ACTION FOR PEACE

Summer 2025| Issue 123



FEATURING...

- Updates on the TPNW
- Local news
- The Rise & Fall of Anti-Nuclear Protest in Sheffield
- Upcoming events

LATEST NEWS

The past few months of our campaign have been extremely busy. Please read on for regional, national and international updates.

We're also happy to announce that our new website is finally live! We hope that you find it more accessible and a useful resource as a hub for everything we are doing and plan to do!

REGIONAL UPDATES

At the start of the summer, we went to Glastonbury to raise funds and raise awareness about our cause. We managed to raise nearly £4000, so we are very thankful to our hard working volunteers. On the stall, we also had some labelled jars which the public could fill up with pebbles. This was used to start discussions around the recent government budget, and increased military spending at the expense of other services.

In July, we joined MHAC (Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign) for the annual 4th July Independence From America protest. A good number of us went up to the base with flags and banners. We attempted to hand in a letter to the base commander. Having previously been told that someone would be there to receive the letter, on the day the Ministry of Defence Police refused to take it. We are also grateful



for the powerful video messages from Richard Tranter (an academic and campaigner against the activities of Pine Gap) and Murray Horton of the Anti Bases Campaign in New Zealand. We were also shown a brilliant video from protesters at Pine Gap, which included campaigners kicking the radomes (golf balls) down the road.



In August, we helped to organise the 80th anniversary commemoration vigils for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This included events in Sheffield, Leeds, Bradford, Keighley, Hebden Bridge, Bradford, Settle, Skipton, and York. We also supported a demo at the University of Sheffield's AMRC facility.

In September, we helped to organise the Peace History Conference at The University of Bradford. Thank you to all the speakers for their great insights!

We were also pleased to welcome the film director Jonathan Bellés from Spain to introduce and talk about his film about the influence of war (especially nuclear weapons) on Ishiro Honda (the director of the original Godzilla film). A local actor, Chris Thorpe, also joined a Q&A panel (hosted by Sam Legg from Yorkshire CND) to discuss what the arts can do to engage people with the nuclear disarmament movement. Thank you to Abolition 2000 UK for funding this event, and Cultplex for hosting us.

We also got involved with the opening event for the 'Pins For Peace' exhibition at the Peace Museum in Saltaire, with over 700 attendees! It



Photo credit: Jack Cox (@jackynory)

was wonderful to see people enjoying the exhibition and getting stuck into the activities! Peace movements require collaboration, creativity and energy, and that's what Mek Summat brought to The Peace Museum through this exhibition. The exhibition will be on display until Sunday 30th November.

NATIONAL UPDATES

We have been made aware that the UK plans to buy at least 12 nuclear capable F-35A fighter jets. This was announced by Keir Starmer at the NATO summit in The Hague in June. Since then, National CND has been given a legal opinion from Professor Christine Chinkin and Dr Louise Arimatsu (London School of Economics) that suggests this purchase would put the UK in breach of article six of the NPT (nuclear non-proliferation treaty).

We were pleased to see the growing support from the Trade Union movement, with the TUC voting for a motion on Wages Not Weapons. We attended a great talk in Sheffield on this last month, and recommend reading the 'Alternative Defence Review' report if you haven't yet.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

In international news, we are thrilled to see that the global majority have now signed onto the TPNW (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons). 99 out of 197 eligible states have now taken legal action under the treaty.

Following a previous campaign by musicians to pull music from Spotify (led by Deerhoof), due to the CEO (Daniel Ek) investing a huge sum of money into artificial intelligence military software, there is some hope for the future of the platform. In September, Ek announced that he was stepping down as CEO. This has led to hope that the platform would become more ethical by moving away from military ties and for the new leadership team to provide a fairer pricing model to musicians on the platform.

The war on Ukraine by Russia has included numerous heavy attacks, with Russian drones even spotted in NATO airspace. Whilst more negotiations to end the war have taken place, so far they have sadly not resulted in positive news. With the New START Treaty set to expire in February 2026, we hope that further talks around this and other negotiations will take place soon as a matter of urgency.



Photo credit: Neil Terry

80 years on

The following speech was read by Dave Webb (Chair of Yorkshire CND) on 9th August in Park Square (Leeds), to commemorate the lives lost in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Leeds is one of the 8,509 cities in Mayors for Peace, these and thousands more towns and cities around the world are remembering the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As this plaque by the tree planted by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2003 says, we also commemorate all those killed in armed conflicts since 1945, including those being fought now in the Middle East, Ukraine, Africa and all the others that we hear little about.

80 years after two American atomic bombs caused death, destruction and injury on a scale not seen before, we have never been closer to the possibility of a nuclear apocalypse. Today's nuclear weapons are vastly more powerful and could end civilisation and devastate the climate.



Despite international agreements to disarm, nuclear powers continue to modernise their arsenals. The UK is spending hundreds of billions of pounds building and maintaining new nuclear-armed submarines and we are once again hosting US nuclear bombs at Lakenheath.

