Yorkshire CND
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Action for Peace

The Yorkshire CND Newsletter

Reasons to be cheerful

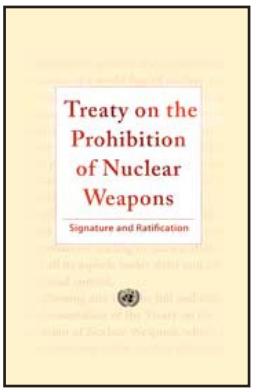
in a time of national and global chaos!

Despite the frankly terrifying global dangers we are facing on multiple fronts, there remain reasons for hope. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is being signed and ratified at a record setting pace. 22 countries out of the 50 needed for the Treaty to enter into force have already ratified and 70 countries have signed. We know many more are on their way. Switzerland's Parliament called on the government to sign and ratify the Nuclear Ban Treaty and in December, Australia's opposition party Australian Labor committed to signing and ratifying the Treaty when in power. Similarly, our own Leeds NE MP, and Shadow Minister for Peace & Disarmament Fabian Hamilton has stated that a Corbyn-led government would sign. In February South Africa became the first former nuclear-armed nation to ratify the UN Treaty.

It is widely expected that the 50 ratifications needed for the treaty to enter into force will be achieved by 2020.

In other good news, Don't Bank on the Bomb campaign has got some serious commitments to divest from nuclear weapons from major banks & financial institutions in Germany, Norway, Netherlands and even the US.

However, nuclear armed states and nuclear umbrella states are resisting the Treaty and ignoring their legal obligations as signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to negotiate "in good faith" the complete elimination of their nuclear arsenals.



Inaction of governments has prompted cities to take the lead in supporting the Nuclear Ban Treaty. The ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) Cities Appeal was launched in November, and Los Angeles, Melbourne, Manchester (UK) and Toronto were among the first cities to have pledged support. Minnesota and New Hampshire are in the process of signing, and many hundreds of cities are expected to sign by the end of 2019.

Yorkshire and the Bomb

We've taken up the challenge of the ICAN Cities Appeal with a tour of cities across Yorkshire to ferment a municipal rebellion against nuclear weapons. Manchester City Council became the first in Europe to call on national government to sign the UN nuclear ban treaty at the end of last year, but Yorkshire won't be outdone and we're hot on their heels!

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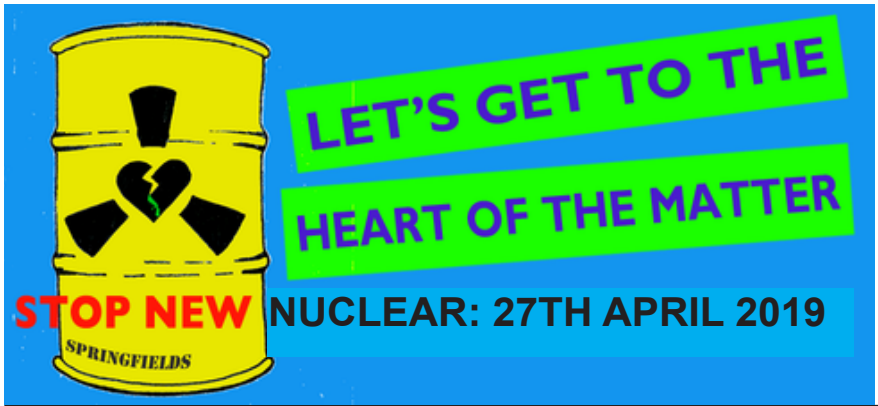
Surround Springfields

People dressed as Nuclear Waste barrels will be descending on Springfields on April 27th to symbolise Nuclear Waste returning to its place of birth with each barrel representing a 100,000 yrs of radioactive waste. Springfields, near Preston, is the world's first nuclear fuel manufacturing plant. It carries out civil and military nuclear contracts for facilities across the UK, producing nuclear fuel, storing and processing nuclear waste and decommissioning nuclear plants and facilities. Through the gates of the Springfields plant passes a deadly cargo of materials which have fuelled nuclear bombs, nuclear reactors and nuclear accidents for over 70 years.

