

British politics. Their respective policies were arrived at through a lengthy internal debate and there is no question that the membership of these respective bodies was aware of the policies and the arguments.

2) Before the shift in policy away from unilateral nuclear disarmament the Labour Party did some research into which of its policies were sufficiently unpopular to warrant people turning away from the party. Their results indicated that somewhere in the region of 4% of their sample would have not voted for the party because of its unilateralist position. Balanced against that must also be considered the proportion of the population who would have turned away from the party because of their change in policy or because of a lack of clarity in their defence policy. There is no evidence, therefore, to support the idea that defence lost the party this, or any other election. This picture was borne out further by the experiences of people canvassing for votes for the Labour Party, when very few indicated they had been challenged on the party's defence policy.

3) Although many of those involved in CND are pacifists, CND is not a pacifist body. An important part of the peace movement is an organisation called Ex-Services CND, many of whom came to CND because they felt nuclear weapons represented a threat rather than a defence. One of the more notable members of that organisation is Air Commodore Mackie who while he was a serving officer, was for some time an adviser to the cabinet office on

nuclear defence policy. CND is not opposed to any defence policy, we are opposed to the current nuclear weapons policy and are seeking to have it changed for a more rational one.

One thing which should be made clear is that Britain's defence relies as much on our merchant fleet and our manufacturing industries' ability to function in modern technology as it does on Frigates and aircraft. What is most striking about our current situation is that, even by the standards set by the most hawkish of militarists, Britain's defences are not in good condition. One of the factors which has put us into this position is the concentration on nuclear defence, and the total indifference to the need to protect our civilian industrial capacity.

4) The nuclear defence system to which Britain is currently committed implies a huge defence budget which necessarily draws government resources away from support for our civilian manufacturing industry and our social services. No other European Nato country does this, and the net result has been to leave our economy unable to compete with German and Italian industry. In some very real senses our so-called defence policy has contributed to the destruction of those things which it is supposed to defend.

Our economy is currently very vulnerable. Unless our government begin to radically alter its attitude to support for industry the quality of life for ordinary people in this society is set for a rapid deterioration. TUCND have argued for a number of years that central to our ability to expand our civilian manufacturing base is support

for the conversion of our arms industries.

I would like to add that I do recognise that the concerns you express are genuinely held, and that I am sure many of the people who share your views are genuinely committed to a change in the way this country is run. I am also sure that all of those involved in TUCND would share this commitment for change. However, one group of people firmly committed to no change is the bulk of our press. In many cases the Labour Party policy, the role of the trade union movement, and the aims of CND are consistently and deliberately distorted in the press. It would be morally wrong and probably political suicide were any of us begin to alter policy on the basis of what the press in this country tell us is happening rather than what we feel is best for the country. One of the ways we can overcome the bias in our press is to make sure that accurate information is made available to our members through our respective organisations. One of the ways in which accurate information on defence policy can be gained is through an affiliation to CND. I would therefore urge your branch to reconsider their position. Should you so wish, I could arrange to have a speaker attend one of your future meetings to discuss our position with you.

