



OXFORD CND

NEWSLETTER

September/October 2022



U.S.A.F. Croughton
(US communication base)

Keep Space for Peace
Stop militarisation of space

Saturday 1st October 2022
12.00-3.30pm

National March and Rally – Speakers:

Paul Mobbs – ‘Croughtonwatch’

Dave Webb – Convener Global Network

Tom Unterrainer – Chair CND

This major U.S. communication and intelligence base supports space communications, data links, military drone information, bomber guidance, missile defence, diplomatic communications, and command and control war fighting functions. It is a key link in the ‘chain’ controlling US surveillance, armed drone and special forces operations across Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. The new U.S. ‘Space Force’ is part of the militarisation of space. This will also need ground stations like USAF Croughton.

‘RAF’ Croughton main gate is on the B4031, off the A43, 2 miles North of M40 junction 10, just South of Brackley, Northamptonshire.

Travel west on the B4031, past the main gate, turn left at mini-roundabout on eastern edge of Croughton village, and park at signed site, not at main gate. Starts 12.00 car park, along B4031 to Main Gate, finishes 4.00pm. Food stall and disabled toilet at main gate. Bring flags and banners!

Speakers / Music / Food / Banners / Campaigners

Minibus leaves St Giles, Oxford 10.45 & Oxford Rail station 11.00

Tickets £8.00 – **pre booking essential** – contact:-

01865 248357 / oxonpeace@yahoo.co.uk

Oxfordshire Peace Campaign

Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

The Play Continues

It was April 1981: Ronald Reagan had been elected, Margaret Thatcher had flown to see him with Trident top of the agenda, the Soviet Union had conducted the first of a series of 21 underground nuclear tests for that year. And the Chipping Norton (Chippy) CND branch was set up, with support from Banbury CND, at a meeting in the gallery of the town's theatre. "Better Active Today than Radioactive Tomorrow", was the headline on its first newsletter. In August a meeting of over a hundred people in Charlbury was addressed by the CND General Secretary – the wonderful Bruce Kent (who remained indefatigably active until we sadly lost him in June this year).

The branch Secretary was Eve Coles, a stalwart activist for peace and social justice whom everyone knew in Chippy, where she regularly got re-elected as district councillor even when her Labour party was in decline. I was fortunate to know her and her archive has been passed to me following her own sad death recently. Browsing through the pages, and revisiting the history of that time, I am reminded of just how much effort, by how many people, over the decades has been committed in the struggle for nuclear disarmament. The history also shows that, in spite of official denials, the protests and the campaigns did have a significant effect upon the British government and upon others in Europe.

In the month after the Chippy branch was set up, the British defence secretary John Nott announced plans for a publicity campaign to wean "well-meaning innocent people" away from CND, warning that peace groups were dominated by "a tiny number of left-wingers," Files relating to her Washington visit (released in 2011), reveal according to an analysis by the Margaret Thatcher Foundation that "the real problem for the politicians was uncertainty as to their ability to manage public opinion with unilateralism rising in popularity". The US historian Lawrence Wittner in his great three-volume history of the world movement has documented its "significant... impact upon the nuclear policies of governments around the world."

It did make a difference, and all those mundane

but time-consuming activities planned by Chippy and other branches helped to do so. The branch was looking for "cake makers, market stall workers, raffle ticket sellers, typists, artists, printing machines and street theatre performers". It seems to have found them all, including the performers. Two years later, they staged a show with a large model of a Cruise Missile, and two Reagan and Thatcher look-alikes, who sang to the tune of "Oh No John No".

Reagan: "In Downing Street there stands a Thatcher, God is on her side I know. I'll go and court her for her bases, She must answer yes or no." *Thatcher:* "Oh no, Ron" etc. But by the end of the song she is saying "Yes", in exchange for Cruise missiles (actually it was in exchange for the Trident update).

The Chippy archive includes a selection of

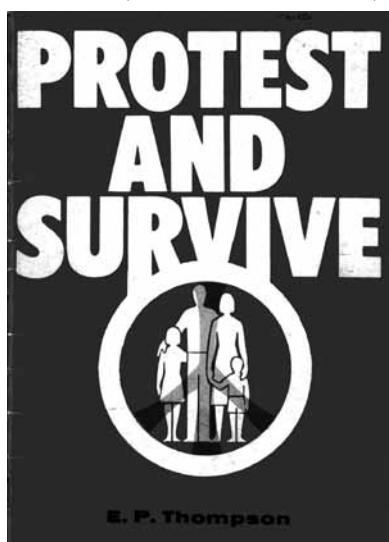
pamphlets from the 1980s – a reminder of how much serious research was done both by CND and the European Nuclear Disarmament (END) campaign – and also how publishers including Penguin gave them an outlet. E P Thompson's *Protest and Survive*, Paul Rogers on the *US Military Presence in Britain*, Nobel prize-winner Martin Ryle's *Towards the Nuclear Holocaust*, the science writer Nigel Calder on *Nuclear Nightmares*, and even a CND campaigners' guide to "using the media". I have checked with the CND archive, now lodged with LSE, and

they already have copies of these works: if any local branch would like the collection, they are welcome to have it.