The Government is pressing forward with new nuclear power, despite delays, spiralling costs and even bankruptcy of the major players. Springfields would play a pivotal role in supplying this power and in processing the waste material.



Join us in the dirty core of the UK nuclear industry for a day of protest, information sharing and solidarity. We plan to surround the site with people dressed as nuclear waste barrels – a record breaking attempt!

Transport will be arranged from across the region - phone the office or look at www.yorkshirecnd.org.uk/springfields

Inside

Global Dangers double-page spread, Diego Garcia, Day of Dance, upcoming events & more.....

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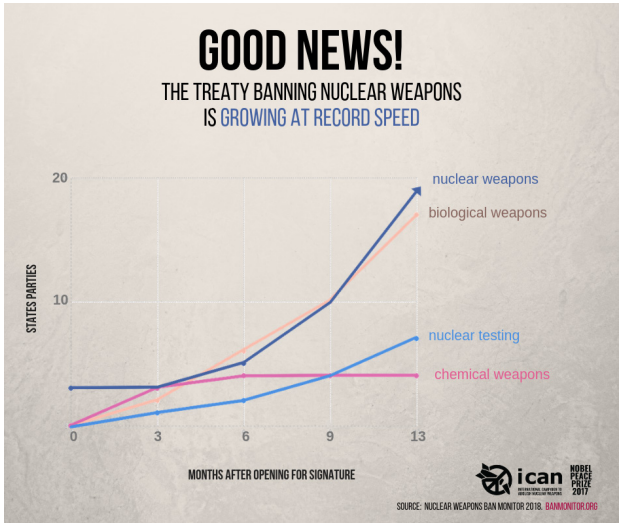
The Cities Appeal is a fantastic opportunity for local campaigning, extending the existing work with MPs on the Parliamentary Pledge, to include local councillors – we all have three of those, trebling our chances of finding a receptive ear.

The tour began in Sheffield in January with an excellent meeting (pictured below) and the group that came together has achieved so much in the last month, building support amongst local councillors, passing resolutions at Labour branches and finally bagging Sheffield's first Parliamentary Pledger – Paul Blomfield MP (Sheffield Central).

We then moved on to meetings in Bradford and Leeds, drawing up plans of action for both cities – both groups have pretty ambitious plans so any help would be very gratefully received – contact the YCND office to be added to the list.



To build on this work, we've got CND's Parliamentary Officer Amy Keegan coming up North to give us a masterclasses in Parliamentary Lobbying in both **Sheffield and Leeds on the 23rd March** (see diary). These sessions are open to anyone, regardless of the topic on which you'd like to lobby your MP.

Next the tour rumbles on to **Hull on April 7th** (see diary, back page for details) in partnership with local groups 'War Stops Here' & Yorkshire Medact, so we're expecting great things. If you're in the Hull area please join us for a day of campaigning, crafting and even some music to round off the day.

Cities Appeal meeting in Sheffield

The race is on: which city will be Yorkshire's first to back the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; which will be the first town? If there's no meeting planned yet in your town call the office and help us organise one.

We currently working on Yorkshire handbook on the Cities Appeal, but for now you can find more info, including sample materials for MPs, Councillors & Party and Union Branches at: yorkshirecnd.org.uk/cities-appeal

Hands off Diego Garcia - UN court tells Britain.

The International Court of Justice has told Britain that it has no right to claim sovereignty of the Chagos Islands. The ICJ judgement said "the UK has an obligation to bring to an end its administration of Chagos archipelago as rapidly as possible."

It is half a century since the UK took control of the Chagos Islands from its then colony, Mauritius. The British government evicted the entire population, before inviting the US to build a military base on Diego Garcia, one of the larger atolls.

Mauritius was in the middle of negotiating its independence from the UK at the time and has repeatedly condemned the deal. Between 1967 and 1973, Britain removed 1,500 people from their homes and they were never allowed to return.

