

## **No Trident Replacement core group 23.07.2024**

### **1. Attendees**

Sara Medi Jones (CND), David Cullen (NIS), Steve Hucklesby (JPIT), Liddy Buswell (Christian CND), Richard Outram (NFLA), Phil Webber (SGR), Rachel Earlington (CND), Andrew Jackson (Pax Christi), Dixie Wills (Quakers).

### **Apologies**

Frank Jackson (Uniting for Peace), Kate Hudson (CND), Ros Cook (WILPF).

### **2. Minutes and matters arising**

Two corrections under point 3 in relation to Frank Jackson's comments: it should have read "\$91 billion" and should have read that none of the candidates gave any answer to the question, not just that they did not answer positively.

### **3. Election analysis including nuclear and military factors**

The Labour Party are now in government, having won a large majority of Parliamentary seats in the July 4th election, despite winning less votes than they received in 2019. Core group discussed what the result means for the peace and anti-nuclear movement.

The Conservative vote was down, with the right-wing vote split by Reform, for now. However, the party likely to regroup for next election.

Four independent candidates were elected that stood on a platform of a ceasefire in Gaza, including Jeremy Corbyn.

Further discussion needed in core group on implications of results in Scotland, when Scottish colleagues can be present. The number of SNP MPs is down to nine, with impression relayed that in general, Scottish MPs are now less committed to nuclear disarmament.

The Green Party now has four seats. Good position on peace and anti-war issues, but they have recently changed their policy on NATO to support reform as opposed to an outright rejection of the nuclear-armed alliance.

The Lib Dems (winning 72 seats) have also changed their position on Trident recently, now supporting maintaining a continuous patrol of the nuclear-armed submarines. There are still strong anti-nuclear members in the party, and CND received good responses from many of their candidates that did reply to the general election campaign.

There are no Conservatives in Wales now, and four Plaid Cymru MPs were elected. CND will be looking for more opportunities to work with them in Westminster, particularly around the TPNW which the Senedd officially supports.

Many core group members currently reaching out to make contact with newly-elected MPs.

Plenty of challenges ahead, especially with external pressure to increase the military, but also opportunities to engage.

Still waiting to find out on Chairs and membership of select committees, which will have an impact on potential for organisations' work in Parliament.

#### **4. Labour's Defence Review**

Labour in government has announced it will be conducting a Strategic Defence Review. Review has been commissioned by the Prime Minister, will be overseen by the Defence Secretary John Healey, and headed by Lord Robertson alongside Fiona Hill and General Sir Richard Barrons. Will report in the first half of 2025.

Review will be taking submissions by the end of September – CND, Rethinking Security and others will be contributing.

#### **5. What another Trump presidency could mean for peace campaigning**

Discussion had on recent events in US politics - the attempted assassination of one candidate and the other stepping down. A new Democratic candidate might change things, but many polls indicate a second Trump presidency is possible, and even likely.

Core group members expecting negative impact on our campaign issues. NPT Review Conference mentioned – President Trump makes consensus even more unlikely in 2026.

Discussion had on possibility of Trump renewing nuclear testing. He was persuaded out of this in first presidency but international situation now different. What impact would this have on nuclear sharing arrangements with UK, which has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty? When should we start raising this as a potential issue with politicians?

Trump has been linked with Project 2025, their nuclear policy could give some indication of what could be ahead (see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project\\_2025](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_2025)).

## **6. Spycops Inquiry**

Core group members updated on CND's participation in the 'Spycops' Undercover Policing Inquiry that is investigating decades of undercover policing work and its impact on individuals and organisations. Kate Hudson recently gave evidence on behalf of CND, which is a 'core participant' in the Inquiry, owing to the fact that it was infiltrated by undercover police officers during the 1980s.

The behaviour of the police and MI5 clearly anti-democratic. In addition, Kate told the Inquiry that the Conservative party had used the undercover officers to help their "propaganda war against CND" in the 1983 general election campaign.

Personal experiences of interaction with undercover policing discussed.

## **7. International summits: NATO and NPT PrepCom**

NATO summit took place earlier this month in Washington, marking the 75th anniversary of the alliance. The meeting focused on supporting Ukraine, with members pledging support to future membership, announcing further integration with Ukraine's military, plus military support. US-built F-16 jets are in the process of being transferred to Ukraine from Denmark and the Netherlands, the first time Ukraine has received the advanced aircraft.

World BEYOND War has given the 2024 Lifetime Organizational War Abolisher Award to No to War – No to NATO, an international network comprising of 650 organisations (including CND) in over 30 countries.

NPT PrepCom is currently ongoing in Geneva. CND side meeting took place this morning, discussing the need to oppose any talk of a European nuclear bomb.

China has presented paper proposing all nuclear-armed states adopt no first use policy, see [https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty\\_on\\_the\\_Non\\_Proliferation\\_of\\_Nuclear\\_Weapons\\_-\\_Preparatory\\_Committee\\_for\\_the\\_Eleventh\\_Review\\_ConferenceSecond\\_session\\_\(2024\)/NPT\\_CONF.2026\\_PC.II\\_WP.33\\_-\\_33\\_ADVANCE\\_UNEDITED\\_VERSION\\_-\\_China\\_-\\_No-first-use\\_of\\_Nuclear\\_Weapons\\_Initiative-ENG.pdf](https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty_on_the_Non_Proliferation_of_Nuclear_Weapons_-_Preparatory_Committee_for_the_Eleventh_Review_ConferenceSecond_session_(2024)/NPT_CONF.2026_PC.II_WP.33_-_33_ADVANCE_UNEDITED_VERSION_-_China_-_No-first-use_of_Nuclear_Weapons_Initiative-ENG.pdf).

Reaching Critical Will's Twitter account a useful resource for updates from conference - @RCW\_.

## **8. Mutual Defence Agreement**

NIS has published report on MDA, with new information provided by Freedom of Information requests: <https://www.nuclearinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/MDA-Briefing-digital.pdf>

NIS was stonewalled in efforts to obtain further information on the transfer of nuclear materials, but has discovered new figures on transfer of non-nuclear components.

Worth noting that the language of the MDA was changed in 2014 to allow for the UK to purchase more submarine reactors, reactor parts and fuel.

Report includes good information on the Joint Working Groups (JOWOGs).

## **9. Lakenheath peace camp: US nuclear weapons coming to Britain**

Lakenheath Peace Camp is currently ongoing outside the main gates of the base in Suffolk (running July 13<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>). Camp has been a success, with many visitors. Rally organised last Saturday, where two activists were arrested while trying to get a response from the base commander to their concerns.

Next steps for the campaign against US nuclear weapons returning to Britain to be discussed – CND looking into arranging a national demonstration at Lakenheath towards the end of the year.

## **10. Any other business**

- The anniversaries of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are coming up on August 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Please inform [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org) if you are arranging any events that can be added to this map: <https://cnduk.org/hiroshima-and-nagasaki-cnd-exhibition-what-can-you-do/>
- The US has declassified the number of nuclear weapons in its arsenal, in what is a positive move towards nuclear transparency. Core group members discussed how to use this to bring pressure on new UK government to revert to disclosing information on its stockpile.

The next NTR core group meeting will take place on **Tuesday September 17<sup>th</sup> at 3pm** (in break with usual pattern to avoid clash with Labour party conference).