In addition, more nations are expressing interest in nuclear arms, and nuclear threats are surfacing in ongoing conflicts.

World leaders seem to have forgotten, or are ignoring, the lessons of 80 years ago. They have also ignored the advice of 70 years ago. In 1955, when, one year after the United States tested a hydrogen bomb 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb used on Hiroshima, an international group of scientists warned that *"H-bombs might quite possibly put an end to the human race."*

At that time, much like today, a Cold War was escalating rapidly and scientists, led by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein urged world leaders to avoid war at any cost. and called for direct, open dialogue between scientists and policy makers from around the world. They posed the question: *"Shall we put an end to the human race; or shall mankind renounce war?"* and urged leaders to: *"Remember your humanity and forget the rest."*

The Russell-Einstein Manifesto prompted the beginning of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, which, together with physicist Joseph Rotblat, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995 for laying the groundwork for numerous nuclear weapons agreements, including the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty.

As we have heard, the Hibakusha, the survivors of the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan, cannot forget their experiences and have

formed the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organisations, known as Nihon Hidankyo and dedicated their lives to preventing nuclear war.



Around 650,000 people survived the bombings but, only around 99,130 now remain in Japan, with more in Korea and elsewhere. Their testimony has been vital and has not gone unheeded.

In 1957 the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) was formed following an article in the New Statesman titled "Britain and the nuclear bombs" by J.B. Priestley. It followed the first hydrogen bomb test by Britain on Christmas Island and called for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

More recently, Hidankyo inspired the younger generation and helped launch the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) in 2007. ICAN combined youth energy with veteran campaigners to emphasise the humanitarian consequences of nuclear war. They hosted global conferences in Norway, Mexico, and Austria, and in 2014, Austria led a pledge to ban nuclear weapons—supported by 128 nations.

Their work was also endorsed by Pope Francis who delivered a 40-minute-long impassioned plea to the United Nations in September 2015, calling for an end to nuclear weapons and urging nations to protect unborn children.



The UN General Assembly eventually voted to negotiate a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons. Despite a boycott by the nuclear weapons states, 122 countries adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017.

That December ICAN received the Nobel Peace Prize for "drawing attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons." Accepting the prize were Beatrice Fihn, ICAN's Executive Director, and Setsuko Thurlow, a Hibakusha and survivor of the Hiroshima bombing.

Setsuko was 13 when she was pinned under a collapsed building after the blast. *"Suddenly,"* she said, *"I felt hands touching my left shoulder and heard a man saying: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! I am trying to free you. See the light coming through that opening? Crawl towards it as quickly as you can." As I crawled out, the ruins were on fire. Most of*





my classmates in that building were burned to death alive. I saw all around me utter, unimaginable devastation."

The TPNW became law in 2021 and 94 (of 193) member states have now signed. The UK could become the first nuclear weapons state to sign.

As Setsuko Thurlow said: *"All responsible leaders will sign this treaty. And history will judge harshly those who reject it."*

Beatrice Fihn echoed that, saying *"the only rational course of action is to cease living under the conditions where our mutual destruction is only one impulsive tantrum away."*

Last year Nihon Hidankyo also received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of *"its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again."*



The Nobel Committee praised their use of personal stories to mobilize public opposition, saying the Hibakusha help us *"grasp the incomprehensible pain and suffering caused by nuclear weapons."*

And at the end of last year, UN secretary-general António Guterres set up a panel to study the physical and societal consequences of a nuclear war, and to publish a report by 2026. So, it is important for people like us to be at places like this today, to remember the events of 80 years ago and the stories of the survivors and to commit to the Hibakusha's vision.

As American anthropologist Margaret Mead said: *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

Like Setsuko Thurlow, we have to keep moving, keep pushing and, even in the darkest of times, keep sharing the light — so that this precious Earth may survive.

Photos provided by Neil Terry & peace groups throughout the region.



NEED DECORATION FOR YOUR HOME OR CAR?

We have loads of vintage giant stickers of the iconic Smiling Sun design in our shop stock for only £5! The Smiling Sun was created in 1975 in Denmark.The anti-nuclear power movement in dozens of countries adopted the logo to serve their campaigns.

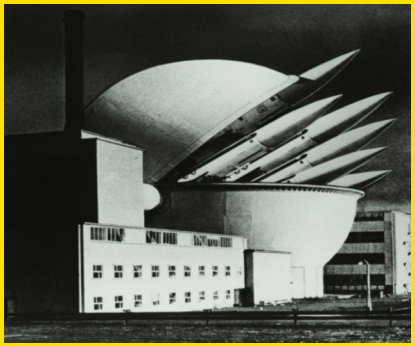
Giant stickers are available in French & German. We also have post-cards and smaller stickers available in English & Welsh.

The Rise and Fall of Nuclear Protest in Sheffield: part 1

Following the recent news about the University of Sheffield's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) working with the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) to design a new generation of nuclear weapons, we reached out to a local campaigner (Richard Bakewell) to provide us with some context and the history of nuclear protest in the area. Over the course of the next 3 AfP newsletters, we'll be sharing some of his personal reflections on the anti-nuclear scene in Sheffield.

