

# MERSEYSIDE CND

**SPRING 2021 UPDATE**

151 Dale Street, Liverpool, L2 2AH

merseysidecnd@gmail.com | [mcnd.org.uk](http://mcnd.org.uk) | 07394 810 871

*There's a joke in nuclear deterrence circles: There's far more evidence for God than there is for nuclear deterrence*

- [Patricia Lewis](#), British-Irish nuclear physicist and Research Director for International Security at Chatham House



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## UK TO INCREASE NUCLEAR WEAPONS STOCKPILE BY 40%



In a move which threatens to kick start a new arms race, and make a nuclear war that much more likely, the Government has just announced its intention to [increase by 40% the UK's stockpile of nuclear warheads](#) and to change the rules of engagement for the use of nuclear weapons.

The increase in our nuclear stockpile, from 180 to 260 warheads will increase our present 'kill capacity' from a paltry 175 million to an, apparently more credible, 204 million people. Boris Johnson, in his introduction to the Governments Integrated 'Defence' Review, assures us that this increase in our 'lethality levels' will prove a much better deterrent and provide "the ultimate insurance" for Global Britain in a hostile world. In what mad universe does threatening to kill an additional 29 million people make this country 40% more secure?

In addition, the Government's Review makes nuclear war that much more likely by changing the rules of engagement for the use of nuclear weapons. The Government has unilaterally lowered the threshold above which it would be 'acceptable (!)' to start a nuclear war. The UK will now reserve the right to use nuclear weapons not just in response to a nuclear threat, but also against an "exceptionally destructive attack using cyber or other emerging technologies". While this could be seen as military posturing by a government desperate to throw its weight around as 'Global Britain', it is actually a frightening shift that brings the prospect of nuclear war that much closer.

These policies introduced without any public consultation or parliamentary vote, directly contravene section 6 of the [Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty](#) and have been criticized by our European allies, the UN and the new Us Administration. Despite this, and with characteristic arrogance Boris Johnson seems determined, by diktat, to both start a new nuclear arms race and significantly increase the range of excuses for starting a nuclear war.

Leaving aside, the grotesque immorality of proudly announcing "the biggest increase in 'defence' spending since the cold war" (£21.5 billion) while pleading poverty to avoid paying NHS staff a decent wage, this Government's imperial pretensions make the world much less safe for all of us. We need to make it clear to the Government that their actions are undemocratic, immoral, insanely reckless and carried out without our consent.

Show your opposition to the Government's plan to increase the number of stockpiled nuclear weapons by asking your MP to sign [EDM 1667 on Steps Towards Disarmament](#).

Peter Wilson - Merseyside CND Co-Chair

# ASH WEDNESDAY 2021



Liverpool Pax Christi continued their campaign against Trident with a low-key, socially-distanced vigil outside the Metropolitan Cathedral.

Highlighting the exorbitant cost of replacing Trident, the vigil was held shortly before the Government announced a 40% increase in the number of stockpiled nuclear weapons (See Pg. 1).

This comes at a time when the NHS is under unprecedented pressure and continues to be woefully underfunded.

To voice your opposition to Trident replacement, please ask your MP to sign EDM 1072 in support of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

## MAJORITY WANT UK TO SIGN NUCLEAR BAN TREATY

A poll commissioned by CND shows the majority of the British public want the Government to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The TPNW is the first international legislation to explicitly ban nuclear weapons and represents a major step towards the ultimate goal of global disarmament.

At the time of writing, [86 countries have signed the treaty and 54 have ratified it](#).

However, none of the nations which actually possess nuclear weapons have signed. The British Government has said that they will 'never sign it' and boycotted the UN vote.

This pole clearly demonstrates how out of the touch Westminster is with UK public opinion and the vast majority of the global population.

We ask all Merseyside CND members and allies to [contact their MP](#), urging them speak out in support of the TPNW.

# 59%

**of the public support the UK Government signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Nuclear Weapons; including 50% of Conservative voters and 68% of Labour voters**

# 77%

**support a total, global ban on nuclear weapons; including 71% of Conservative voters and 83% of Labour voters.**

**Both the UK signing the TPNW and a total global nuclear ban have majority support across every single demographic (age, regions and nations, education level, income bracket, 2019 General Election vote, and 2016 EU referendum vote)**

# MIDDLE EAST NUCLEAR TENSIONS

CND condemns the suspected [cyber-attack on the Natanz uranium enrichment facility in Iran](#), which will only increase the risk of conflict in the Middle East. The attack seems intended to derail the ongoing talks in Vienna which are working to restore the Iran nuclear deal.