For its side of the bargain, the US gave Britain a discount on the Polaris nuclear weapons system.

Some have expressed concern that because Diego Garcia is used as a US military base, it may contravene the The Pelindaba Treaty, the historic 2009 agreement that made the continent of Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The US base has also been a transit point for extraordinary rendition flights for suspected terrorists.

The UK has previously said it will hand the islands back to Mauritius when they are no longer required for defence purposes. Hopefully this judgement will force Britain to rethink such outdated imperial hubris and get to work righting this historic wrong for the sake of the long-suffering Chagos islanders.

GLOBAL THREATS TO PEACE

Nuclear neighbours and rivals

On 26th February 2019, Indian warplanes crossed the Line of Control (the de facto border between Pakistan and India) for the first time since 1971. This is a drastic escalation and a very serious cause for concern considering the historical animosity between the nations and the fact they are both nuclear armed states.

This situation is further compounded by the fact that India is led by the controversial Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) a Nationalist party that has stirred internal and external violence. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India has in the past been accused of involvement in the violence that occurred in both Gujarat in 2002 and the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992.

Meanwhile, Pakistan refuses to adopt a no-first use policy in regards to nuclear weapons and its military has been described by some analysts as a 'state within a state'. It has curtailed democracy on 3 separate occasions since Pakistan's formation in 1947 and has major political and economic influence within the country. During the Kargil conflict, it is alleged General Musharraf took military action without informing the then Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif before ultimately deposing him in a coup.

Overall, this is a very dangerous situation that could potentially escalate into a direct military conflict between two nuclear armed neighbours who have a long and tumultuous history. The perception amongst some people is that these are two 'third world countries'; however, their respective militaries are anything but 'third-world' and possess a vast array of sophisticated weaponry. This includes ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads that can result in calamitous consequences.

Shambraiz Tariq

US & North Korea

As Action for Peace goes to press, the latest talks between Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un have unexpectedly broken down and finished early. The US president said that the summit failed over the issue of sanctions, after the talks in Vietnam ended early with no deal. According to Trump, Kim made a significant offer - to dismantle all of the Yongbyon complex, the research and production facility at the heart of North Korea's nuclear programme. But in return Mr Kim wanted all sanctions on North Korea lifted, something the US was not prepared to offer.

There has been an alarmed response from some in South Korea who felt that this was a serious setback for the security situation in the region. It remains to be seen whether momentum for future dialogue can now be maintained.

'Star Wars' rears its ugly head once more

In January President Trump announced the USA's new missile defence policy, which leads us closer to the militarisation of space. The new Missile Defence Review details the development of new technologies, including a space-based layer of sensors as part of an enhanced missile defence system.

Specifically referring to America's perception of threats from China and Russia, Trump's new policy calls for major upgrades to a pre-existing land and sea-based interceptor system, as well as a layer of satellites capable of tracking new cruise or hypersonic missiles from other nations.

In a clear escalation, President Trump said that the US will now use an enhanced missile system as a part of America's "defense and obviously part of our offense" – confirming what CND has long known: US missile 'defence' is actually a highly offensive system.

Trump's missile defence will undoubtedly escalate hostilities between the US, China and Russia due to the threat of their own systems being rendered obsolete. The result of this insecurity is very likely to be an escalation of the arms race as these nations seek to develop new weapons capable of addressing Trump's space technology.

Combined with Trump's reckless intention to withdraw from the INF treaty (see over), this new missile policy is eroding an increasingly weakening international arms control system, making the world a more dangerous place.

Parts of the US missile defence system are based in Yorkshire, and we must step up our campaigning and call on the UK government to refuse to co-operate with Trump's arms race.

In January, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists announced that the domesday clock would remain at two minutes to midnight, describing the current existential threats to the world as 'A new abnormal'. This is the closest the clock has been to apocalypse. The worrying events that have happened since the announcement serve to underline the description of our times as an "unpredictable and shifting landscape of simmering disputes that multiply the chances for major military conflict to erupt."

