nukiller power plants which were shut down during March 2011.

KN has also been working with Japanese Against Nuclear UK (JAN). JAN was formed last autumn by a group of Japanese who had joined us on the embassy picket. During march KN, JAN, and London Region CND organised a series of Remember Fukushima events to mark the 2nd anniversary of the start to this continuing disaster. These were part of a series of protests held throughout the world.

Moving on

One of the reasons for my moving to Liverpool is because it is a key region in terms of campaigning to close down the nukiller power industry. It is not far from Capenhurst and in the other direction is Springfields.

Before moving I was also active in the Nuclear Trains Action Group, and intent to continue working upon this issue in to the future. There are nukiller waste trains which pass through Chester, while DRS (Direct Rail Services) who run these trains have a key depot at Gresty Lane, Crewe. So a lot of my time will now be spend in educating people about the existence of the trains, and the danger which they pose to us all.

Martyn Lowe

Chester CND

Meet regularly, hold stalls in city centre and leaflet at Chester Station when nuclear trains go through. Venue for monthly meetings is Friends Meeting House, Frodsham St.

Contact— Allison Challon on chestercnd@gmail.com

Wallasey CND

Planning Meetings: Mon. Oct. 7th 3pm, Nov 4th and Dec.

2nd all 3pm @ Barbara's, 4 Taunton Rd. Wallasey

Pub Quiz: Friday Dec. 6th 8pm at Park View Social

Club, Liscard Rd. Wallasey £5 entrance includes

ploughmans snack—bring a team along.

Contacts Barbara 638 3967, Janet 677 1133

Birkenhead CND

Next meetings Tues 29th October 8.00pm at Shirley's, Flat 2, 14 Beresford Rd.

Stall at Prenton High School festival of Light on Friday November 29th

New Year Party January 9th at Shirley's 7.30pm

Contact: Shirley 652-3768

Merseyside CND 50 Club

Recent winners: May draw: Barbara Hardcastle; June: Wallasey CND; July: Wallasey CND*; August: Gerry Poole Thanks to all members of the 50 Club for your continuing financial support. For £5 per month you too could be a winner of £50 per month or £250/£100/£50 in annual draw. Ask Janet for a membership form – 0151 229 5282 mcnd@care4free.net

*Some groups/individuals pay 2 memberships per month - hence have twice the chance of winning the draw! It's not a fix—honest!

Wirral Save Our Services

Attacking austerity

Launch conference

Poulton Vics Social Club, Wallasey

Saturday 26th October 9.30-4pm

Join us for workshops on

Bedroom tax

NHS

Benefit changes

Wirral cuts

Tickets from 07528 261016

Or email wirralsos1@gmail.com

Liverpool CND

Watch this space for a meeting to launch this new city wide group. It's hoped activities will include regular stalls in Liverpool City Centre, planning/discussion meetings while a Liverpool CND website is in the making. If you'd like to help this group raise CND's profile in Liverpool please contact Andy Morton via MCND office

Liverpool Pax Christi

(the international peace movement of the Catholic church)

Meet at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm. Usually at St. Michael's Church, West Derby Road, /Horne St. L6 5EH.

Contact Jan Harper 263 5623

Maghull and Lydiate

Temporarily taking a break send good wishes to all members. Contact: Sylvi: 526 7293

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, 151 Dale St, Liverpool L2 2AHD

MCND Co-ord: 2pm
Wednesday Oct. 23rd
CND Office 151 Dale St.

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. Duplicated by

