

BARROW ALTERNATIVES ONE YEAR ON

Since June last year, when the full-time worker for BAEC, Steve Schofield, began work, both he and the rest of the Committee have been active researching alternatives and campaigning locally and nationally to develop the case for conversion.

Research has taken priority and the Committee have been given valuable assistance by the Bradford School of Peace Studies in providing academic support in the area of defence economics and detailed analysis of conversion experience internationally. (It was precisely this sort of academic help which the Lucas shop stewards wanted but were unable to get when developing the Combine Plan.)

The Committee's report, to be published next month will cover the main areas of concern, ie the cost of Trident and its effect on the defence budget, a non-nuclear defence policy and its implications for Vickers and the possibilities for new civilian production using the existing skills and facilities available at Vickers.

As far as campaigning is concerned, all the Committee's members have been active at meetings, conferences and dayschools both here and abroad. Most recently, Harry Siddall, a founder member of the Committee was invited as a keynote

speaker to the European conversion conference held in Brussels, which many participants have described as the most important yet in extending the international network for conversion initiatives.

At the local level the Committee has established itself as a resource for the trade unions by providing information on Trident and publishing a detailed analysis of the privatisation of Vickers, the various companies interested and the long-term effects of private ownership. To that extent the Committee is well established as a constituent part of the Barrow trade union scene.

The difficulties experienced in the year's activities must be acknowledged. Many Vickers workers are suspicious of arguments for civilian production when the national economy is in such dire straits and the prospects for conversion are not encouraging. Yet every union branch at Vickers has now had the opportunity to hear the case put against Trident and the ideas of conversion have been discussed at every level of the local trade union movement, including the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

For the future, the Committee hope that the publications of its first conversion report will provide extra impetus to its work so that it can extend its research activities, develop contacts with other conversion projects and assist the campaign for a national conversion programme which has the support of the full trade union movement.

Ideally, the Committee would like a full time research worker and a full time campaign worker but the limits on funding are a major handicap to achieving this.

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NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFERENCE ON SDI — THE STAR WARS PROGRAMME AND ITS ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES FOR BRITAIN

This will be a major Trade Union Conference on the economic consequences for Britain of our involvement in the United States' SDI — Star Wars — programme.

SDI is a serious threat to Britain's scientific institutions and consequently to our industry. This programme will, if allowed to go ahead, dominate this country's research and development facilities for advanced technology, access to which is vital for the future of Britain's industry.

And this comes when British industry desperately needs the use of these facilities to develop new products and technologies.

Speakers will include Labour Party Defence Spokesperson Denzil Davies, and NUPE Deputy General Secretary Tom Sawyer. GMBATU General Secretary John Edmonds will chair the conference.

**11.00am Conference opens
1.00-2.00pm Lunch
4.30pm Close**

Background papers will be made available before the conference.

Name

UNION

ADDRESS

**Delegate fee of £3 enclosed ☐
Crêche required ☐**

Please return to TRADE UNION SDI CONFERENCE, c/o 22-24 Underwood St, London N1 7JG

NUM · NALGO · SOGAT · NUPE · UCW and others

TUCND News

June/July

No. 16

Public order or police power?

These photographs show what is unfortunately becoming typical of policing at both peace movement and Trade Union movement events. The photograph of the Wapping defences shows their similarity to the measures taken to defend Ministry of Defence establishments against the peace movement. The other photograph was taken at a recent demonstration against the American bombing of Libya. As many a printer will confirm it is also typical of the way the police are behaving in defence of Rupert Murdoch.

The new Public Order Bill which is going through the House of Lords at the moment, will dramatically increase the police discretion to suppress public protest. A march for instance can be banned if the police feel that there may be a *Wagons behind the wire at Wapping*



Police — over the top in Oxford Street

risk of serious public disorder, if it might seriously disrupt traffic or people shopping, or if the police feel that the intention of the organisers is to intimidate others. The police will also be able to decide on where a static picket or a vigil can take place and how many people can take part. A new offence has been created where the police have reasonable cause to believe that something is likely to harass, alarm or distress another person. Causing 'alarm' could include the words you use or the gestures you make.

