



LANCASTER DISTRICT CND NEWSLETTER APRIL 2010

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ELECTION ACTION SPECIAL

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Use CND's on-line lobbying tool, at www.cnduk.org/election.
The more people make use of this tool to quiz their Parliamentary candidates the better. It takes only a few moments to type your postcode into CND's tool.
- Write a letter to the local press about Trident replacement.
- Set up a private meeting with your candidates to ask them about their views.
- Attend the hustings run in constituencies around the country by *Churches Together*.
(See back page for details of Lancaster hustings)
- Grill the candidates. CND's postcard deals with some of the most common excuses for retaining and replacing Trident. Keep it handy during the run-up to the election and use it to quiz door-to-door canvassers.

Your vote means a lot to the candidates.

Lobby them now.

A full election pack is available on line at
<http://www.cnduk.org/election/cnd-election-pack.pdf>

Current Party Policies

Parties <i>(in alphabetical order)</i>	Official policy on nuclear weapons Manifesto information where available
British National Party	<p>‘Retain a genuinely independent nuclear deterrent and produce all our weaponry in Britain.’ (<i>Source: BNP website</i>)</p> <p>No manifesto available at time of writing.</p>
Conservative Party	<p>Supports current Government policy of a ‘minimum nuclear deterrent’ as ‘an insurance against future attacks’, backing the 2006 Government White Paper on the Future of the United Kingdom’s Nuclear Deterrent.</p> <p>‘We will ... replace Trident and maintain the UK’s independent submarine-based nuclear deterrent.’</p>
Green Party	<p>Opposed to nuclear weapons.</p> <p>‘We will ... decommission the UK’s nuclear weapons.’</p>
Labour Party	<p>Supports a ‘minimum nuclear deterrent’ as ‘an insurance against future attacks’, according to the 2006 Government White Paper on the Future of the United Kingdom’s Nuclear Deterrent.</p> <p>‘We will maintain our independent nuclear deterrent’</p>
Liberal Democrats	<p>Supports a ‘minimum nuclear deterrent’, but now opposes the replacement of Trident with a like-for-like system without giving the details.</p> <p>‘We will (commit) not to replace the Trident nuclear weapons system on a like-for-like basis.’</p>
UKIP	<p>‘Mutually Assured Destruction will never be a comfortable concept, but it works.’</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Policy Paper 2008)</i></p> <p>‘UKIP will ... Maintain Britain’s independent nuclear deterrent with existing Trident submarines and then replace them with four British-built submarines armed with US missiles.’</p> <p><i>(NB Government policy is to replace the current four submarines with only three new ones.)</i></p>

ABOUT TRIDENT

The Current System

Trident is Britain's nuclear weapon system. It consists of four nuclear-armed submarines, one of which is on operational patrol, under the seas, at all times. Each Trident submarine carries up to 48 nuclear warheads, each of which can be sent to a different target. Each warhead has an explosive power of up to 100 kilotons, the equivalent of 100,000 tons of conventional high explosive. This is 8 times the power of the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, killing an estimated 140,000 people.

There are three parts to the system: the warheads – which are the explosive 'bombs', the missiles which carry them and the submarines which carry the missiles.

The submarines are made in Britain at Barrow-in-Furness, refitted at Devonport, and maintained at Faslane, Scotland. The missiles are leased from the US. The warheads are made at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston and are stored at Faslane.

Britain has been nuclear armed since 1952, buying into the US nuclear weapons system Polaris from 1968 to 1996 and Trident from 1994.

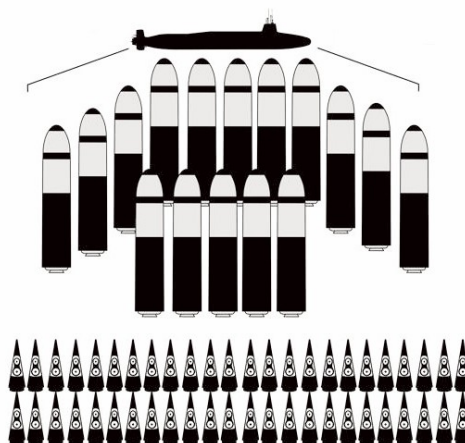
Trident Replacement

The current Trident submarines begin to reach the end of their service life in 2024. A Defence White Paper stated in 2006 that a replacement for Trident would consist of another submarine-based system, with similar components of missiles and warheads, planned to come into service around 2024 with a lifespan of 25 years.

The timescale for introducing the new system is over several decades, and so there is plenty of time for the government to reverse its decision, but an earlier cancellation would support global initiatives.

Not replacing Trident would be a very big step towards the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons.

TRIDENT
Four nuclear powered submarines
(one on patrol at all times)
Each one carrying up to 16 missiles
Equipped with up to 48 nuclear warheads



Each warhead has 8 times
the explosive power of
the bomb dropped on Hiroshima

Why a Nuclear Weapons Convention?

The nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty requires both nuclear disarmament and non proliferation. Until recently it has been relatively successful in terms of non proliferation, but there has been little success in achieving progress on disarmament. This failure is now increasing the chances of proliferation.

Therefore, a team of international legal, scientific and negotiation experts drew up a draft treaty for the abolition of nuclear weapons. This was submitted to the UN for discussion by Costa Rica.

We already have legally enforceable agreements banning the use of chemical and biological weapons. CND believes that a similar convention should ban the use of nuclear weapons.

The model proposed outlines five phases for the elimination process. The first step is to take existing weapons off alert and the last is to place all fissile material under international control.

DIARY DATES

- Tuesday
April 27th**
7.30-9pm
St Thomas' Church, Penny St, Lancaster
- General Election candidates in public debate organised by Lancaster Churches Together.
- Written questions only, to be submitted by 7.15 on the evening.
- Wednesday
April 28th**
12-3pm
Market Place, Lancaster.
- Chernobyl Commemoration Stall
- Heysham Anti Nuclear Alliance (HANA).
- Wednesday
April 28th**
8pm
Gregson Community Centre, Lancaster.
- Public Meeting and Discussion
'Heysham 3, Nuclear Policy and the Environment'
- John Whitelegg,**
(Green Party)
Dr Stuart Parkinson
(Scientists for Global Responsibility)
Dr Noel Cass
(Lancaster University)
- Monday
May 3rd**
Burnley
- May Day Parade. Assemble at 11.30 in car park behind Mechanics' Institute. No hills! Music and stalls.
- LD CND members are hoping to attend this event. Contact the Secretaries for a lift.
- Thursday
June 10th**
2 Laister Court, Bare.
- LD CND Group Meeting.
7.30 pm.



LANCASTER CND STALLS, SPRING 2010.

So far this year (touch wood) the weather has favoured our stalls, not producing the deluges faced in previous years! Here you see the stalls we had in Market Square Lancaster to celebrate International Women's Day (above), and in support of the Aldermaston Blockade (below).

Many thanks to all who came along to help.



SELLAFIELD SEAGULL CULL?

According to *The Times*, seagulls are floating around in open cooling ponds at Sellafield nuclear plant which contain plutonium and radioactive waste, some of it dating back decades. Martin Forwood of Cumbrians Opposed to a Radioactive Environment (CORE) claims that these birds act as 'a gateway to poison the wider area.' Sellafield staff claim that the problem is under full control. An intensive but 'humane' cull is one solution to the problem currently being discussed.