Understandably CND waned as a mass movement in the false dawn that followed the apparent end of the cold war – although Oxford and quite a few other peace groups have weathered the trend. It is good to hear now that there are plans under way to revive the Chippy branch, and anyone interested should contact Mike Cahill, tel. 07876 685417, or email him at annapers@aol.com.

It did make a difference, and it still does. It would be great to see a new street theatre in the Chippy market place, and there are, alas, new characters to be acted. ■

John Gittings



Nuclear Information Service

'Extreme Circumstances – the UK's new nuclear warhead in context'

A new report from Nuclear Information Service gathers together all available information from UK and US on the UK's Replacement Warhead Programme. The report examines the links between the UK Replacement Warhead and the planned US W93 warhead, and the dependencies which mean the new UK warhead is very likely to follow the W93 in having a higher explosive yield than the current UK warhead. Other subjects include the rationale behind the W93, nuclear policy in both the US and UK, and the status of the lower-yield capability on the UK's current warhead

The new warhead will be deployed on the UK's Trident missiles which are leased from the United States (US). It will be a 'parallel' programme to the new US W93 Trident warhead currently being developed. The UK has the smallest nuclear weapons stockpile amongst the five nuclear-armed states recognised by the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). As a party to that treaty the UK is committed to eliminating its nuclear weapons. In March 2021 the government abandoned plans to reduce the UK's warhead stockpile limit to 180 and instead announced an increase to 260, a reversal of trends established towards the end of the Cold War.

The new UK Replacement Warhead Programme was announced in February 2020. It entered its 'readiness phase' in the financial year 2019-20, and the government spent £214m on the project up to the end of financial year 2020-21. The project is currently at a stage analogous to the first phase of the W93 programme and is yet to settle on a single chosen design. The government has not provided an official cost estimate and timetable for the project, but the warhead is likely to come into service some-time in the late 2030s or early 2040s.

Recommendations

1 If the UK Replacement Warhead Programme goes ahead, despite the known drawbacks, the Government should make a public statement to the effect that the programme will not result in any change to the UK's nuclear capabilities, and any changes to the warhead design will be solely focussed on: a) Improvements to safety and surety. b) Ease of verifiable dismantlement, using lessons learned in the UK's disarmament verification

research. c) Easy replacement and life-extension of components, in order to eliminate any technical pressures for new future warhead designs while the UK remains a nuclear weapons state.

2 The UK government should release a detailed justification for the recent increase to its warhead stockpile cap, in order to allow public debate about the merits of the change.

3 This justification should include a statement about the status of any lower-yield capability on the UK's current warhead and a timetable for the permanent phase-out of this capability, in keeping with its commitments to the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences.

4 The UK should abandon its doctrine of strategic ambiguity. It has the potential to confuse decision-making in a crisis and any strategic benefit it might provide is outweighed by the harms done to democratic scrutiny, accountability and strategic stability.

5 The UK government should immediately make public the size of its operational warhead stockpile, as well as the maximum number of missiles and warheads carried on each submarine. It should commit to updating parliament on any changes to these numbers.

6 The UK's nuclear weapons programme, particularly the Dreadnought submarine programme and the Replacement Warhead Programme, should be subject to detailed parliamentary scrutiny to ensure the best possible management of the public funds being spent. A central element of this scrutiny should be annual inquiries and reports by the Defence Select Committee, as was the case during construction of the first generation of Trident submarines and warheads through the 1980s and early 1990s.

The full report and an executive summary can be downloaded at –

<https://www.nuclearinfo.org/reports/2022/extreme-circumstances-the-uks-new-nuclear-warhead-in-context/>

An update on UK nuclear weapons modernisation -

<https://www.nuclearinfo.org/comment/2022/06/an-update-on-uk-nuclear-weapons-modernisation/>

IAEA hopes to visit Zaporizhzhia 'as soon as possible'

With shelling continuing in the area of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi has welcomed recent statements indicating that both Ukraine and Russia support the IAEA's aim to send a mission to the plant.

The Zaporizhzhia plant has been under Russian military control since early March, but continues to be operated by its Ukrainian staff. It is the first time a nuclear power plant has been occupied by a military force. There has been continued military action in and around it, with both sides blaming the other for the intensified shelling over the past two weeks.

