

Campaign

A roller-coaster experience

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** retires from her role on March 31st after almost twenty years leading CND. She will be taking up the role of CND Vice-President. Here she writes about her time at the helm.



WHEN I accepted nomination as a vice-chair of CND in the summer of 2001 I had no idea how much the world would change by the time I was elected at CND Conference on 15th September. Certainly I knew that the world was becoming a more dangerous place – NATO was expanding, missile defence was back with a vengeance and new nuclear weapons were on the agenda. But I hadn't anticipated 9/11, the 'War on Terror' and the Project for the New American Century. Just days after the terrible attacks on the US, I was elected by CND conference: delegates agreed with my hustings speech, that we were united in condemning all forms of terrorism, by states too, not just by non-state actors.

The years that have followed, as Chair from 2003, and as General Secretary from 2010, have been a roller coaster – the Iraq war, Trident replacement, missile defence, NATO, nuclear power, 'low yield' nuclear weapons, nuclear 'use' policies, the climate emergency... the challenges have been endless. But that has always been the case for our movement.

The greatest lesson that I have learnt, both from CND's history and my own time in office, is that CND is most effective when we work in alliance with others, united across the movements, embracing diversity and engaging internationally. And above all I value CND's democracy, the fact that it is a member-led organisation and

that it makes its own political decisions, without fear or favour. And sometimes that means hard debate and discussion.

But that is our greatest strength, because only a movement open to different views can adapt and develop in an ever-changing world, and CND members are so passionate about our goals we are determined to get it right. As a result we have been able to play a leading role in virtually every peace campaign since CND was founded. Our most important asset has always been the accumulated experience of our members and I am confident that will continue. We are most successful and effective when we relate directly to people's most pressing concerns – linking our issues to the reality of what is going on in the world.

The history of CND is the history of post World War II, told from the side of those fighting for humanity against the horror of war. It is the story of ordinary people's struggles to shape a world without nuclear weapons and war, based on legality and morality; to make our governments responsive and accountable over our right to stay alive, our right to breathe air free of radioactive pollution, our right to say no to the indiscriminate killing of other peoples. We continue to make this history and I am proud to have been part of our struggle to bring our vision of the world into being.

It has been an immense privilege to serve in the leadership of CND for almost two decades and I thank you all for the trust and support that you have shown me.

Meet the staff

This month:
Joe Jukes, Peace Education Officer

I run CND's Peace Education programme, which gets students thinking critically about nuclear weapons issues, so they can reach their own conclusions about these crucial matters.

I work with a dozen incredible volunteer School Speakers, and an office volunteer, to educate young people across England on this issue. Week to week I deliver workshops in schools and universities, organise future sessions, liaise with our volunteers, and maintain the Peace Education website and social media accounts. Last academic year our programme reached 7,500 students in over 120 schools and trained approximately 450 teachers.



Spotlight

This month:
Oxford CND



Oxford City Council passed a resolution in January supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This is in no small part down to the fantastic campaigning of Oxford CND – congratulations to all involved!

If you are a CND member or supporter who lives in Oxford, please consider getting involved with the group.

Get in touch by phoning 01865 248357 or emailing oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop

Warhead decision 'anti-democratic'

CND Campaigns Officer **Sara Medi Jones** examines the announcement that work has begun on new nuclear warheads.

PARLIAMENT voted in 2016 to start building new submarines for the Trident replacement programme. But the submarines are only one element of Britain's nuclear weapons system. Britain leases the Trident II D5 missiles that are carried on the submarines from a US pool of missiles, an arrangement which is set to continue with the replacement system.

MPs have been repeatedly promised that a new warhead for the replacement programme would be the subject of a parliamentary decision. But in a surprise announcement, United States officials let slip last month that work had started on a new warhead for Britain, revealing that the US will share its technology. The UK government later confirmed the news. It is a sorry state of affairs when our elected parliamentarians hear about the commissioning of a new UK nuclear warhead from Pentagon officials, rather than directly from the UK government.