Venezuela

Aggression against Venezuela is mounting from right-wing governments across the globe. There is a "diplomatic siege" in Venezuela, one which has the aim of regime change.

In Trump's latest speech on Venezuela on 18 February he warned the Venezuelan military that they would "lose everything" if they continued to remain loyal to Venezuela's constitution and to democratically elected President Maduro. Alongside this explicit agitation for an internal military coup, the US administration continues to exert pressure on Venezuela through harsh economic sanctions and threats of direct US military intervention. There are mounting fears that under the guise of delivering 'humanitarian aid' the US is trying to stage-manage a confrontation to provide a pretext for a US military attack on Venezuela. The fact that Trump has selected Elliott Abrams as 'Special Envoy' to Venezuela points to an agenda of regime change. Abrams was convicted (but pardoned later by Bush) for his role in the Iran-Contra affair, during which the US illegally sold weapons to Iran and funnelled the proceeds to right-wing Contra forces busily terrorising Nicaragua. Commentators remind us that weapons were smuggled to the Contras in aid convoys. In this context, the claims by those in the peace movemement that this is just another oil war seem justified. In fact, US National Security Advisor John Bolton was rather explicit in why overthrowing the Venezuelan government is in the interests of the US. He said

"It'll make a big difference to the United States economically if we could have American oil companies really invest in and produce the oil capabilities in Venezuela."

CND supported a recent demo on 23rd February and more actions are planned for 16th March - see stopwar.org.uk for updates.

Yemen & Palestine

There is no improvement in the dire situations in Palestine or Yemen. There is a **Rally for Palestine: Exist! Resist! Return! on Sat 30 March**, 1pm, Israeli Embassy, Kensington High St, London.

Stop the War have organised a speaking tour to highlight the UK role in the humanitarian crisis in Yemen - more details www.stopwar.org.uk

INF Treaty

Donald Trump has announced that the US is suspending its obligations and giving six months' notice for formal withdrawal from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Russia has responded by announcing it too will withdraw. This treaty has been a cornerstone of nuclear arms control since the Cold War, having eliminated thousands of nuclear missiles in Europe.

This is a very dangerous moment for the whole world. A new nuclear arms race is beginning and the threat of nuclear war grows by the day.

The 1988 INF Treaty between the US and Russia bans ground-launch nuclear missiles with ranges from 500km to 5,500km. Crucially for the UK, it meant that US cruise missiles were removed from US bases at Greenham Common and Molesworth. With the overturning of the treaty, we may now see the return of US nuclear missiles to British soil.

Since its adoption, both the US and Russia have variously accused the other of violating the treaty. These allegations have placed the treaty under enormous pressure in the last few years, especially in the context of deteriorating US-Russia relations generally. The US says it is withdrawing from the treaty as a result of Russia fielding the 9M729 missile system. Russia denies it is violating the rules, but the US has demanded that Moscow destroy all of its 9M729 systems in the next six months. However, there are some doubts as to whether Trump's motivation for withdrawing from the treaty is purely down to these violations.

Both the US and Russia have voiced concerns regarding the treaty's bilateral nature, arguing that the INF unfairly prohibits them from possessing missiles which neighbouring nations – particularly China – are developing.

It is believed that one of Trump's motivations for wanting to withdraw from the treaty is the fact that it places the US at a strategic disadvantage to China. The Trump administration has consistently attacked China on economic and defence grounds.

The UK response

In a letter to CND, the government blamed Russia for the breakdown of the INF treaty. It is fully supportive of the US position without considering the wider context, and is not doing enough to encourage a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Standing by and allowing crucial nuclear arms control agreements to be torn up places the whole world in great danger.

If this treaty is destroyed, the US and Russia would be free to once again produce and deploy intermediate-range missiles. It follows that the US would look to place them in Europe, possibly the UK.

This would increase the likelihood of a nuclear war on European soil. Putin has already stated that if European countries host US missiles, these countries 'must understand that they are putting their own territory at risk of a possible counter-strike.'