Much of what are currently regarded as legitimate forms of protest by both the Trade Unions and the peace movement will be made into criminal acts by this bill, some material on the bill is available from this office. Further material is available from NCCL.



AEU disaffiliates from CND



Paul Johns debates a point with a foundryman in the TUCND fringe meeting at the AEU National Committee in Eastbourne



At their annual National Committee meeting in April the AEU (formerly the AUEW) accepted a motion to disaffiliate from CND by the closest possible margin of 59 to 61 votes with one abstention. The only thing that wasn't expected about this result was that the vote was so close. The leadership of the Union were clearly unhappy when the Union did affiliate and Trade Union CND have not had any contact with them since the affiliation.

A rather shallow and artificial argument was used to justify disaffiliation: CND's policy has been examined over the last year and it had been found to be exclusively unilateralist whereas the AEU's policy was for multilateral disarmament. Since we have consistently maintained that we do not regard unilateralism and multilateralism as mutually exclusive and since we have had no contact with the AEU's leadership — so unless Gavin's been lurking in our dustbin — its difficult to see where this impression of CND came from.

What is clear is that Trade Union CND have not done enough to draw the Engineers into the argument around nuclear disarmament. In fact as a national organisation we haven't done anything on the need for disarmament for AEU members. This is a serious

omission on our part, especially as there is obviously a substantial groundswell of opinion among the union's membership in favour of disarmament.

Since it's clear that we would have had precious little from the AEU's leadership compared to the support we have received from other unions, in the past year, disaffiliation will mean little in terms of how we must organise within the industry. What very obviously does need to change is the level of activity on our part in developing the debate amongst Engineers.

Engineers more than most are aware that the priorities within our economy are dramatically wrong. Unless these priorities are altered and the level and nature of armaments spending within our economy is shifted towards investment in R&D and investment in manufacturing industry, then it is difficult to see how the engineering industry can survive as a significant part of our economy.

Needless to say, I don't think anyone expects the decision to disaffiliate to be the last word as far as the AEU's relationship with CND is concerned.

AMERICA BOMBS LIBYA — TUCND response

The US bombing of Libya has produced a rapid and outraged response from the labour and peace movements in Britain.

The Scottish TUC meeting in April issued an emergency call "for the removal of ALL US bases from Britain in the interests of world peace". This followed the "unlawful US attack on Libya and the consequent loss of civilian lives including children", which represented a "threat to world peace".

Ron Todd, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, declared: "Indiscriminate bombing of innocent men, women and children cannot solve the problem, it can only exacerbate it".

The launching of the Libyan attack by F-111 bombers from US bases here has most vividly brought home to the British people what CND has been saying for years:—

1. The presence of US bases here endangers our security as they make us a prime target for retaliation.
2. US bases will be used to launch 'first strike' nuclear attacks without consultation with the British Parliament — thus making a mockery of the so-called "dual key" whereby the US is supposed to consult with a British Prime Minister before launching nuclear missiles.
3. "Senator" Margaret Thatcher slavishly follows US foreign policy, even to the extent of being isolated from Britain's EEC partners, and even when no NATO justification can be found for the attack.
4. The US by its murderous actions in violation of international law is bringing the world closer to nuclear war and is recklessly heightening tensions regardless of world opinion.
5. New NATO plans to allow the deployment of US chemical weapons at bases in Europe adds a terrifying new twist to the dangers of having US bases on British soil.



Liverpool May Day demonstration

A combination of factors now present the greatest threat to world peace ever.

Not only has there been the US attack on Libya, but also the US has conducted three nuclear tests already this year in flagrant disregard of the Soviet Union's unilateral test ban freeze. Only after the third test was conducted did the Soviet Union finally end its own freeze. These tests are clearly linked to US plans to drive ahead with their aggressive 'Star Wars' plan.

It is vital that we mobilise the feeling that now exists on these issues to ram home the message loud and clear:

- **US bases out of Britain.**
- **Stop Trident and Star Wars.**
- **We need unilateral nuclear disarmament now!**

CHERNOBYL —

What this means for the British nuclear industry

Proponents of nuclear power in this country argue that the industry is an asset to Britain. This was why the EEPNU some years ago requested that the Fuel & Power Committee of the TUC, that trade unionists be allowed to attend seminars organised by the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell near Oxford. As a result a steady stream of trade unionists have been going there since. The arguments which the AERE put to them there are designed to support three main points: that nuclear power is environmentally safe; that it is cheaper than other fuels and finally that there are no links between nuclear power and nuclear weapons. These three things are very closely interlinked, in fact the rational arguments against nuclear power are based on a different assessment of the same three factors: cost, safety and links with nuclear weapons.

The Soviet nuclear industry has a slight variation: that nuclear power is used where other fuels are less accessible and therefore more costly. This contrasts somewhat with the AERE's more basic discredited position that nuclear power is cheaper than anything

else per se. But it still creates the link between cost and expediency in an industry where the cost of failure is absolute.

The issue is not therefore about whether the Soviet Union is more or less secretive about its nuclear blunders than Britain. (Russian secretiveness has been stressed in our press but given the appalling record of unjustified secrecy from our own nuclear industry this is, to say the least, a bit much). Nor is the issue whether our reactors are inherently more safe than the Soviet Union's according to Greenpeace, if anything, the opposite is true.

We as trade unionists have to cope with the fact that we have a large number of people employed in an industry which is actually based on the need to produce material for nuclear weapons but is thinly disguised as a part of the power generation industry. Because of Chernobyl the cost justification for the industry is withering, especially if the cost to the environment is quantified, exposing the industry to increasing demands that it should be dismantled. It is likely that future Labour governments will be concerned with the dismantling rather than the growth of the industry. It is important that we stress that a central part of the discussion around the dismantling of the industry has to be the provision of alternative employment for the people employed in it. If we are to campaign successfully for nuclear disarmament we have to ensure that disarmament does not adversely affect the employment prospects for large numbers of people within the trade union movement.

SOUTH EAST REGIONAL TRADE UNION CND

For some time now there has been a gaping hole in our regional organisation. The South East regional TUC area has not had a corresponding regional Trade Union CND organisation. This situation has now been put to rights with steps being taken to establish such a group. A delegate general meeting will be held in the not too distant future in order to formalise the organisation. If you would like to be involved, please contact J Barnes at CND's national office for further information.

LOCAL AUTHORITY UNIONS AND CIVIL DEFENCE

A joint trade union leaflet on civil defence for local authority unions has been produced and should be available towards the end of July. This leaflet was actually planned some considerable time ago and was originally intended to be produced in conjunction with the Nuclear Free Zone local authorities. The relationship with the NFZ's unfortunately has had to be abandoned because of new government restrictions on what they regard as political activity by council. The leaflet, however is still going to be produced but without the NFZ's name upon it.

NORTH WEST TUCND PUBLIC MEETING AND DISCUSSION ON STAR WARS

This was a very well-attended conference organised jointly with the National Assembly of Women, with three women scientists speaking, one from the Soviet Union, one from the United States and one from Britain. The meeting, which was absolutely packed, took place in Liverpool on April 6th 1986. For more information, contact George Stratton 051 928 6738.

OXFORD CONFERENCE

This took place in late March 1986 in Oxford Town Hall with Mary Kaldor and Harry Siddall as speakers. It was decided to set up a steering group which will produce a report together with the City Councils peace working party. If any one would like this report please contact Andy Gibbons 0865 64777 ex. 472.

CONVERSION IN THE SOUTH WEST REGION

This region has a conversion council under the title of 'The better future for defence jobs steering committee.' It was set up about two years ago and is made up predominantly of Trade Union officials. It has for the last two years organised conferences and another is planned for this year. The group is also encouraging local groups within individual plants to develop positive alternatives to production for the defence industry.

The Secretary of the group, R. Clarke, is a TASS branch secretary in Bristol and can be contacted c/o the TUCND office in London.

Work for peace. Join CND.

Yes, I'll join the CND

Name _____ (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address _____

Post Code _____ (IMPORTANT)

☐ MEMBERSHIP
RATES Adult £9 ☐ Two people at same address £12 ☐ 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
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Telephone: 01-250 4010.

