

# Campaign



Last month the Chancellor George Osborne faced strong opposition to his Budget, even from within his own party. Chair of Parliamentary CND **Caroline Lucas MP** discusses its relevance to the Trident debate.

**I**t's astonishing, when you take a moment to think about it, that we live in a country where our government is willing to spend billions of pounds on weapons of mass destruction, but is so obsessed with 'belt-tightening' that they try and take away vital benefits for people with disabilities.

As I sat through the budget discussions in March I couldn't help but think of the many ways in which the over £100bn earmarked for Trident could be put to better use. Giving those with disabilities the support they need would only be a start of the difference such sums would make. But perhaps the most galling thing about this government spending so much on Trident is the fact that ministers are always talking about cutting back on 'wasteful spending'. What could be more

useless than replacing Trident?

There is no doubt that Trident is outdated - a weapons system from a bygone age. Even the Tories' own analysis has relegated nuclear attack to being a 'tier 2' threat - below far more pressing concerns such as terrorism, public health and major natural hazards.

Nuclear weapons aren't just outdated though; their presence actually makes us less safe. They do nothing to hinder lone gunmen or extremists, yet their very presence on these islands - and the transport of nuclear warheads on our roads - presents not only a target for terrorism but a continued risk of accidents linked to human error or technical failure.

Britain's possession of nuclear weapons also stalls the global non-proliferation

process. Maintaining our nuclear weapons sends a dangerous signal to the rest of the world that security is dependent on being able to use weapons of mass destruction. Ultimately, countries retain their nuclear weapons because of the perceived threat from other nuclear armed states.

### Balancing the books on the back of poor is never morally justifiable.

A majority of UN nations want to extend International Humanitarian Law to nuclear weapons. They voted overwhelmingly for multilateral nuclear disarmament talks this year. Shockingly, the British Government voted against.

The multibillion pound lifetime spend on Trident would be far better invested in the foundations of real security and wellbeing. That means a decent welfare state, paying public servants what they deserve and, crucially, investing in the foundations of a green economy which creates jobs for the future and leads the fight against climate change.

Balancing the books on the back of poor is never morally justifiable. But in the context of spending over £100 billion on nuclear weapons this warped policy is particularly odious.

### Group round-up

As Spring has sprung, CND groups across the country – including some new ones, like **Exeter University CND, Sherborne and Yeovil** – are arranging more and more actions against Trident replacement. In addition, CND representatives have been debating at Constituency Labour Party and trade union meetings across the country. The response has been very encouraging so far, with almost all CLPs voting in favour of anti-nuclear motions. The overwhelming view of Labour grassroots members, like wider society, is that the time has



come to stop Trident and use the money tackling the threats we face in the 21st century.

**London Region CND** led the remembrance events for the fifth anniversary of the Fukushima accident.

### Your gift for peace

You have the ability to do something now that shapes the future of the nuclear disarmament movement, and help create a genuinely safer world for generations to come.

You can do this all, with a gift to CND in your Will.

Making or updating your Will is quick, simple, and doesn't cost much – usually around £100. It's a small investment for a large return: having a Will ensures your loved ones are provided for in exactly the way you've chosen, and including a gift to CND will enable you to help bring about a world free from nuclear weapons.

Imagine the day the last nuclear weapon is dismantled.

It won't happen overnight, but we're determined to make sure that day comes.

If you want to speak to us about how to make a Will, or amend your Will to include a gift to CND, you can call us on 0207 700 2393. You can also find out more at [www.cnduk.org/legacies](http://www.cnduk.org/legacies).

# Diversify for the future

Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) is one of the unions affiliated to CND. Its General Secretary **Mark Serwotka** writes for CND.

**The moral imperative** to rid our country of weapons of mass destruction coexists with the ethical necessity of protecting our planet, growing a sustainable economy and spreading more equally the proceeds of that growth.

Sadly the debate around Trident is too often debased, and we are offered the through-the-looking-glass scenario that the ‘extremist’ is the leader who says he could never push the nuclear button. Against this background, it has been disappointing to see some in the unions dismissing out of hand the prospects for diversification.

There is an unarguable need for major investment in socially productive industries and infrastructure, not to mention the as yet uncertain hi-tech demands of a future economy. Workforces, and their unions, are best placed to identify how their skills and the technology they use can be adapted for more useful and ethical purposes.

