

NOTTS. NALGO

11 MAY 1984

RECEIVED

# UNION CONFERENCES:

## The Issues

The trade union conference season will soon be under way. Union attitudes to the threat of nuclear war are likely to figure on the agendas of many unions. Here, John Chowcat, the newly elected Chair of Trade Union CND looks at some of the issues confronting union supporters of CND.

Serious trade union concern at the acceleration of the nuclear arms race is distinctly justifiable on economic grounds — quite apart from important moral considerations. The UK Government's own public spending forecasts, showing a planned growth in military expenditure to a total of £18,660 million by 1986/7 while spending on national education services will stand at £13,750 million by comparison\*, demonstrate that the formidable price of purchasing the US Trident weapons system and maintaining other aspects of Britain's nuclear "deterrent" force means cuts in those vital public services which the trade union movement has always promoted and defended.

This applies not only to education and health but also to Government support services for sorely-needed industries and jobs in the private sector. The very same government which stands back, allowing "market forces" to decimate employment levels in manufacturing industry today is committed to massive and growing state involvement with the means of atomic mass extermination.

TUC Annual Congress, recognising these dangers, resolved in 1982 to oppose British nuclear weaponry, and confirmed this policy by Congress vote in 1983. An increasing number of individual national trade unions have adopted the same stance, with 29 unions (including the TGWU, ISTC, NUR, ASTMS and

NALGO) now affiliated to CND at national level.

The present government emphasis on extending British military "security" now brings additional problems for trade unionists in its train. After the attack on elementary trade union rights at GCHQ, Cheltenham, recent reports point to heightened government pressure to reduce the civil rights of trades unionists in sections of the Civil Service should they engage voluntarily as citizens in peace movement activities.

Our trade union policies in opposition to nuclear weapons must indeed be strengthened in these circumstances through commitment by union conferences and committees to assist in practical campaigns. The examples set by the NGA, ACTT and SOGAT in establishing national Disarmament Committees within their structures; the need for inclusion of peace discussions in trade union educational work; features on disarmament in trade union publications; and the importance of linking the arms issue to on-going trade union campaigns against unemployment and cuts in public services all deserve consideration in 1984.

\*"The Government's expenditure plans 1984/5 to 1986/7" Vol. 1, HM Treasury, February 1984.

## TRADE UNION CND: HINTS FOR ACTION

Trade Union CND is a specialist section of CND. Our role is to promote CND's aims in the trade union movement. TUCND will offer whatever assistance we can to any union and/or CND member who wishes to promote CND in the union movement.

### FIRST STEPS

If you're a union member you could consider the following steps:

- \* Join CND nationally and/or locally.
- \* Wear a CND badge to work.
- \* Talk to your workmates about CND and CND activities.
- \* Display CND posters at work.
- \* Keep a small stock of literature for people who want more information.

### INFLUENCING YOUR UNION

- \* Suggest that your union branch invite a CND speaker.
- \* Move a policy resolution opposing the nuclear arms race at your branch. Model resolutions are available from TUCND.
- \* Urge your branch to affiliate the CND. Details are available from TUCND.

- \* Suggest that your branch distribute CND material and sponsor CND activities.
- \* Persuade your branch to take action itself, appoint a CND liaison officer, produce your own leaflets etc.
- \* Move resolutions to go to other sections of the union.

If your CND group wishes to increase union involvement in your activities, the following steps could be considered:

- \* Appoint a Trade Union liaison officer.
- \* Survey your group's members to find out which unions they're members of.
- \* Through your members find out the present policies of local unions. Ask them to raise the issue at their local branch meeting.
- \* Contact local branches and trades councils offering speakers, asking for support for your campaigns.

These are just a few hints: for a full guide contact Andrew Hewett at Trade Union CND.

# TUCND News

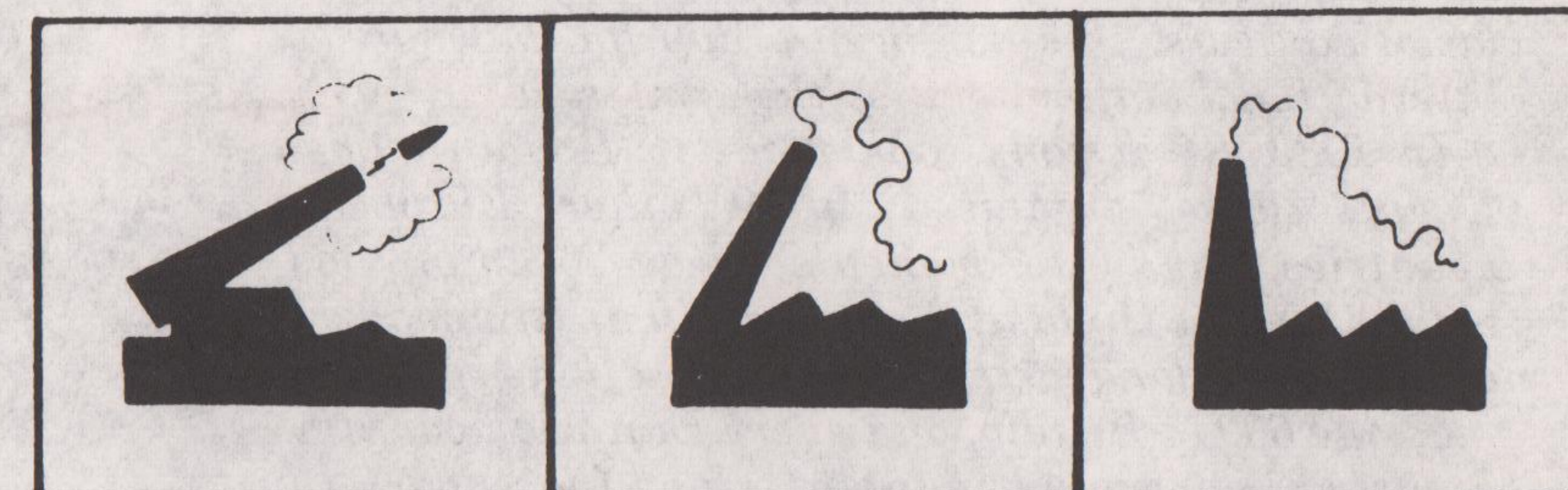
April 1984

No. 3



10469

## A FAREWELL TO ARMS



In the mid 1970's faced with a spate of redundancies, shop stewards at Lucas Aerospace developed an alternative production plan for alternative products to military work. But despite world-wide publicity, it seemed that the plan had been consigned to the dustbin of history.

However, now it appears that there is greater interest than ever in the ideas developed by the Lucas workers and others. Its obvious why there's been the renewed interest — with four million people on the dole, trade unionists are desperately searching for policies that put a premium on jobs.

In the defence industry, there has been a long-term decline in employment — between 1963 and 1978 a quarter of a million jobs were lost. With the shift in defence policy towards aerospace, electronics and, of course nuclear weaponry, there's been a run-down in the older labour intensive part of the military industry. More expensive and capital intensive equipment has become the norm. Defence spending has been increasing (up to £17 billion in 1984/85) — jobs have been decreasing.

The headlong rush to nuclear war, and the growth of the peace movement, is the other reason why there has been a renewed interest in the ideas of arms conversion. Without proper planning, nuclear disarmament would mean the loss of millions of jobs around the world.

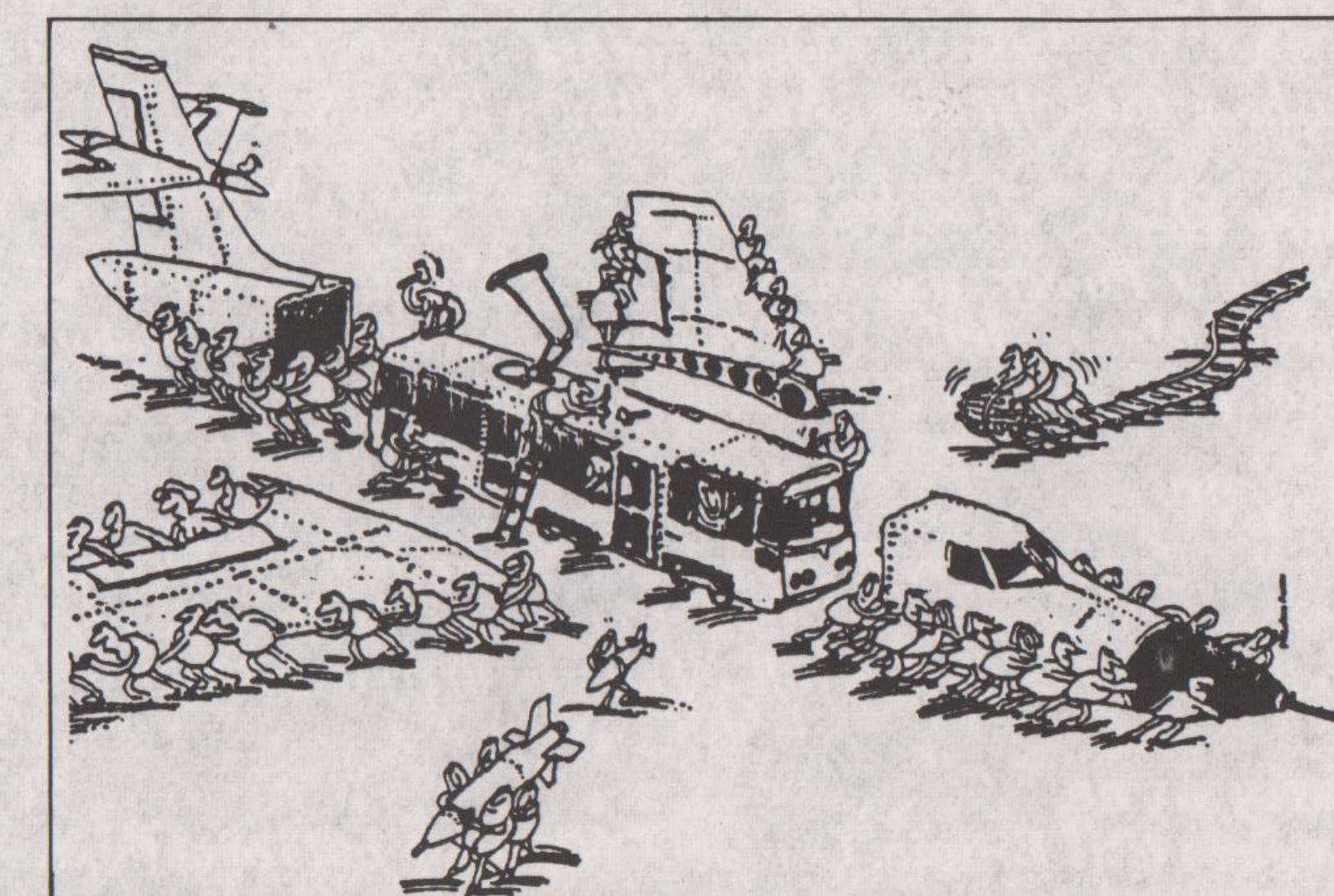
Increasingly its been argued that arms conversion is part of the answer, both to the threat of nuclear war and to mass unemployment. Defence workers are faced with a false choice when they are asked to choose between more military contracts or the dole queue. The real choice lies in converting the money, skills, plant and resources used to produce monsters like Trident, to the production of civilian goods.

Building on the many excellent conference policies, trade unions are now beginning to publicise these ideas and discuss how they could be put into practice. The TGWU, SCPS, IPCS and AUEW-TASS have all recently produced reports on the question. Four major unions sponsored the conference in Bradford on a better future for defence jobs, while in Barrow the local Trades Council and the Northern Region of TUCND are holding a day school on the alternatives to Trident which is to be

built in the town. And nationally CND will shortly be publishing a leaflet on conversion.

All these activities are aimed at taking the conversion argument to where it matters — workplaces employed on defence contracts. The next stage will be to develop a publicity campaign around the issue, to get the TUC and Labour Party to develop a practical programme for putting conversion into practise; and most importantly, to encourage defence workers to establish Alternative Use committees to examine real alternatives to unemployment and the arms race.

Conversion holds out the prospect of transforming the slogan of "Jobs Not Bombs" into a living reality.





## INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY FOR DISARMAMENT

The third International Women's Day for Disarmament will take place on 24th May. For the last two years, this has been a day for widespread international action against the arms race.

In 1982, 84 actions took place in Britain alone. Events were organised in 9 other European countries, and a women's peace camp was established in Holland. Last year, in an atmosphere of increased danger, the number of actions rose to a massive 600 in Britain, and every European country reported enormous support for the day. In Auckland, New Zealand, 20,000 marched for disarmament, women were arrested for civil disobedience in Australia and the US. We even heard from women protesting in Zimbabwe and Costa Rica.

The Trade Union Movement contributed a great deal to last year's events in Britain. Thousands of TU branches throughout the country passed resolutions of support. At a national level, a number of TU executives passed resolutions and NALGO



even endorsed strike action by individual branches. The Women's Advisory Committee of TUC, the TUC General Council, the Labour Party Women's Committee and the National Executive of Labour Party supported the day of women's action for peace.

This year, we hope that TU women will organise again in their regions and encourage their male colleagues to support them.

### WHAT'S ON

**April 7/8**

"A Better Future for Defence Jobs". National Conference. Bradford University. Details: Andrew Hewett, c/o 11 Goodwin St., London N4 3HQ.

**April 14/15**

Regional actions against US nuclear bases. Details local CND group or (01) 263 0977.

**April 15/23**

Easter Peace Pilgrimage. Details: Christian CND (01) 263 0977.

**May 12**

WEA Day School: What future for Defence Jobs? Durham City. Details: Alan Milburn (0632) 329057.

**May 12**

"Nuclear Power: the end in sight" Working conference. Queen Mary Hall, YWCA, Gt. Russell St. London. Details: 22 Beacon Hill, Holloway, London N7.

**May 26**

"Free Europe from Nuclear Weapons". National demonstration and Festival. Coventry. There will be a trade union leg to this rally. Details: (021) 632 6909.

**Early June**

Reagan visits Britain. Contact CND for details of actions. (01) 263 0977.

### TUCND AGM

Trade union CND held its Annual General Meeting on Saturday February 25. Nearly 200 delegates and observers came together to discuss TUCND's campaigning over the last year and the perspectives for the next twelve months. There was a strong consensus that while TUCND had made a lot of ground in attracting official trade union support, the priority now was to develop more workplace activity. Workshops on different campaigns and industries were held to exchange experiences and information.

A new TUCND executive was elected. John Chowcat, a divisional officer with ASTMS, was elected the new Chair.

### What price Trident?

170 union activists attended a successful conference on the economic consequences of the arms race in mid-February. The conference which was sponsored by a number of unions after an initiative from the ACTT Disarmament Committee, focused on the disastrous impact of the Trident submarine on the economy, jobs, and most importantly on world peace. The need to develop an effective campaign to convince union members of the need for arms conversion was a recurring theme. A video featuring the main speeches from the conference is being prepared and will be available soon.

# Disarming Education

Stewart Hastings, NUPE Divisional Education Officer in Wales describes a week-end school on the peace movement and NUPE.

Nearly twenty health service and local government workers came together in mid-February for a week-end school on the threat of nuclear war and the role of the trade union movement. The school was organised by the Wales Division of NUPE.

The school began with a poll of people's attitudes to CND and the peace movement — 5 were CND members, two were hostile to CND but were prepared to listen to the arguments while the remainder were not strongly committed one way or the other.

John Cox, CND Vice-President and Sue Lamb from Greenham Common were the tutors. Sue's from the Valleys and hence could immediately relate to the people on the course. The NUPE Peace Pack and the video, A Guide to Armageddon were the back-up resources.

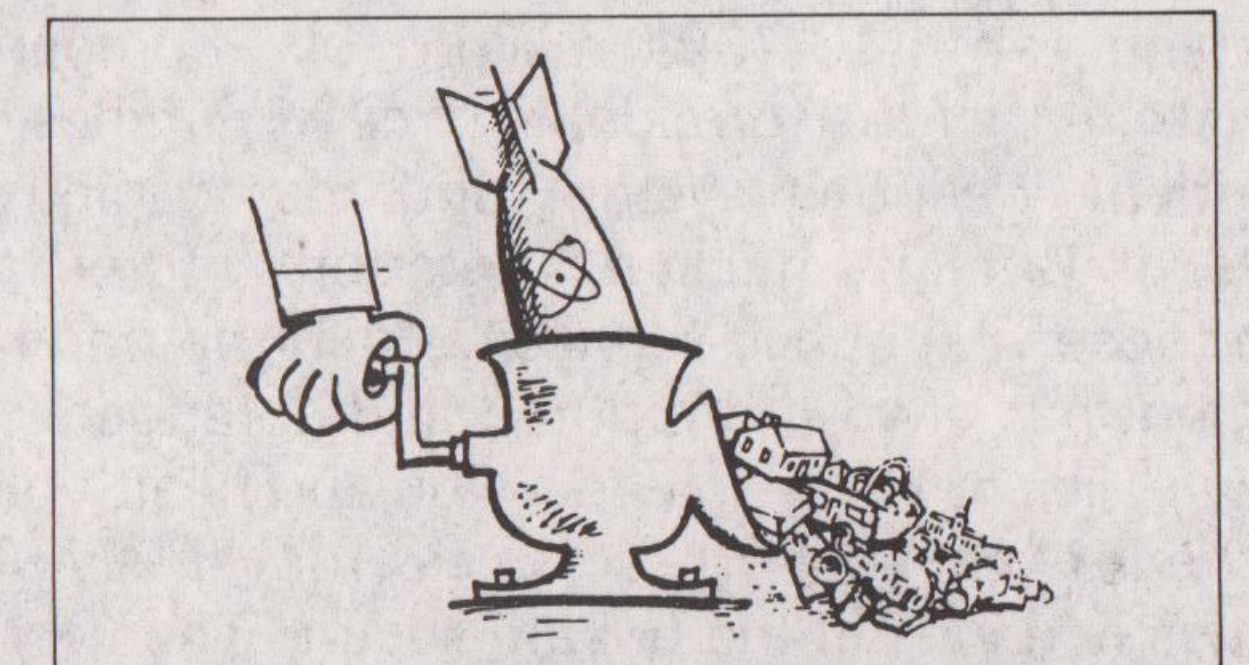
Health service and local authority workers are in the front line in the campaign against the Government's new civil defence regulations. After

examining the consequences of a nuclear war, it became abundantly clear that neither the health service or local councils would be able to cope.

Students also came to the belief that the trade union movement needs to become more actively involved in the peace movement. It's no longer good enough just having good resolutions with little follow-up.

The school was declared a great success. At the evaluation session, 17 students shared the view that they were prepared to be more involved in the trade union campaign for nuclear disarmament; while the remaining student, stated that after hearing Sue Lamb his views were changed and that he was going to give the issue greater consideration.

If other unions would like any information on the course contact NUPE 158/59 St. Helen's Rd., Swansea.



### LOCAL TUCND GROUPS

Trade Union CND recognises that the success of our work relies upon the development of a network of regional TUCND groups throughout the country. At the moment we know of only 7 such regional TUCND's. The ones currently in existence perform the invaluable work of encouraging local trade union bodies to become actively involved in the campaign for nuclear disarmament. TUCND nationally is able to offer all sorts of assistance, including financial help, to both established and budding TUCND groups. If you think that we might be able to help, please contact: The Treasurer, TUCND, 11 Goodwin St., London N4 3HQ.

### LIKE THE NEWS?

Additional copies of TUCND News are available at a cost of 4p each (plus postage) from TUCND, 11 Goodwin St. London N4 3HQ. Why not get a few copies for your trades council, union branch, CND group or for your workmates?

### Work for peace.

 **Join CND** 

Yes, I'll join CND

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_ (IMPORTANT)

☐ MEMBERSHIP  
RATES Adult £6 ☐ Two people at same address £9 ☐ Student £3 ☐  
Unwaged & Pensioner £2 ☐ Youth CND (21 and under) £1 ☐ (tick one)

Please find enclosed

£\_\_\_\_\_ for membership

£\_\_\_\_\_ donation ☐ (tick for donation receipt).

☐ I'd like more information about CND and the Trade Unions.

My Trade Union is \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please send me details of how to affiliate my Union organisation to CND.

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to CND and send with completed form to TUCND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ.  
Phone (01) 263 0977.



TA