The Israeli media is reporting that the sabotage operation was an Israeli military and intelligence action. This has produced a furious response in Iran, which has accused Israel of 'nuclear terrorism' and whose Foreign Minister has said 'we will take our revenge'.

Sunday's action fits into a wider pattern of Israeli extra-legal action, ranging from the Stuxnet computer virus a decade ago to the [assassination of the Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh](#) in November 2020.

This attack highlights the nuclear double standards when it comes to the Middle East. Israel has a nuclear weapons arsenal, outside of any international monitoring, yet no sanctions are placed on it or punitive action taken as a result. A very different approach is taken to Iran, which has no nuclear weapons and had voluntarily entered the JCPOA and accepted full IAEA inspections prior to former President Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the agreement.

Successive nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conferences have called for a nuclear weapons-free Middle East, and the UK and the US must now take steps to ensure the negotiations to this end are a success.

CND will be addressing these issues in depth in its forthcoming conference: Working for Peace in the Middle East, on Saturday 22nd May.

To register and take part in the discussion, please go to: <https://cnduk.org/events/working-for-peace-in-the-middle-east-cnd-online-conference/>

## WHAT IS THE POINT OF CND?

Sometimes it is worth reminding ourselves why CND exists and why it is needed now more than ever. CND exists because the number and nature of nuclear weapons currently deployed throughout the world threatens the future of the human race and something needs to be done about it.

### The Size of the Threat - Overkilling Us All!

Nine states ( US, Russia, China, France, the UK, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea) currently have some 9,500 nuclear warheads in military service. As each warhead is almost seven times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb, collectively they have the capacity to kill some 8.8 billion people, which is actually **more** than the present population of the earth! Even if only a fraction of those warheads were used in a nuclear war, the radioactive fallout would be such that the planet would be rendered uninhabitable.

### The Nature of the Threat - Proliferation and Confrontation

Despite 50 years of lip service to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NNPT) and tortuous negotiation about multilateral disarmament, none of the nine nuclear powers has significantly reduced its nuclear arsenals and, in most cases, are using modern technology to increase their effectiveness. The British Government is blatantly breaking the terms of the

NNPT by increasing its nuclear stockpile. In addition, states like Iran and Saudi Arabia, seeing how existing nuclear powers value their nuclear weapons, now want some of their own.

As more states acquire nuclear technology, and the possession of nuclear weapons continues to be a national status symbol in an increasingly complex and unstable world, the chances of an accidental, or deliberate, nuclear holocaust are accelerating. Those in power seem unable or unwilling to do anything about it.

### Doing Nothing is not an Option

The inertia and complacency of those in power in the existing and aspiring nuclear armed states, is such that it is up to us, as citizens, to force them to renounce an arms race that could, literally, cost us the earth. That is why CND and our sister Peace Movements throughout the world, campaign relentlessly, day in and day out, to persuade the public of the immorality and dangers of the nuclear arms race and of the need to demand of those in power that they stop before it is too late for all of us. Join us.

Peter Wilson, MCND Co-Chair





## FUKUSHIMA: The disaster continues

10 years ago the world witnessed one of the most serious nuclear incidents of all time.

An earthquake had caused the reactors at the Fukushima nuclear plant to shut down. The tsunami which followed flooded the emergency generators, cutting power to the pumps which circulate cooling water to stop the reactors from over-heating. The ensuing explosions released dangerous radioactive materials into the atmosphere; an incident classified as Level 7 - the highest possible - on the International Nuclear Event Scale. 8% of the Japanese landmass was contaminated by radioactive fallout from the disaster.

CND remains seriously concerned about the current state of the Fukushima plant. The continuing problems underline the constant danger that nuclear power presents due to events totally beyond the control of power station operators. CND urges the UK Government to reconsider its support for building new nuclear power stations in Britain and instead to invest in truly safe, clean and sustainable forms of energy.