Essential features of our economy are currently suffering: more than 1.2 million households languish on local authority housing waiting lists,



while homebuilding consistently falls woefully short; we lag behind other countries on renewable energy; and the sick joke that is our privatised rail network makes British Rail seem a model of efficiency and popularity.

This is not just about money, it’s about a strategic government committing to development and improvement, harnessing the expertise of skilled workforces. Take renewables – the future will not just require us to generate more green energy, but also use it to power new technologies such as smart appliances in our homes, greener ways of heating and powering buildings, and cleaner forms of private and public transport.

Some areas of the country that rely heavily on Trident, such as Barrow in Cumbria and Devonport in the south west, also suffer from higher than

average unemployment. It is essential that the transition from maintenance of nuclear weapons not only protects livelihoods and skills, but improves them. We must never repeat the deliberate de-industrialisation policies of the Tories in the 1980s and our union will never support any policy that leads to our members, or those of other unions, losing their jobs.

Decommissioning these weapons will take years. During the Labour leadership election campaign, Jeremy Corbyn pledged a government he led in 2020 would immediately start to plan with communities, workforces, unions and businesses to diversify work as part of a new industrial strategy, backed by a national investment bank to direct funding for manufacturing, infrastructure, science and engineering.

This kind of approach is crucial, but will be impossible if name-calling continues to drive our public debate. We need to be mature, thoughtful and collaborative – watchwords of the union movement – to create a safe, sustainable and peaceful future for the next generation and the ones to come.

### 14th April

#### **The Truth about Trident**

7pm, Friends House, 173 Euston Rd, London NW1 2BJ  
Tim Wallis from Quaker Peace and Social Witness will preview his forthcoming book 'The Truth about Trident', to be followed by a Q&A session. The Network for Peace AGM will take place first at 7pm and will take about half an hour. All welcome.

■ Please contact: [mail@networkforpeace.org.uk](mailto:mail@networkforpeace.org.uk) or 07794 036602 with any questions.

### 16th April

#### **People not Trident bloc**

at People's Assembly March for Health, Homes, Jobs and Education. Assemble 1pm, Gower St / Euston Road, London NW1  
Bring your NHS not Trident tshirt!

■ [Email campaigns@cnduk.org](mailto:emailcampaigns@cnduk.org) with any questions.

### 16th April

#### **Spring Concert for Peace**

7:30pm, St John's Church, 73 Waterloo Road, SE1 8TY.  
Musicians for Peace and Disarmament hosts a concert for peace, featuring pianist Julian Jacobson. Tickets £15 / £10 – all proceeds go to the peace movement.



■ Buy your ticket at <http://www.wegotickets.com/event/350335>

### 18th April

#### **Global Day of Action against Military Spending**

The UK will spend £45 billion this year on military expenditure, including on Trident, Britain's nuclear weapons system. Get involved in the Global Day of Action against Military Spending by asking people how they would prefer to spend this money.

■ <https://demilitarize.org.uk/day-of-action/>

### 14th May

#### **Yorkshire CND Day of Dance**

Victoria Hall, Saltaire.  
Dancing, singing and music workshops, plus therapy

treatment and food.

■ <http://www.yorkshirecnd.org.uk/dayofdance>

### Throughout June

#### **Month of Direct Action against Trident**

at AWE Burghfield  
Arranged by Trident Ploughshares.

■ Contact 01547 520929 / 07456 588943 / [june@tridentploughshares.org](mailto:june@tridentploughshares.org)

### Peace Camps

#### **Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp**

Second weekend of every month.

■ Tel: 07946 676761  
[info@aldermaston.net](mailto:info@aldermaston.net)  
[@Peace\\_women\\_AWE](http://www.aldermaston.net)

### Faslane Peace Camp

Permanent. A814, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire G84 8NT.

■ Tel 01436 820901  
[faslanepeacecamp@hotmail.com](mailto:faslanepeacecamp@hotmail.com)

### Menwith Hill

#### **Women's Peace Camp**

■ Contact Yorkshire CND for details: 01274 730795 or [info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk)

### Menwith Hill vigil

Every Tuesday 6-8pm.

■ For more information contact Linds – 01423 884076 or [perry@phoncoop.coop](mailto:perry@phoncoop.coop)