The INF Treaty was in large part a result of huge international protest against nuclear escalation in the 1980s, including CND protests against cruise missiles which mobilised hundreds of thousands. CND stands resolutely against this return to Cold War nuclear escalation

Ask your MP to sign EDM 2073 on the suspension of the INF treaty

Global Dangers Tour

The world is currently getting more and more dangerous, especially in the context of what appears to be the breaking down of international norms governing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. CND national are organising a tour with the aim of developing discussion on the situation, fostering links between people working on these issues and getting more people involved in CND's campaigns.

They have a list of top-notch speakers lined up to take part including Caroline Lucas MP, tactical nuclear weapons expert Ted Seay, writer Victoria Brittain, international security specialist Paul Rogers, journalist John Gittings and many more.

As part of the tour, South Korean peace activist Park Jung Eun, Secretary General of NGO People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, will be in the UK. Yorkshire CND is hoping to host her and organise a meeting around 17th/18th May.

But the whole Global Dangers tour will take place between mid-May and October and we suggest local groups get on and work with us and national CND to organise events now!

Get Ready to Protest NATO and Trump in London

Heads of state from NATO countries will gather in London this December. Donald Trump is expected to be among those attending.

In the last few days, President Trump began the process of US withdrawal from the INF treaty. This has already sparked a ratcheting up of the nuclear arms race.

The NATO summit will be a crucial opportunity for our movement to oppose Trump's nuclear warmongering and highlight the dangerous role NATO, as a nuclear alliance, plays in raising international tensions.

CND will be working with British and international partners to co-ordinate protests in London.

Two CND Events in York:

How Women Are Banning Nuclear Weapons. York, 6th March

Come along to hear from a fantastic line-up of speakers and find out about the treaty, women's role in it's adoption, and why nuclear weapons are a feminist issue.

Video introduction from Rachael Maskell MP

Rebecca Johnson – International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

Taniel Yusuf – Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

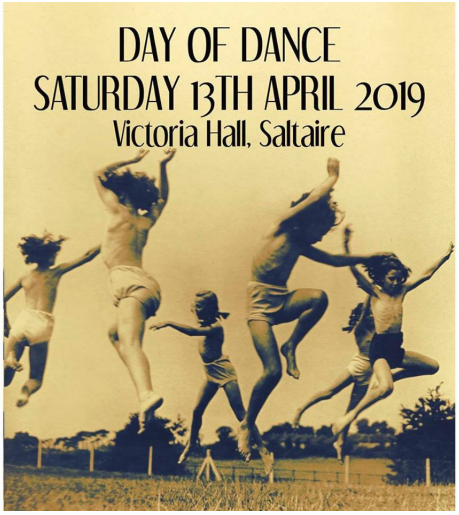
This event is part of York International Women's Week. Free to attend (donations are welcome) please book in advance to avoid disappointment. yorkshirecnd.org.uk/womenandtheTPNW

6-8pm, Priory Street Centre, 15 Priory Street, YO16 York

5th March 7-9pm Film screening of "Carry Greenham Home" with guest speakers and discussion.

This event is part of York International Women's Week and a chance for women who took part in Greenham Common protests to share memories, and for everyone to discuss current campaigns against nuclear weapons. Greenham Common was an exciting time for women's protest. The legacy can still be seen today at the protests at nearby Menwith Hill and in the adoption of the UN Global Ban Treaty. Come along to find out all about this and more. Free (donations are welcome), please book a place yorkshirecnd.org.uk/carrygreenhamhome

Quaker Meeting House, Friargate, YO1 9RL York



Fundraising round-up

Day of Dance tickets are selling like hot cakes - if you haven't got yours yet, don't delay in order to avoid disappointment. There's the usual diverse range of workshops, old favourites like Charleston, and new dances such as Family Musical Theatre, all topped off with the Ceilidh with Phoenix Ceilidh band.

Online booking with no fee is available at www.yorkshirecnd.org.uk/dayofdance along with a full line-up. Alternatively, contact Cath at the office or dayofdance@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

Help very definitely needed on the day, or the day before for the cooking. If you could bake a cake or help take a register or volunteer in any other way please contact me in the CND office.