"In this highly volatile and fragile situation, it is of vital importance that no new action is taken that could further endanger the safety and security of one of the world's largest nuclear power plants," Grossi said. "There is an urgent need to lower the tension and take the necessary steps to help ensure nuclear safety and security and prevent any radiological consequences for the population and the environment. The IAEA can play an indispensable role in this regard."

He said the IAEA is in active consultations with all

parties regarding its efforts to send such a mission as soon as possible. As during two previous IAEA missions to Ukraine during the conflict, Grossi would himself lead this mission.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, in a 19 August telephone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron, said he was in favour of sending a mission from the IAEA to the Zaporizhzhia plant. The Élysée Palace said Putin had indicated "his agreement to the deployment of this mission and the methods mentioned". A statement from the Kremlin said "the Russian side confirmed its readiness to provide the Agency inspectors with the necessary assistance."

The Élysée Palace noted that Macron had spoken to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on 16 August and they had "discussed the terms of such a mission".

In a 19 August address, Zelensky said: "Ukrainian diplomats, our partners, representatives of the UN and the IAEA are working out the specific details of the mission to be sent to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. With this mission, the restoration of full security at the ZNPP and in [the nearby town of] Enerhodar can begin. ■"

Sizewell C

It has now been confirmed that Sizewell C, a proposal for a new nuclear power station in Suffolk, has been given the green light by both the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The project is estimated to cost £20-30 billion, in which the Government will soon make a final decision on public investment. Government is expected to buy a 20% stake, costing £6bn. Leader of the Suffolk GLI Group, Cllr Andrew Stringer, is concerned that decisions are being made against the recommendation of their own planners, and that the benefits claimed are vastly overstated: "[Sizewell C] has been heralded by some as a huge boost to employment opportunities for the young, as well as the saviour of our ever more urgent energy crisis.

Several factors may prove this enthusiasm ill placed." Suffolk GLI as a group have concerns that the highly-skilled jobs promised will be imported from outside Suffolk, leaving the Suffolk workforce

to pick up lower-skilled employment. In addition, many support packages to help the local economy do not nearly equate to the level of custom and tourism lost during Sizewell C's development. Cllr Stringer puts emphasis on the importance of the critical decisions we make now about our energy supply, stating nuclear power is not in keeping with a fully net-zero energy security strategy: "No nuclear project has ever gone to plan. At best, Sizewell C will be producing power in 2033/2034, and the carbon legacy of the building process will take a further decade to payoff.

This ignores the issues in waste and assumes the current developer will see the project through at its current agreed price. Since the agreement to build Sizewell C, the French Government are in the process of buying EDF, and at present UK consumers are paying double for the same EDF Energy French consumers are." ■

Royal International Air Tattoo

Campaigners from Oxford CND, Abingdon Peace Group, Kidlington Peace Group and Faringdon Peace Group (Collectively Oxfordshire Peace Campaign, OPC) and XR Swindon gathered on July 14th near Lechlade, Glos. on one of the roads leading to RIAT 2022 at USAF Fairford. Photo is of some of the campaigners.

They displayed banners illustrating the true nature of the base, which now hosts USAF U2 intelligence gathering planes flying out daily near Eastern Europe. The base also hosts regular 'forward mission' training visits by nuclear-capable USAF bombers, such as B52s, B1s, and B2 Stealth bombers.

Many punters were travelling by heading for the large camping areas surrounding USAF Fairford where the event, the largest international air tattoo in the world, takes place over a weekend. The demonstration was on the 'trade' day when potential buyers and important potential buyers also visit before the main RIAT. ■



NUKEWATCH Nuclear convoys

Two nuclear convoys travelled through Oxfordshire recently. A Special Nuclear Material convoy travelled from RAF Brize Norton to AWE Aldermaston on July 22nd, passing Witney, Kidlington, Oxford, Abingdon and Didcot. A nuclear warhead convoy travelled northbound passing Didcot, Abingdon, Oxford, Kidlington, Bicester and Banbury on July 25th. These convoys were tracked and monitored by nukewatchers.

These are the most dangerous cargoes on our roads. ■



Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombing remembered

Each August the anniversary of the dropping of the first atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 is commemorated across the world. This year, Hiroshima Day, Saturday 6th August, was marked with a gathering for reflection and commemoration at the War Memorial in Bonn Square, Oxford. ■



B52 bombers at USAF Fairford

4 x B52 nuclear capable US bombers arrived Thursday August 18th on exercise at USAF Fairford on the Oxfordshire / Gloucestershire border – <https://ffdmovements.blogspot.com/>

It follows a few days of transport planes arriving and departing from the base. US U2 intelligence gathering planes already operate out of the base.