My involvement with CND began in the summer of 1981 when I saw a screening of `The War Game` in the AUEW building in Sheffield. This film horrified me to the extent that I immediately started to attend Broomhall CND, my local group. I helped with publicity by painting A3-sized posters and getting local shops to display them. We held an annual Summer Fair in the Broomhall Community Centre with a stall endorsing CND and ANC, the Anti-Nuclear Campaign (which had its national HQ nearby above a shop in West Street). ANC, which alas is no more, revealed the link between the nuclear power industry and nuclear weapons, an issue which graphic artist Peter Kennard, well known at the time, also exposed in his photo montages, see below, where he depicts a row of buildings with a group of missiles pointing out of an opening in a white spherical shaped structure ... echoes of Calder Hall?

We also took part in Sheffield-wide gatherings to highlight places connected to the nuclear power industry, e.g. Stocksbridge, which contributed through its Sheffield-based manufacturing companies of Arnold Wragg and CW Fletcher who supply components and services for nuclear power plants and projects. Then we had a tent at the annual Sheffield Show in Hillsborough Park where we publicised CND issues collectively with other local groups.



Photomontage by Peter Kennard, 1980-1984. Picture credit: Science Museum Group

During this period Sheffield was a nuclear free zone with an officer on the Labour left-wing Council, Stuart Kemp, whose job was to promote the idea of nuclear free zones. This meant that no vehicles carrying nuclear material could pass through the city boundaries, either by rail, road, or motorway. Among other things happening in the city, in this climate Sheffield was nicknamed `The Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire` as it had no interest in the Tory Government of the day led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. This was the time of the notorious `Battle of Orgreave` when many thought Britain could have its own mini socialist revolution.

It was also the era of the Greenham Common women and many coaches left Sheffield bound for London to join over 250,000 CND protesters demonstrating against the siting of American cruise missiles in the UK. At a rally in Hyde Park Labour Party leader Michael Foot stated *"In this autumn of 1981 we stand at the most dangerous moment of all ever since these nuclear weapons have come into operation, and that is why it has been so necessary to re-establish this campaign ... people now reject the insanity of nuclear weapons"*. Tony Benn MP said it was time to stand up to the Americans and close their UK missile bases, he said *"President Reagan cannot ignore us because President Reagan does not own Britain and Europe. This is our continent and we will shape it for ourselves"*.

In the autumn of 1984 there was again a large national CND demonstration, this time at Barrow-in-Furness. Sheffield CND groups chartered a special train which was completely filled with supporters. Once there thousands took part in a mass `die-in` and rose from the streets as the all-clear siren announced its end. We linked arms and burst into song as the protest against trident surrounded the town`s nuclear dockyards. Dozens deep, we flanked the North Road as part of the thousand-strong human chain which surrounded the dock. The 20,000-strong crowd sang `we shall overcome` and I can remember weeping at the seeming hopelessness of it all. After this Monsignor Bruce Kent, CND general secretary, led a four-minute silence as a tribute to the millions who died in the bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

On the way home, as we travelled close to the mud flats of Morecambe Bay, I was overcome by the beauty of the sea and sand. The idea of any more nuclear bombs being dropped seemed as if it belonged to an alien world, a world totally void of any earthly origin. Although this period in the life of Broomhall CND was very productive, I wasn`t aware that it would all soon disappear and be no more. To be continued ...

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lakenheath Alliance For Peace meeting - for Bradford based campaigners
28th October @ online via zoom

Songs For Peace
9th November, 1-2pm @ Bradford Cenotaph

Yorkshire CND's Peace & Crafts Fair
29th November @ Victoria Hall, Saltaire, BD18 3JS

Weekly evening demos at Menwith Hill
Every Tuesday @ 6-7:30pm

For more information, please contact: info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk
Or subscribe to our calendar for more: yorkshirecnd.org.uk/events

LOCAL CONTACTS

Youth & Student CND (Yorkshire Region) – sam@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

Huddersfield Peace Group - fairbankcharles@gmail.com

Leeds CND – leedscnd@gmail.com / dave@space4peace.org

Keighley – tridentsylvia@gmail.com

MHAC (Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign) – mail@themhac.uk

Grassington & District Peace Group – strand@hawkswick.net

Sheffield CND – richardbakewell@yahoo.co.uk

Sheffield Creative Action for Peace – rachelrow@yahoo.co.uk

Calder Valley CND – kathypitt725@hotmail.com or Catherine on 07980 291478

The Yorkshire CND

PEACE & CRAFTS FAIR

SATURDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2025

VICTORIA HALL, SALTAIRE, BD18 3JS
OPEN FROM 10AM - 4PM



£3 ENTRY / FREE FOR UNDER 18s

Featuring over 60 stalls with a wide range of quality crafts, campaign & charity stalls, live music, delicious veggie food, tombola, plants & Christmas presents galore!

Please contact us for further information: info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk / 01274730795