Cath

Diary

Vigil at Menwith Hill 6pm-7.30pm. The intrepid and dedicated folk of MHAC are now doing more spontaneous weekly protests on different days, to avoid the heavy policing. Please contact them to find out when - 01765 600928 / 07902 173148.

5 & 6th March - Peace events in York (see inside for details)

7th March - How Not to Go To War. Speakers Vijay Mehta, Peace activist and Founder of Uniting for Peace will give a talk based on his new book 'How Not to Go to War'. Fabian HamiltonMP, Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament will talk about his peace building role in a future Labour Government. Norcroft Lounge, University of Bradford, 6.30-8.30pm. Organised by Peace Studies Dept and the Peace Society

9th March - Yorkshire CND stall and workshop at Do Summat - a community festival of resistance that brings together people & change-makers from around Leeds & Yorkshire. Notre Dame College, St Mark's Ave, Leeds LS2 9BL. All welcome, free event. Details at www.facebook.com/events/449283602228600/

12th March - Command and Control Film Showing - Leeds Arts University - Students only

23rd March - Free Masterclass in 'Effectively engaging your MP' 11-1pm Sheffield Central Reform Church, 60 Norfolk St and 3-5pm Mill Hill Chapel, City Sq in Leeds.

24th March - Fly Kites not Killer Drones. 2.30pm, Infirmary Fields, Bradford BD8 7SF. Begun by Afghan peace volunteers, Fly Kites not Killer Drones has become a global movement, why not join us? For more info: 07773 315 317

7th April - **Hull Against the Bomb** - 2pm, Ground, 60 Beverley Road, Hull (see page2)

Saturday 13th April - DAY OF DANCE 2019 - see inside for more details.

Saturday 13th April - if dancing is not your thing, you could visit the Otley Green Fair. Otley Courthouse

13th April to 9th May - Global Weeks of Action Against Military Spending (GDAMS). Get in touch for details of events organised in the region, or if you would like to organise an event in your area, and would like help with publicity contact the office.

27th April - Surround Springfields (see front page)

17/18th May - Park Jung Eun speaking tour (see inside)

4th July - The Annual Independence from America Day demonstration at Menwith Hill is being planned for July 4th. As usual, Yorkshire CND will be coordinating transport, so put this in your diary now and more details will be available closer to the time

August 6th & 9th - Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day events

early September - Every two years, the global arms trade comes to London. DSEI, one of the world's largest arms fairs, returns in September 2019. This is where those who profit from war, repression and injustice do business. This is where we can stop them. Last time the arms fair came to London, hundreds of people took action to disrupt its set-up. We're planning to do so again - get in touch to find out how to get involved or see www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk

Local CND & Peace Groups/

Rotherham CND - jon_smith@blueyonder.co.uk or phone 07952 044824

Shipley CND - Chris Butler christopherbutler1@mac.com or 07913 636036

Calder Valley - contact kathypitt725@hotmail.com or 07980 291478

Huddersfield Peace Group c/o Charlie Fairbank, fairbankcharles@gmail.com, Tel: 01484-846183 or Huddersfield Quakers - Robin Bowles at cara@cooptel.net

Leeds CND - contact Dave on 07717 606189 facebook.com/LeedsCND or leedscnd@gmail.com

Leeds Coaltion Against War - Meetings will be twice a month, on the first and third Wednesdays, 7pm, Leeds Civic Hall info@anbeal.co.uk

Keighley Peace Justice & Environment Network - email Ada at a.whitaker@gmx.co.uk

Grassington & District Peace Group - Richard Hargreaves, strand@hawkswick.net

Sheffield CND - jonathanpaul.wallis@virginmedia.com http://www.sheffieldcnd.org.uk

Sheffield Creative Action for Peace (SCRAP) - Hilary 07818040982 - scraptridentnow@gmail.com

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Yorkshire CND, Bradford Deaf Centre, 25 Hallfield Rd, Bradford BD1 3RP 01274 730795

info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk
www.yorkshirecnd.org.uk

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