[Sign the Petition Against Nuclear Power](#) [Why we oppose nuclear power](#) [Join MCND](#)

## PROTECT YOUR FREEDOM TO PROTEST - SIGN THE PETITION

The Government is planning to make important changes to the law that will restrict the right to protest when lockdown restrictions are eased. CND is amongst the many organisations opposing the planned legislation and is instead calling for the adoption of an eleven point 'Charter for Freedom of Assembly Rights'.

Police chiefs and Government ministers are seeking new power to restrict protests which may cause disruption and, in particular, involve direct action and civil disobedience. We see these changes as a needless attack on the freedom to protest.

The Charter for Freedom of Assembly Rights, proposed by [Netpol](#), calls on the National Police Chiefs Council to accept greater transparency and accountability for the way protests are policed, based on the standards of international human rights.

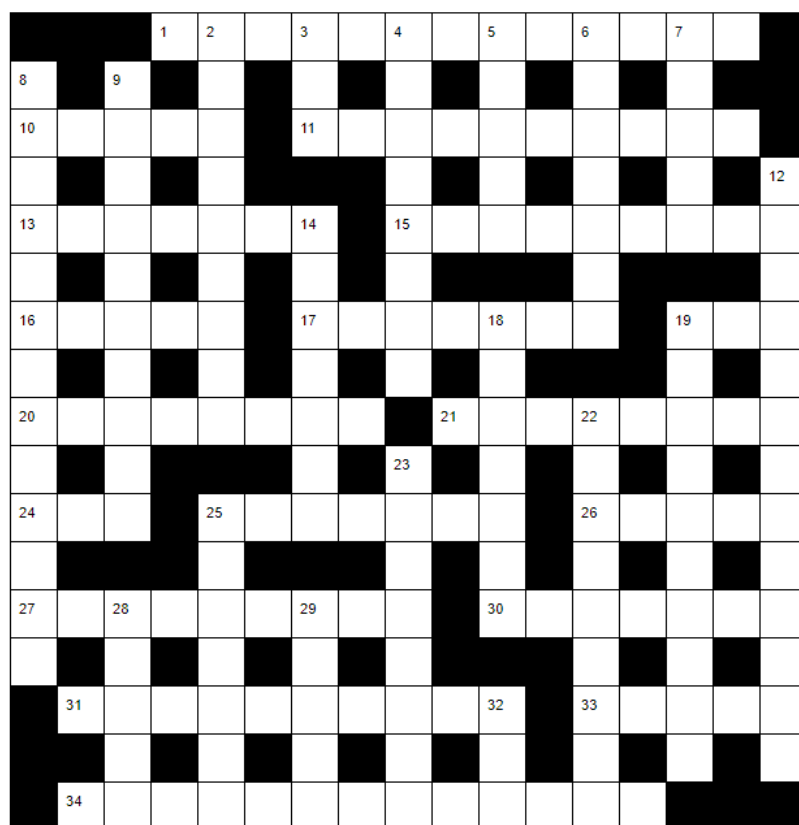
Despite being repeatedly asked to publish their own guidelines, senior officers have been reluctant to explain how they would protect, rather than restrict the right to protest. And with new restrictions planned, we can wait no longer.

Supported by a coalition of organisations, the Charter set out what people taking part in protests can expect from the police and calls for:

- **Proper protections - not more restrictions - for the right to protest. This includes an end to treating direct action and civil disobedience as an excuse to shut down protests completely.**
- **An end to routine surveillance of protestors. This includes strict limitations on the use of police video recording, use of facial recognition and surveillance of social media sites used by campaigners.**
- **An end to the excessive use of force and the targeting of organisers for arrest, surveillance and punishment.**
- **An end to targeting the most vulnerable. The police have a particular duty to protect the rights of young, vulnerable or disabled people wishing to exercise their right to freedom of assembly.**

Sign the petition at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/protect-the-freedom-to-protest>

# SPRING CROSSWORD



## Across

1. Going around (13)
10. Minor Hebrew prophet (5)
11. Rutherford B. Hayes or the club house (10)
13. Smallest continent (7)
15. An intense desire to be alone (9)
16. Enabled by the gustatory cortex (5)
17. Surgical tool (7)
19. La Cosa Nostra (3)
20. Applying concentration to something (8)
21. Welsh town on the Sirhowy River (8)
24. Not particular (3)
25. Ohio's nickname (7)
26. .... Equina Syndrome (5)
27. Third book of the Old Testament (9)
30. Can be underactive or overactive (7)
31. Moving images (10)
33. Elementary particle similar to the electron (5)
34. With great praise (5, 3, 5)