There will be a national CND gathering at USAF Lakenheath on September 17th to protest at the potential return of US nuclear bombs to Britain. Our local campaigners plan to gather at USAF Fairford on the same day to protest at the exercises by nuclear capable US bombers carried out from this base. ■



CND demonstration at RAF Lakenheath

Join CND at RAF Lakenheath to protest against US nuclear weapons being stationed there on Saturday 17th September. CND condemns the return of US nuclear weapons to RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk. Speeches and entertainment between 1pm-3pm.

A shuttle coach will be taking people from Norwich station to the base, contact Norwich CND (richard.allwright@icloud.com) to reserve a spot.

- Book a seat on the London coach
- Yorkshire CND is organising a coach from the region, contact info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk to register your interest

- Further coaches are being arranged from across the country, more information soon.

For any general queries, please contact: information@cnduk.org

Oxfordshire Peace Campaign demonstration USAF Fairford

Join Oxfordshire Peace Campaign to protest against US nuclear capable bombers conducting regular exercises from USAF Fairford, Gloucestershire, on Saturday 17th September. 4 x B52 bombers are now at the base, along with the U2 intelligence gathering aircraft stationed there. Demonstration at main gate, probably 12.00 noon – 2.00pm – more details later. ■

‘War and climate emergency’

A day school for climate and peace campaigners

West Oxford Community Centre, Oxford,

Saturday 29 October 2022, 11-5



It may – or may not – be too early to say whether the war in Ukraine and with it the renewed threat of nuclear-tipped Cold War will wreck or accelerate national and international efforts to respond to an ever-worsening climate emergency.

It certainly poses questions for how grass-roots climate as well as peace campaigners ‘think’ effective action in the coming months and possibly years ahead. This educational workshop has been put together to provide space in which to learn, reflect and respond. The workshop welcomes anybody with an interest.

Contributors will include Nafeez Ahmed, RethinkX writer and analyst, Stuart Parkinson, Scientists for Social Responsibility, Andrew Simms, Rapid Transition Alliance and New Weather Institute, Tim Street, nuclear weapons expert.

The workshop is being part funded by Rescue!History <http://www.rescue-history.org.uk> but we would appreciate a £5.00 donation from waged folk, or whatever participants can afford. Unwaged for free.

Eventbrite registration will follow. WOCC hall size means there will be a cap on participant numbers,, so please register early.

Further enquiries, contact Nuala Young on NualaYoung@hotmail.com

Supported by MAW (Movement against War), Oxford CND, Oxford FOE, Swindon XR, Faringdon Peace Group. ■



Diary

September

Wednesday 7th – Faringdon Peace Group – 7.30pm.

9th-10th Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp – Nuala 01865 749459.

Tuesday 13th – Oxfordshire Peace Campaign Zoom – 4.30pm.

Saturday 17th – USAF Fairford main gate demo – 12.00 noon – 01865 248357 or oxonpeace@yahoo.co.uk.

Tuesday 20th – Abingdon Peace Group meeting – 8.00pm.

October

Saturday 1st – USAF Croughton march & rally – 12.00 noon – 3.30pm. oxonpeace@yahoo.co.uk

Wednesday 5th – Faringdon Peace Group meeting – 7.30pm Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp – Nuala 01865 749459.

7th-8th – Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp – Nuala 01865 749459.

Saturday 15th – CND conference.

Sunday 16th – Menwith Hill / Yorkshire CND workshop.

Tuesday 18th – Abingdon Peace Group – 8.00pm.

Saturday 29th – Militarism & Climate day school, West Oxford Community Centre – Nuala 01865 749459.

Best list of news items, webinars etc:

https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/news_items

<https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/events>

<https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk>



Latest News

NTP

A month-long meeting on nuclear disarmament ended in failure at the United Nations when Russia refused to accept the final draft of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The treaty is reviewed every five years as part of an effort to reduce nuclear risks and stop the expansion of nuclear arsenals around the world. The failure came amid disagreements over Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Liz Truss

Liz Truss has vowed to push ahead with renewing Trident if she wins the Tory leadership, as part of plans to "protect the UK". She has already pledged to boost defence spending to 3% of GDP by 2030 – a promise her rival Rishi Sunak has refused to match because he says he does not believe in "arbitrary targets" when it comes to security.

Membership subscriptions 2022 Please pay your subscription soon!

If you pay your subscription by cheque please can you pay us as soon as possible. Oxford CND needs that money to campaign and send you information and newsletters. We are also very grateful for extra donations.

Subs are very reasonable – £10 or £5 low wage, but are essential for us to continue to campaign. Standing orders can continue as before. Make cheques for 2022 payable to Oxford CND and send to: Membership, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP.

Oxford CND Newsletter by email

Some members already receive the Oxford CND newsletter only by email. If you would also like to receive it only by email, contact: oxfordcnd@phoncoop.coop

Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

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Contributions to the next issue...

Please send letters and items to:
Newsletter, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP
No later than **Monday, October 24th 2022**