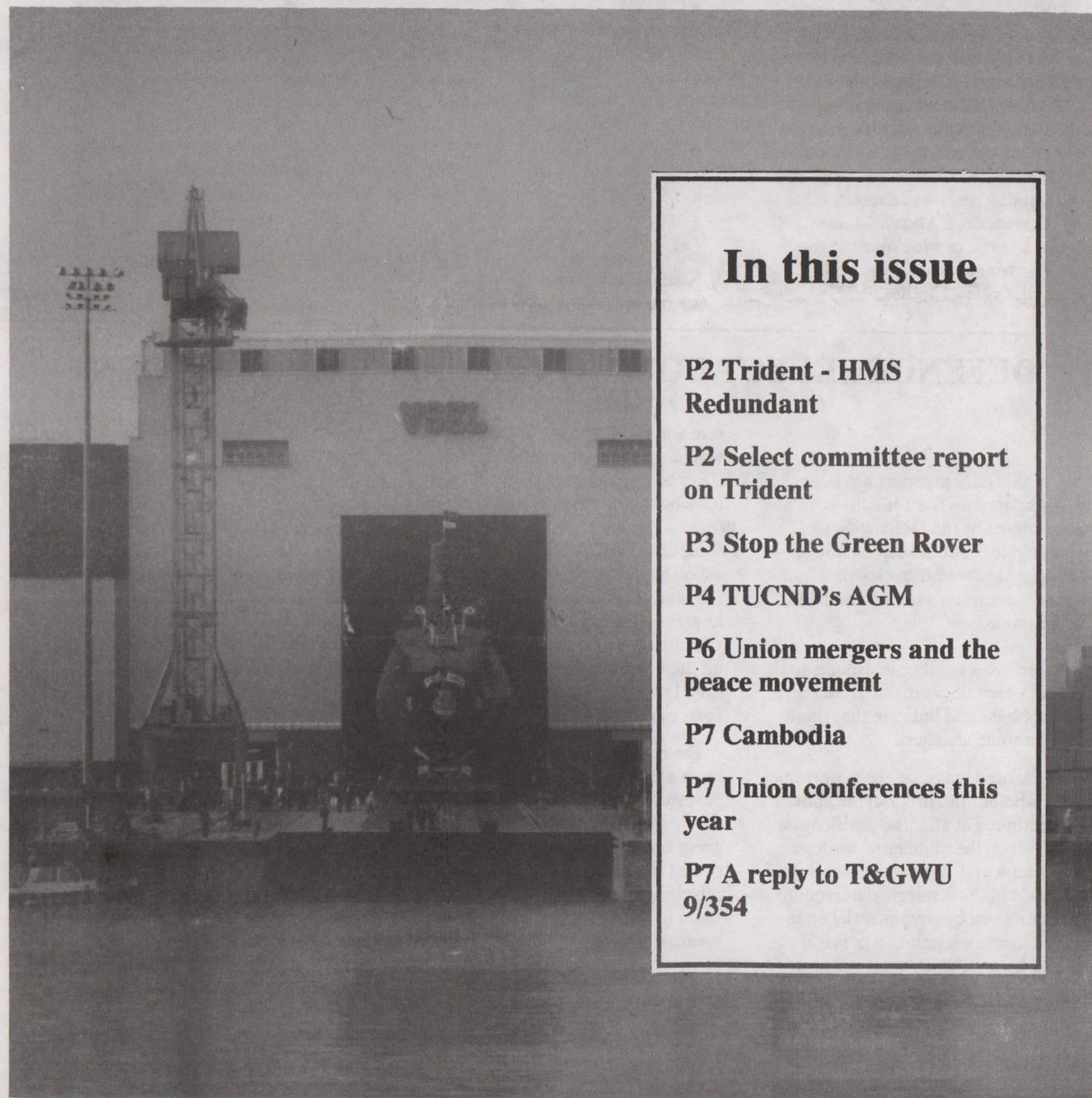
Yours fraternally

J Barnes (Secretary, Trade Union CND)

# TUCND NEWS

Issue 6

June - July 1992



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## TRIDENT - HMS REDUNDANT - HMS EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

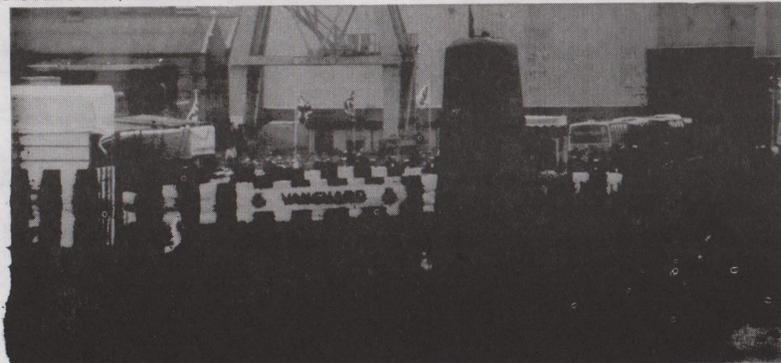
Britain's first Trident submarine was 'named' by Princess Diana at a ceremony in Barrow on the 7th April this year. There isn't a launching where the boat slides down a slipway into the water with these submarines, instead they are lowered into the water on a lift which takes a number of hours. To create a little drama out of the occasion VSEL arranged this naming ceremony.

CND groups were demonstrating around the perimeter of VSEL. A 'die-in' was arranged to coincide with the actual event of naming Trident and CND held an alternative naming ceremony for a mock-up Trident of our own. A competition had been held to pick the best alternative name and the winning entry was announced as Air Commodore Alistair Mackie broke a bottle of wine over the mock up. The winning name was HMS Emperor's New Clothes.

A banner with 10 foot high letters referring to Trident as HMS Redundant was also hung from the bridge overlooking the naming ceremony.

A number of people were arrested in trying to blockade VSEL. The most notable were two residents of the Faslane Peace Camp who attempted to stop the motorcade carrying Princess Diana. Much of the press coverage of the event centred on the threat that

one of these peace campaigners presented to the life and limb of Princess Diana as he tried to get close enough to her car to explain why he felt she ought not to participate in the event. If the Sun is to be believed the poor woman was in fear of her life as the monstrous anarchist - or was it antichrist - came looming up to the armour plated vehicle. The person responsible weighs all of eight stone.



The naming ceremony at VSEL

## DEFENCE SELECT COMMITTEE CRITICAL OF TRIDENT PROGRAMME

A highly critical report has been prepared on the Trident programme by the Defence Select Committee. In polite diplomatic terminology the report questions a number of assumptions underpinning the programme.

There are a number of aspects to the report which demonstrate fundamental problems and indicate that there may be some changes.

In guarded language the report questions whether the programme should be continued at all... "the justification for Trident, the number of warheads to be deployed and the relationship of the scale of the strategic deterrent to that deployed by any potential enemy are once again legitimate political and military issues," the report states.

It report goes on to question the veracity of the MoD's accounting sys-

tem and the way costs are allocated. It would appear that many items not attributed to Trident costs would not have been purchased had it not been for the Trident programme. For instance the MoD have bought two tugs which wouldn't otherwise have been purchased. The report states "It is our impression that attribution of costs specifically to Trident may have erred on the low side, with the effect, intentional or not, of understating the real costs of the programme".

The report expresses disappointment at the amount of orders the US government have allocated to British companies from their Trident programme. Allowing British companies to tender was seen as a way of offsetting the several billion being spent in the US by the British government.

A very telling point made in the report relates to the need for four Trident submarines rather than three. Be-

cause of a series of delays the fourth boat will not be in service before the first boat is sent for its first refit. This means the Navy will be running the programme with two active boats rather than the three which they maintain are necessary. The report goes on to say "it would help informed discussion of this very greatly if ministers would declassify the evidence to support this assertion".

In a number of places towards the end of the report the language gets sharper and the criticism more pointed. For instance in discussing the secrecy surrounding the number of missiles the MOD propose to order, the report states "We remain unclear from whom this information is being safe-guarded. It makes no sense to suggest that 'it would reveal information about the overall size of the force': the necessary element of uncertainty relates to warheads and not missiles".

The British Government have agreed to sell a former Royal Navy Auxiliary vessel called the Green Rover to Indonesia. This is typical of the way in which our government is prepared to circumvent the public condemnation of the arms trade and continue to supply militarily significant equipment to extremely unpleasant regimes.

## THE INDONESIAN DICTATORSHIP

The current government has the dubious distinction of being the world's longest running dictatorship. It has lasted 26 years. It took power through a military coup in 1965 under the leadership of General (now President) Suharto. In the following 18 months in an attempt to annihilate the opposition, the government killed an estimated million people. This was condoned by the US Government and Suharto has enjoyed consistent support from both the US and the British governments ever since. It is probable that this coup would not have happened had it not enjoyed this support. Professor Gabriel Kolko, a US his-

torian with a of record support for most of the cold war US attitudes, described this support in the following terms: No single American action in the period after 1945 was as blood-thirsty...for the US tried to initiate the massacre, and did everything in it's power to encourage Suharto.."

## STOP THE SALE OF THE GREEN ROVER TO INDONESIA

In the early 80's death squads started to pick up people who voiced some form of opposition to the regime. Sometimes their badly mutilated bodies would be dumped in the countryside, sometimes they would never be found. An estimated 4,000 people died at the hands of these death squads.

In the early 70's an independence movement began in Aceh, North Sumatra, and a guerilla war has been going on there ever since.

In 1975 the regime invaded the newly independent former Portuguese colony of East Timor with terrible consequences for the people of that area. It is estimated that a third of the population, roughly 20,000 people, have died at the hands of the army.

In November last year government troops opened fire on a funeral procession in East Timor. According to eye witness accounts, when the firing had stopped troops clubbed to death the wounded. Estimates of the number of people killed vary from 50 to 180 with the larger figure being the more likely.

## WHAT THE WEST HAS GAINED

East Timor has offshore oilfields. The companies exploiting that oil are British and American. Britain and the US also import substantial amounts of agricultural produce, as well as rubber and valuable hardwoods.

## THE GREEN ROVER

This is an oil tanker designed to refuel warships at sea. Our government estimate that we sell 3 million worth of military hardware to Indonesia a year, which our government regards as not being significant. Yet the contract for refitting the Green Rover alone, not including the cost of the vessel, is estimated to be worth £11 million.

The Green Rover is not regarded by our government as an arms sale, yet it has a great deal of significance for the Indonesian Navy. It provides with what is termed a "blue water" capability. That means it considerably extends the range of Indonesian warships.

## WHAT TUCND IS CALLING FOR

It is probable that Indonesia would have had difficulty finding a shipyard in Britain prepared to take on the work of refitting this ship had it not been for the fact that our shipbuilding industry is in such a demoralised state. A number of the war-shipyards in Britain have orders for military ships and equipment for unpleasant undemocratic regimes, a reflection of the fact that we are not in a position to compete in the civilian market. One of the things that TUCND are calling for is a change in attitude towards civilian shipbuilding.

This ship should never have been sold to Indonesia and TUCND are calling for the sale to be cancelled. We are also calling for the government to pay for the refit currently under way at Swan Hunters on Tyneside, and for it to be offered for sale to governments without the appalling human rights record of Indonesia.

TUCND would like you to write to the Ministry of Defence, and also write to your MP urging him or her to put pressure on the MOD to cancel the sale.

# TRADE UNION C.N.D. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 25TH APRIL 1992

Trade Union C.N.D.'s AGM took place against a backdrop of important and significant changes within C.N.D. and both domestic and international political life. In particular, we had just witnessed the defeat of the Labour Party in the General Election, which had been a serious blow to the common aims of trade unionists and peace campaigners alike.

Attended by delegates representing a wide range of Trade Unions and Trades Councils, the AGM was opened by an introduction from Brian Didsbury, Chair of TUCND. In his introduction Brian outlined the financial difficulties which had faced C.N.D. throughout 1991 to date and the subsequent impact on TUCND. He also referred to the disappointing result of the General Election and emphasised the ever more critical role TUCND would have to play against a government who was more determined than ever to reassert its imagined position as a military power on the world stage.

This theme was reinforced by the two speakers invited from C.N.D. The first, Air Commodore Alastair Mackay, who brought greetings from Ex-Services C.N.D., highlighted the lunacies of the U.K.'s desperate attempt to cling to an image of military power via its purchase of the Trident system. As a member of the international organisation, "Generals for Peace", he condemned Trident from a military stand point. He stated that many of Britain's top defence experts regarded our Trident programme as a nonsense in the post Cold-War situation. Trident was not a defensive system. On the contrary, it was a "first-strike" weapon. It was also clearly not a deterrent, as the Gulf War proved.

Indeed, Trident served no credible military purpose at all. Its only political purpose arose from the present government's "delusions of grandeur" and determination to retain their position on the U.N. Security Council, a criticism that could equally be directed to the Labour Party. He deplored the present bi-partisan policy of the Labour Party on Trident and other

defence issues, and suggested that, with the General Election out of the way, the Trade Unions should be putting pressure on Labour M.P.'s, who he referred to as the "conscience of the Labour Party", to oppose Britain's current nuclear defence policy.

The second speaker, Laurie Gibson, C.N.D. Vice-Chair, bringing greetings from C.N.D., stated that despite the financial difficulties referred to earlier, he was optimistic about the future of C.N.D.

Reinforcing the criticisms of the first speaker, he stated that Trident had lost any credibility it might ever have had, and, referring to the dangers of



*TUCND's secretary addressing a fringe meeting at MSF's conference this year, together with Tim Webb, National Officer and Brian Pemberton, a BAE convenor.*

nuclear proliferation, pointed out that Britain's Trident programme was an obstacle to achieving an effective non-proliferation treaty. He finished by stressing the important role TUCND could play in ridding Britain of Trident.

Introducing the Annual Report, Jimmy Barnes, TUCND full-time worker, examined and explained the financial problems that had hit C.N.D. and the plans of TUCND to combat them. In particular, from April 1992, all affiliation fees and donations from Trade Unions to CND would be passed to TUCND, whilst affiliation fees would have to be increased. These changes would compensate, not only for the loss of the wages of

TUCND's full-time worker, when made redundant by C.N.D., but also for an expected fall in income arising from the growing number of Trade Union mergers. Even if these changes were acceptable to delegates, there would only be sufficient core funding raised from these sources to pay a worker a part-time wage. It was stressed that further fund raising would have to be initiated if we were to increase the salary to that of a full-time post. After some debate, the new financial arrangements were accepted by the delegates.

Dealing with the more general aspects of TUCND's work throughout 1991, Jimmy outlined the work that

had been done around the issues of Trident, Arms Conversion, the Arms Trade, Proliferation and Cambodia. Many of these issues would be at the fore-front of TUCND's work in 1992, specifically Trident, Arms Conversion and the Peace Dividend. In summing up on the work priorities, Jimmy pointed out that Trident did not provide any long-term future for employment in the Barrow area and that we needed to actively pursue the issue of diversification amongst Barrow's workforce and Trade Unions, including the building of merchant ships.

Jimmy then pointed out that despite growing area of compatibility between the parties there were differences be-

tween Labour and Tory Party policies on defence. We should be working to influence Labour Party policy whilst, at the same time, continue to apply pressure on the Tory government's foreign and defence policies. Policies that were of most recent concern to TUCND were our governments support of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the threats of military action against Libya.

This was followed by George Brumwell, General Secretary of UCATT. He opened his speech by stressing the common purpose of the peace and Trade Union movements, not only to end the development and use of weapons of mass destruction, but, also in promoting the expansion and diversification of Britain's manufacturing base. He stated that it was essential that the peace and Trade Union movements campaigned jointly on getting rid of nuclear weapons and promoting a programme of Arms Conversion.

Referring to the wealth of anti-Trade Union legislation, both in existence and being planned, and the attacks on people's rights in general, including those in the peace movement, he urged the need for active collaboration between both peace campaigners and trade unionists in order to combat and reverse such attacks.

The final speaker was the outgoing Treasurer, Peter Tuck who presented a detailed report of finances. TUCND are financially stable for the coming year on the basis that the worker, who is now to be employed by TUCND, CND having made him redundant, will receive a half salary. Peter stressed that he did not feel this was satisfactory and we should aim to return him to a full salary as soon as the finances allowed.

There followed a lively discussion based on the annual report. A section which stressed that TUCND's support for an anti nuclear power policy was

THE ARMS TRADE, THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ARMS CONVERSION IN BRITAIN - A CND PUBLICATION



*The front cover of one of the broadsheets TUCND produced last year.*



THE TARGET THE EQUIPMENT AND THE ALTERNATIVE

on the basis of the relationship between nuclear power and the development of nuclear weapons. Some delegates as being a watering down of the current policy. The Annual Report argued that, because of the changing international situation, other issues, such as military intervention by the UN and others and so, in drafting the report on behalf of the EC, the secretary had sought to define precisely the limits of our policy on a range of



*Peter Haggar, T&GWU, one of TUCND's delegates addressing CND's national conference last year*

issues. At the end of this discussion the Annual Report was accepted.

## RESOLUTIONS

(1) The Greater London Association of Trades Councils called for the cancellation of Trident and a reduction in military spending, and for the transfer of resources saved to meet social needs. This resolution was moved, with a powerful speech by Tom Durkin, a UCATT branch delegate. It was passed unanimously after contributions from the floor.

The conference also agreed to send a message via Bro Durkin, to those in Cuba working for international peace and nuclear disarmament.

(2) A proposal was put to the AGM suggesting that TUCND should promote a conference in Barrow around the issues of the Peace Dividend. Such a conference could be organised in collaboration with C.N.D.

It was agreed that this should be looked at by the incoming

## EC.ELECTIONS

Brian Didsbury, TGWU, was re-elected as Chair unopposed;

John Chowcatt, MSF, and John Geleit, GPMU, as Vice-Chairs;

## UNION MERGERS AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT

There is a constant stream of rumour reported in the press about union mergers, some of which are true but many are clearly driven by a wishful thinking rather than anything real. Some of these mergers may have an impact on TUCND.

Our income, for instance, from national union affiliations is likely to fall by an estimated 20% as a result of mergers. The political consequences for TUCND fall into two basic categories and are perhaps more important than the financial implications. These are the likelihood of the new merged union changing its attitude towards the peace movement, and the problems of administering a relationship between a large union and TUCND.

Added to this set of problems is the question of what will happen to, the TUC in the near future.

### CHANGES IN ATTITUDE

NUCPS and the CPSA were in merger talks for some time. Apparently one of the items in those talks was the affiliation of NUCPS to CND. Given the disagreements between the two over the fight for decent pay and conditions for their members it is unlikely that NUCPS would have been prepared to watch the merger fall because of one affiliation. It was possible, therefore, that the new merged union would not be affiliated to CND. One of the sticking points was the affiliation to CND. Aside from that particular merger it is unlikely that there will be any change in any of our major affiliates.

The Guardian carried an article a little while ago suggesting that secret merger talks were under way between the new AEEU and Roger Lyons of MSF. It is clear that there are a number of things to be gained for the AEEU leadership by encouraging the idea that such a merger is on the cards but it is difficult to see what MSF or Roger Lyons could possibly gain from such a merger. The AEEU doesn't have a credible clerical, technical grades section and they clearly need one. MSF has financial problems but not as great as the AEEU so a merger

would help bail out the AEEU financially. Also the new AEEU desperately needs to lose the smell of the plague carried into it from the EEPTU, which the latter gained from its expulsion from the TUC and from its abortive raid on UCATT's membership. Being seen to hold talks with the credible mainstream of the trade union movement could help them promote the image that they themselves are credible and mainstream.

On the other hand Roger Lyons does not have a reputation for political self mutilation and he is on record as dismissing the rumour, even though the Guardian declined to print his denial.

A merger with the AEEU of any of our major affiliates would raise a problem for TUCND because neither the AEU or the EEPTU have had any working relationship either on conversion or the wider issues relating to peace and disarmament. The only circumstances which would create significant problems for us directly would be a merger of one of our major affiliates with the AEEU.

What is more likely is the damage that is done to the Trade Union movement through such issues as disputes over membership. These could affect TUCND. UCATT, for instance has a long and honourable history of support for the peace movement. Had it sustained serious damage recently, that would have reduced TUCND's effectiveness too. Similarly unions such as the NUM and BECTU are affiliated to CND and have always been supportive, but both face the possible devastation of their industries and that again is bound to effect TUCND.

Some estimates put the probable membership of the trade union movement in five years time as low as five million. This in turn will effect.

### PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTERING THE RELATIONSHIP

With smaller unions the relationship is easy to manage. It's simply a matter of phoning the general secretary and them either responding positively or

politely telling you to go away. It is also quite easy to assess what is possible for a small union to do on our behalf, and so it is rare that we are refused if only because requests for support or participation are usually tailored to what that union can sustain. It is far more difficult to make such an assessment with some of the very large unions.

With bigger the union the easier it is for a log jam to develop in communications between the union and the organisation to which it is affiliated. For instance, should the person responsible for dealing with a particular affiliate not be that sympathetic or perhaps be overworked, the problems created can be quite difficult to overcome.

### POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE TUC

Should the process of mergers continue and a small number of very large unions emerge, it is possible that the role of the TUC will be questioned. One of the functions of the TUC was to facilitate relations between unions working within specific industries. The NALGO/NUPE/CHOSE merger leaves a number of public sector industries dominated by one union. A possible T&GWU/GMB merger has a similar industrial logic. MSF organises across a range of skills which would make a merged T&GWU/GMB/MSF very significant in areas also covered by the AEEU. So mergers at this level could allay friction but also create it. Such mergers must raise questions about the way the TUC could cope in these circumstances.

The erosion of the functions of the TUC and the problems faced by Trades Councils could have an effect on the way trade unions function at a local/community level, and thus have an effect on TUCND's ability to function at a local level.

However, although the long term future of the TUC has profound implications for TUCND it is difficult at this stage to predict exactly how the TUC will evolve.

## CAMBODIA - TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES OF A DIPLOMATIC COMEDY

A number of issues ago TUCND News carried an article describing the situation in Cambodia where the Khmer Rouge, still under the leadership of Pol Pot, were using the peace initiative as a way of reasserting their position. With arms and training from the US, Britain, China and France help the Khmer Rouge had taken hold of the northern section of the country and forced people to flee as refugees from large tracts of the rest of the countryside.

One of the principle means of destabilising the regime in Cambodia has been the use of anti personnel mines. These have made farming impossible in large areas and created a massive refugee problem, for a government which has also to cope with large numbers of disabled people. At the same time the blockade imposed by western countries crippled the Cambodian government.

The Khmer Rouge have now told the United Nations that they will not allow UN forces into the areas of the country they control to monitor the run up to the elections which will establish a democratically elected govern-

ment in Cambodia. At least one of the former anti government forces has said that it will be unable to regroup its forces unless the Khmer Rouge agrees to the plan, which underlines their dependence upon the Khmer Rouge.

The US backed a coup in Thailand when the then prime minister began to talk openly about measures which would control the Khmer Rouge based in Thailand. That military government has now been removed opening the possibility of reasserting those attempts. The UN have appealed to Thailand and China to press the Khmer Rouge to comply with the UN agreement.

The key to this will be the attitude of the United States and Britain who covertly backed the Khmer Rouge. TUCND would like our readers to write to Douglas Hurd urging him to ensure Britain's support for policies which isolate the Khmer Rouge and support measures which will allow the Cambodian people to establish a government of their choice and bring the Khmer Rouge leaders to trial for Genocide.

## UNION CONFERENCES THIS YEAR

This year is very much a period of transition for TUCND. Our new funding arrangements mean we have to plan our work very carefully. We have reduced the number of fringe meetings we hold at union conferences this year, partly because of our financial position but also because of the workload we face overall.

Not all the unions at those conferences we hold fringe meetings are affiliated to CND. For instance we traditionally hold a meeting at the AEU national committee. This years meeting had two speakers, one from TUCND and another from the ANC.

There have been fewer unions with policy motions up for consideration at their conferences than in previous years but this does not necessarily reflect a downturn in interest. The policies TUCND has been arguing for amongst trade unionists are now firmly

established as part of union policies and there is little reason to alter that policy. In some unions there are motions which reaffirm existing union policy, but there are not many where that policy is likely to be changed anyway.

USDAW, for instance, reaffirmed its policy and passed a motion supporting TUCND in its campaign for the peace dividend.

There have been some changes, however. MSF passed a very important motion on arms conversion, moved by the Barrow branch. That motion committed the union to supporting financially the National Trade Union Defence Conversion Committee in which TUCND actively participates.

## IN RESPONSE TO T&GWU NO 9/354 BRANCH

Below is the text of a letter from Mr T G Clark, the secretary of the T&GWU 9/354 branch replying to a request to affiliate to CND. It has been included because it reflects the concerns of some trade unionists about affiliation to CND. Also included is an outline of TUCND's position in relation to the issues Bro Clark raises.

Dear Colleague

In reference to 'Trade Union CND' affiliation, our branch committee feel that the Labour Party lost votes because of the T&GWU and the Labour Party involvement in the CND.

I am an ex-serviceman, as are a lot of our members all over the country. I know of members who didn't vote for Labour because of CND, and no matter what, will never vote for any party which will disarm our country. We believe the T&GWU and the Labour Party should, if they want to be the next government, have a rethink on CND.

Yours fraternally

T G Clarke Branch secretary

Dear Bro Clarke

There are three issues which you raise which I should like to deal with in turn. The first is the relationship between the Labour Party and CND. The second, whether the LP Defence policy lost them votes. The third is CND's policy in relation to defence and the fourth, which was not raised in your letter but I feel needs to be a part of any response to CND from a trade unionist point of view, the relationship between defence and Britain's manufacturing base.

1) The Labour Party has, in the past had a policy in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament. That is not the case at the moment and was not the case during the last election. The Labour Party does not, and never has had, any formal relationship with CND. The T&GWU on the other hand has been a strong supporter of the peace movement ever since nuclear weapons became an issue in