## Down

2. To a great extent (9)
3. Negative aspect (3)
4. On the road to... (8)
5. Go in (5)
6. Pertaining to heat (7)
7. Unacceptable (3, 2)
8. Beyond dispute (13)
9. Beside the Severn (10)
12. City in Southern California (3, 10)
14. Alleged to have killed Napoleon Bonaparte (7)
18. From one hundred (3, 4)
19. Greatest work (6, 4)
22. What Bletchley Park did to Enigma (9)
23. Soldiers' recreation facility (4, 4)
28. Chekov's uncle (5)
29. Pertaining to whales (5)
32. Australian singer born in 1975 (3)

## GDAMS PROTEST

IPES GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ON MILITARY SPENDING - GCOMS

@DemilitarizeDay

**DEFUND  
DEFEND** THE MILITARY  
PEOPLE AND THE PLANET



ARTWORK BY ESECI

GLOBAL DAYS OF ACTION ON MILITARY SPENDING

APRIL 10 - MAY 9  
GDAMS 2021

**12:00  
8th  
May**

After the long months of lockdown we're delighted to announce that we'll be soon back out campaigning. Our first event will be part of the Global Days of Action on Military Spending. Respecting social distancing regulations, we'll hold placards at various places around Liverpool city centre for 10 - 15 minutes at a time to highlight to the public the billions the Government wastes each year on weapons of murder and destruction whilst continually underfunding the NHS and other vital public services.

The precise details will be confirmed in the coming weeks, so if you would like more information please contact the office, and find out more about GDAMS please visit [demilitarize.org](https://demilitarize.org)

## BRUCE KENT AND DR. VALERIE FLESSATI AWARDED LAMBETH CROSS

CND Vice-President, [Bruce Kent](#) and Pax Christi Vice-President, Dr. Valerie Flessati, are among the recipients of this year's Lambeth Cross for their outstanding contributions to the Church and wider society from Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

Commended for their 'exceptional, tireless and lifelong dedication to the Christian ecumenical search for peace, both individually and together', their full citation reads:

*Peace is one of three pillars of the ecumenical pilgrimage towards a healed world. Valerie Flessati and Bruce Kent chose spiritual warfare on all violence and war. Their passionate campaigning did not sit easily with ecclesiastical status, so Monsignor Kent felt that to rejoin the laos, the people of God, was his appropriate level of engagement. Was not their baptism into the Body of Christ the highest accolade? Marriage added the mutual support and inner strength which the struggle demands - and which love provides.*

Following the award [Independent Catholic News](#) (ICN), stated that Bruce's work for peace has inspired generations of activists and although the fear of nuclear war may have mistakenly waned, his work affirms that Trident continues to shame us. ICN praised Valerie's intellect and organisational skill, describing her as an inspirational university teacher.

Merseyside CND would like to congratulate both Bruce and Valerie on receiving the Lambeth Cross and pay tribute to their tireless work for peace and social justice.



### 50 CLUB - RECENT WINNERS

#### Monthly Draw

Jan - John Middleton (47)

Feb - Barbara Hardcastle (11)

Mar - Gerry Poole (36)

Despite the likelihood of Co-ord not meeting in person for the foreseeable future, the 50 Club draw will continue each month. If you have won you'll be notified immediately by email. Please send your bank details to [cath.page@phonecoop.coop](mailto:cath.page@phonecoop.coop) if you have not already done so.

### CO-ORD MEETINGS

Since May 2020 our Co-ord meetings have, with one exception, been held online due to the Covid-19 pandemic and we don't yet know when we'll next meet in the office.

If you would be like to take part in the next meeting at **14:00 on 5th May** please get in touch.

## JOIN MERSEYSIDE CND

### MERSEYSIDE C.N.D. MEMBERSHIP FORM

To receive regular newsletters please complete this form and return it to the address at the top of Page 1 along with your cheque.

NAME.....TELEPHONE.....

ADDRESS.....

EMAIL.....

I wish to \*join/ rejoin Merseyside CND. Subscription rates: \*waged-£5/ family-£6/ unwaged or youth (under 22) £2.

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

I understand that Merseyside CND needs funds for its campaigns and donate £.....



Produced by Merseyside Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament