



OXFORD CND

NEWSLETTER

November / December 2025



Trump announces resumption of nuclear testing

On October 30th, President Donald Trump ordered the U.S. military to immediately resume the process for testing nuclear weapons. If this proceeds according to his order, the testing (detonating) of nuclear weapons will end a 33 year-long U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing.



Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

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would, at last and at least, no longer live under the daily (more often, nightly) threats of death, and that, in some way, life would become a bit more liveable.

trapped robots”, in which out-of-date armoured personnel carriers (APCs) were packed with explosives and operated remotely. These were sent in to residential neighbourhoods where they would typically explode early in the morning, causing maximum panic. Or else, they would lay a trail of explosives to be ignited at once. (This was reported in the Israeli press and by critical online monitors such as *Middle East Eye*, but I only heard it mentioned once – by the excellent Jeremy Bowen – on the BBC). First used last year, this tactic became widespread in the renewed offensive before the ceasefire with the clear aim of making huge swathes of Gaza uninhabitable.

Yet Gaza is being re-inhabited – at least the half of the territory from which at the time of writing the IDF has been withdrawn. In such dire conditions, one may ask, how is it possible to maintain even the slightest vestige of “hope”? One answer to this is specific to the existential experience of the Palestine people for whom dispossession has been woven into the history of their last three quarters of a century. The passionate resolve of so many Gazans to return to this devastated wasteland, expressed in many interviews, reflects in part a resolve not

to submit to permanent exile – another *nakba* comparable to that of 1948. (There are others who would prefer to leave, but there is no evidence of a mass demand, apart from the more limited effort to take the badly wounded, especially children, to medical facilities abroad).

Beyond this, hope seems to be a widespread human mechanism to sustain existence in the worst of circumstances – indeed, without a measure of hope (at times even optimism) for

the future, humanity might simply have ground to a halt long ago. Reflecting on this, I have come across several expressions of hope which I would like to share. The first is from Auschwitz: the survivor Primo Levi wrote that although hope was not a sufficient condition for staying alive (having a skill that the Germans might employ was the main requirement), complete despair could be avoided through hope, because of one's "imperfect



knowledge of the future".

My second example comes from Drapchi prison in Tibet, where groups of Buddhist nuns in the late '80s to '90s were imprisoned and tortured for daring to voice publicly their support for the Dalai Lama and independence. In defiance, they composed a set of songs that were smuggled abroad and led to more punishment. One of the poems ends with these lines:

*A time will come when the sun will emerge / From
the cloud and shine clearly. / Our hearts are not sad;
Why should we be sad? Even if the sun doesn't shine
during the day / There will be the moon at night.*

My last example comes from Hiroshima, in a poem by Kurihara Sadako who was a survivor and become known as the “poet of Hiroshima”. Her poems were never fierce or angry, and her poem “River’s rebirth”, written in 1966, is a poem of hope.

*Rain falls on the ruined city... / and plants regain
their colour and freshness. / The river mirrors the blue
sky / and heals wounds.*

The river of hope flows without end. ■

John Gittings

www.johngittings.com

Britain's nuclear hypocrisy

FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER marked the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear-Weapons. On this day CND launched the campaign against Britain's reckless nuclear expansion, starting with a legal opinion we have secured showing that the government's expansion of its nuclear weapons capability is in clear breach of international law.

The new legal opinion, finds that Britain's purchase of 12 F-35A nuclear-capable fighter jets is in violation of its commitments under Article VI of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This article states: that, '[e]ach of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.'

In their joint opinion, international law experts Professor Christine Chinkin and Dr Louise Arimatsu, argue: "[t]he decision of the UK to purchase F-35a fighter jets rather than any other model is precisely because the aircraft can 'deliver both conventional and nuclear weapons' and thereby enable the RAF to reacquire 'a nuclear role for the first time since 1998.' Reinstating a nuclear role for the RAF represents a reversal of the UK's long-term commitment to nuclear disarmament, including under the NPT."

This expansion is, in the words of the Starmer government the 'biggest strengthening of the UK's nuclear posture in a generation'.

This is yet another breach of the NPT by a British government. Back in 2005 a legal opinion found that replacing Trident would put Britain in material breach of the NPT. Many viewed Britain's decision in 2021 to increase in its nuclear warheads by 40% also in breach. There are also serious concerns that the Aukus Treaty – which facilitates nuclear-sharing between the US, Britain and Australia – also breaches the NPT. Ensuring that Australia will become the first non-nuclear weapons state to be able to deploy nuclear-powered submarines will certainly constitute nuclear proliferation.

It is not just CND that have been questioning the legal basis of this nuclear expansion. MPs and peers have been doing the same. Britain's breach of its international disarmament obligations under mine the case for global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

The British F35A fighter jets will be part of a NATO mission. NATO, the most powerful nuclear-armed alliance in the world, has a first-use nuclear strike policy. This means it is an aggressive, not a defensive alliance. These dual-capability jets can launch B61-12 nuclear bombs, which have been designed by the US specifically to be used in war.

The legal opinion is also very important in drawing attention to Britain's nuclear hypocrisy, and the impact this is having on driving nuclear tensions. As both Arimatsu and Chinkin state in their final reflections 'we consider the hypocrisy that allows it [the British government] to pursue its own modernised nuclear policy while asserting the unsuitability of other states to pursue theirs to be indicative of double standards and a defence policy lacking in morality.'

The day CND published this legal opinion exposing the British government's clear breach of its disarmament obligations, the UK ambassador Barbara Woodward, was at the UN arguing that "Iran is defying the global non-proliferation regime" and voted to ensure sanctions are reinstated on that country.

This was despite the fact that Iran – after US and Israeli illegal bombing of its nuclear facilities – had reached an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that inspectors could return to conduct on-site inspections of its facilities. Sanctions may well now undermine this agreement.

Britain's Strategic Defence Review reasserts that British nuclear weapons should be used to stop other countries' nuclear proliferation. It specifically refers to the right of Britain – as part of NATO – to launch a nuclear attack against a non-nuclear weapons state that is a signatory to the NPT that is in 'material breach of those non-proliferation-obligations'. In this current situation, how will Iran interpret such nuclear threats?

It is clear that Britain's nuclear hypocrisy and its dangerous expansion have nothing to do with making the British population – or the world – safer. So long as nuclear weapons states like Britain continue to re-arm and threaten to use their nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states, the threat of nuclear proliferation and of nuclear weapons being used again in war will increase. ■

Sophie Bolt, CND General Secretary

USAF Croughton 'Keep Space for Peace' demo



Campaigners at the Oxfordshire Peace Campaign 'Keep Space for Peace' on Sunday 5th October at USAF Croughton.

Trump announces resumption of nuclear testing

On October 30, President Trump ordered the US military to immediately resume the process for testing nuclear weapons. If this proceeds according to his order, the testing (detonating) of nuclear weapons will end a 33 year-long U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing and this would be extremely dangerous for humanity. If Trump is referring to the resumption of explosive nuclear testing, this would be an extremely unfortunate, and regrettable, step by the United States.

It would almost inevitably be followed by tit-for-tat reciprocal announcements by other nuclear-armed states, particularly Russia and China, and cement an accelerating arms race that puts us all in great jeopardy. It would also create profound risks of radioactive fallout globally. Even if such nuclear tests are conducted underground, this poses a risk in terms of the possible release and venting of radioactive materials, as well as the potential leakage into groundwater.

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has been signed by 187 countries – it's one of the most widely supported disarmament treaties in the world.

The US signed the treaty decades ago, but has yet to ratify it. Nonetheless, it is actually legally bound not to violate the spirit and purpose of the treaty while it's a signatory.

Nuclear watchdogs worldwide are wondering what might come of Trump's pronouncement — and what he even means since the US hasn't

conducted a nuclear weapons test in decades. "First of all, every statement in that post is wrong," said Matthew Bunn, a nuclear weapons expert at Harvard University. "It's not true the United States has the world's most nuclear weapons. It's not true that other states are carrying out nuclear tests. (Trump) seems to think it's the Department of Defense that carries out nuclear tests. It's not. It's the Department of Energy."

Trump's own nominee to head the US Strategic Command seemed unclear of the president's intent as he faced the Senate Armed Service Committee in a confirmation hearing. "Neither China nor Russia has conducted a nuclear explosive test," Navy Vice Adm. Richard Correll said, "so I'm not reading anything into it or reading anything out." The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation defines nuclear tests as "generally controlled explosions of nuclear device, such as bombs or warheads," and Russia's missile and torpedo tests do not meet that strict definition. What's more, Jon Wolfsthal, who advised both Joe Biden and Barack Obama on nuclear matters, notes other nations are already conducting similar tests – along with the US. "Russia, the United States, China are all investing tens of billions of dollars on new nuclear delivery platforms – missiles, bombers, submarines," Wolfsthal said. "We have returned to the arms race dynamics of the Cold War where each side believes nuclear weapons are important." ■

Labour's Fifth Column

by Peter Cann

Part of Mick Conmy's regular talks and performances

Wednesday, 8th October 2025 at Florence Park Community Centre

I'VE NEVER SEEN so many people turn up for a half-hour script in hand performance as the crowd who filled the Main Hall at the Centre, for Pete Cann's production of his new play, **Labour's Fifth Column**. No doubt there were plenty of card-carrying members but there were plenty of others too.