That this deal was agreed in secret with the United States, and the government has admitted it only after Pentagon

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officials let the cat of the bag, is anti-democratic. CND has repeatedly warned that the so-called 'special' relationship with the US is dangerous. In recent years, current US President Donald Trump has brought into sharp focus the very worrying aspects of Britain's relationship with the United States. Maintaining it gives active support to Trump's policies and draws us into Trump's nuclear war-mongering. Now it seems that the relationship supersedes parliamentary scrutiny and accountability.

It is also notable that such a big decision has been taken to start building these nuclear bombs ahead of the government's upcoming foreign policy and defence review, pre-

empting any possible conclusions. Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his adviser Dominic Cummings want to overhaul Britain's role in the world and have announced the review will 'identify the necessary reforms to government systems and structures to achieve these goals'.

Bearing in mind that the government in previous National Security Strategies has downgraded the threat of nuclear attack and highlighted the risks from climate change, terrorism and, interestingly given the spread of coronavirus, health pandemics instead; a common sense review would want to review the spending of at least £205 billion on an outdated nuclear weapons system.

It was reported in the media that a government source had said that 'this review allows us to have some difficult conversations.' Those conversations should involve cutting our nuclear ties with the US, not embarking on a programme to build new warheads and scrapping Trident once and for all.

Merseyside CND meeting

March 4th, 2:30pm,
Liverpool Charity and Voluntary
Services, 151 Dale St, Liverpool.
■ Contact 07394 810 871 or
merseysidecnd@gmail.com

**Nuclear power and its
impact on women: public
meeting, March 5th**, 7pm

Cross Street Chapel, Cross
Street, Manchester M2 1NL
■ Contact 0161 273 8283 or
gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

**An Ethical Foreign Policy
Agenda for Britain:**

London CND conference

March 7th, 12 noon-5pm
Khalili lecture theatre, SOAS, 10
Thornhaugh St, London.

■ Contact 020 7607 2302 or
info@londoncnd.org

**Nuclear developments:
CND Cymru public meeting**

March 7th, 2pm, Morlan,
Queens Rd, Aberystwyth.
■ Contact 01239 851188 or
heddwch@cndcymru.org

Oxford CND AGM

March 10th, 6:45pm, Oxford
Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford.
■ Contact 01865 248357 or
oxfordcnd@phoncoop.coop

**Global Dangers Tavistock
public meeting, March**

11th, 7:30pm, United Reformed
Church, Russell St, Tavistock.
■ Contact 01822 615960 or
ginnydavies@onetel.com

Birkenhead CND meeting

March 17th, 8pm
18 Southdale Road, Tranmere.
■ Contact 0151 201 2273 or
cath.page@phoncoop.coop

**London CND new
members meeting, March**

21st, 3pm-4:30pm, SOAS,
Bloomsbury WC1H 0XG

Remember Fukushima
Commemorate the nuclear disaster

Vigil

March 11th, 5.30-6.30pm
Japanese Embassy,
101 Piccadilly, W1 J7

March and rally

March 14th, 12 noon-4pm
Assemble Japanese Embassy

**Parliamentary
public meeting**

March 19th, 7-9pm, Houses of Parliament
For full details see: rememberfukushima.org



■ Contact 020 7607 2302 or
info@londoncnd.org

**Christian CND Embassies
walk, March 31st**

Meet 11am in Dick Sheppard
Chapel, The Crypt, London.
■ Contact christians@cnduk.org
or 020 7700 4200

**Faringdon Peace Group
meeting, April 1st**, 7:30pm

Friends Meeting House,
Faringdon.
■ Contact 01367 710308 or
steve.jenny@hotmail.com

**Beyond Nuclear:
Helensburgh CND
conference, April 4th**,

11am-5pm, Adelaide Place
Baptist Church, 209 Bath Street,
Glasgow.
■ Contact ellen.renton@sky.com

**Abingdon Peace Group
meeting, April 21st**, 8pm

The Northcourt Centre,
Northcourt Road, Abingdon.
■ Contact 01235 526265 or
sallyreynolds@btinternet.com