Set in 1960 when division racked the Labour Party over nuclear weapons, **Labour's Fifth Column** blows the lid off the secrecy and lies that prevailed, most notably relating to funding from the CIA.

The cast of seven men – excluding Deb Puleston as the Narrator – played ten roles, led by Gerard Ward as Hugh Gaitskell, Leader of the Opposition to Harold Macmillan's Conservative Government. In their dark suits with the occasional bow tie reminiscent of the broadcaster Robin Day, they reinvented some memorable politicians amid growing unrest. I confess to wishing Stewart Ravenhall as Jo Hodson, the American interloper, had worn a ten-gallon hat rather than a trilby, but

you can't have everything. My only real grouse was that in a half-hour play on a set with no obvious wings it was hard to get my head around the doubling. Unsure about the title too.

The screen was used to great effect, displaying among other things, a vintage Labour party liberty badge and finally – in almost total silence – Hiroshima. Thanks to Steve Cooney who also operated powerful sound effects including The Red Flag and the national anthem.

The Q and A that followed continued to astonish. Few had left their seats when Pete came forward to introduce his special guests.

Stephen Marks, to whom the play is dedicated and who was expelled from the Labour Party after more than forty years, responded to questions and gave us more insight, ably assisted by Nigel Day, of Oxford CND.

Finally, reluctantly, the crowd dispersed. ■

Reviewed by **Heather Dunmore**

Nuclear sink hole

THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT for Security and Net Zero's annual expenditure? Not least as the details of this (on p.18 of its 2024-2025 Annual Report & Accounts) are completely mind-blowing. To summarise: Total departmental spend: £8.6 billion; Total spend on nuclear power: £5.1 billion (60%); Total spend on everything else: £3.5 billion (40%) See what I mean? Literally mind-blowing! A few more details on the nuclear side of things: Nuclear Decommissioning Authority: £3 billion (dealing with the legacy of past nuclear programmes).

Support for Sizewell C power station: £1.67 billion. UK Atomic Energy Agency (UKAEA): £400 million (doing bonkers stuff like nuclear fusion). Managing our 'Energy Legacy': £85 million (roughly half the total figure). Great British Nuclear: £26 million (the more or less useless quango overseeing this fiasco).

That's the size of the nuclear sink hole: roughly £5.1 billion! Leaving roughly £3.5 billion for everything else, including all direct support for renewables, 'delivering affordable energy', science,



research and 'capability', as well as other arm's length bodies. Moreover, even that low figure is not quite what it seems: roughly £450 million is set aside for another of Ed Miliband's sink holes, namely Carbon Capture and Storage. ■

Jonathon Porritt

21st October, 2025

ENDING WARS

You are warmly invited to
MAW's 2025 Remembrance Lecture

ENDING WARS

Is it possible that out of the immediate worldwide crises of war and climate catastrophe a new approach can be fashioned to deal with our deepest differences?

Speaker:
Lord John Alderdice.

**Founding Director of
the Centre for the
Resolution of
Intractable Conflict in
Oxford.**

**Co-editor of "Ending
Wars" published August
2025**



Sunday 9th Nov at 3pm

**Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, WC1H 9BD
(a few minutes walk from Tavistock Square.)**

All Welcome. tickets: www.abolishwar.net

**Movement
for
Abolition of War**

Fb: abolishwar

Sunday 9th November

CND 'Stop British Nuke Jets' National demonstration at RAF Marham

28th February 2026

RAF Marham, Upper Marham, King's Lynn PE33 9NP

The government has announced it is buying 12 nuclear capable F-35A fighter jets. This is a significant expansion of its nuclear capabilities, meaning that Britain will be able to launch nuclear weapons from both the sea and sky. Join us at Marham to say loud and clear: WE WANT TO STOP THIS NUCLEAR EXPANSION AND SCRAP BRITAIN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS ALTOGETHER.

More information: <https://cnduk.org/events/stop-british-nuke-jets-national-demonstration-at-raf-marham/>

More information to follow, but in the meantime please contact information@cnduk.org or 020 7700 2393 with any queries. ■

CND National Conference

SATURDAY 22ND NOVEMBER – a day of discussion and activism on challenging the rising global threats of nuclear conflict, an accelerating war drive, climate breakdown and the rise of the far right.

As these global threats rise, the British government is expanding its nuclear capabilities, meaning that Britain will be able to launch nuclear weapons from both the sea and sky. This ties Britain even closer to the dangerous leadership of Donald Trump. It increases the risk of nuclear weapons being used in war. And it takes even more money away from our public services.

Help us build public support for the solutions: prioritising diplomacy and global cooperation and

real, human security – funding health, education, and climate action

The conference is in-person and will take place at The Green House, Ethical Property, 244 – 254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA. Nearest stations: Bethnal Green (Central Line, underground); Cambridge Heath (Weaver Line, Overground).

How to register for Saturday 22 Nov: <https://cnduk.org/events/no-to-war-no-to-british-nuclear-expansion-invest-in-saving-lives-not-destroying-them-cnd-conference/>

Please contact information@cnduk.org or phone the CND office on **020 7700 2393** with any queries. ■

STOP NUCLEAR EXPANSION



CND NATIONAL CONFERENCE

STOP NUCLEAR EXPANSION
END THE WAR DRIVE
SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER

Speakers

Jeremy Corbyn MP, CND Vice-President; Ludo De Brabander, writer and spokesperson for Vrede, the Belgium Peace organisation; Mikaela Nhondo Erskog, Tricontinental Institute of Social Research and campaigner against global NATO; Ben Jamal, Director, Palestine Solidarity Campaign; Micaela Tracey-Ramos, Unison NEC; Dr Louise Arimatsu, London School of Economics; Sophie Bolt, General Secretary, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Lindsey German, Convenor, Stop the War; Karen Bell, University of Glasgow and editor of Alternative Defence Review; Okopi Ajonye, Nuclear Information Service; Nuvpret Kalra, Codepink UK; Rebecca Johnson, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) UK; Alex Gordon, RMT; Jinsella Kennaway, Executive Director, Demilitarise Education; Dave Cullen, Policy Fellow, BASIC; Sabby Dhalu, Co-Convenor, Stand up to Racism; Kirsten Bayes, Outreach Coordinator, Campaign Against the Arms Trade; Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director, Scientists for Global Responsibility; Barnaby Swonnell, Y&S CND campaigner, Sheffield University; Zareen Taj Islam, Lakenheath Alliance for Peace; Denis Fernando, Senior Rights and Justice Campaigner, Friends of the Earth; Dylan Lewis-Rowlands, Parc against Darc campaign; Di McDonald, Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp.

Workshops

Understanding British nuclear expansion; Challenging militarism in education; Exposing the 'defence dividend' myth; Militarism and climate breakdown; Building the movement: organising in our communities; Shutting down the bases

Saturday 22nd November

Diary



**Every Saturday 2 to 3pm
Women in Black at the Martyrs' Memorial**

November

Wednesday 5th – Faringdon Peace Group,
– 7.30pm – Speaker **Harry Weaver** – “Youth in the Peace Movement.”

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

Saturday 8th – Abingdon vigil for Palestine
– Market Place tbc.

Sunday 9th – Oxford CND Alternative Remembrance, Bonn Square, 11.00am.

Mondays – Abingdon Peace Group.

Vigil every Monday – War Memorial 8.15-8.45 Peacemakers.

Saturday 29th – Oxford CND stall – Green Fair, Town Hall.

December

Mondays – Abingdon Peace Group.

Vigil every Monday – War Memorial 8.15-8.45 Peacemakers.

Wednesday 3rd – Faringdon Peace Group
– 7.30pm Gaza Flotilla speaker.

12th-13th – Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp
– Nuala 01865 749459.

Wednesday 17th – Abingdon Christmas social
4.00 – 6.00pm.

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>

Salisbury Vigils virtual tour

– <https://youtu.be/IOTk0Qm7hWI>



Latest News

Oxford Alternative Peace Remembrance

**Sunday 9th November – Bonn Square
11.00am**

This event remembers all victims of war

– Attendees observe two minutes of silence.
– White poppies will be available and represent a commitment to peace.

– The white poppy is worn for three key reasons:

1. To remember all victims of war (both military and civilian)
2. To challenge the militarization and glorification of war
3. To express a commitment to seeking nonviolent solutions to conflict.

Membership subscriptions 2025

For details of Bankers Orders

e-mail: liztaylor5@virgin.net

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 2025 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 like to receive the newsletter online please let Liz Taylor, the membership secretary know on:

liz.taylor5@virgin.net

Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Please contact: Nuala Young
nualayoung@hotmail.com



Contributions to the next issue...

Please send letters and items to:

Newsletter, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP

No later than: **Monday, 29th December 2025**