

# EQUIPMENT WANTED FOR TUCND

TUCND functions on a low budget. This is possible because much of our office and production equipment has been donated to us. Unfortunately, however, it is not so uncommon for one of the poor things to drop dead from overwork or for them to become so obsolete that parts become a serious problem. This means we regularly need replacements.

## PHOTOCOPIERS

We have a maintenance agreement with a Cannon photocopier dealer. If you have a functioning Cannon photocopier which is surplus to your requirements please consider donating it to us. Although we are not in a position to buy such machines we can collect them.

## CB RADIOS

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## PRINT ROOM EQUIPMENT

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**PLEASE CONTACT- J BARNES - 091 272 2046**

## A TRIBUTE TO SEASIDE CND GROUPS

TUCND organise meetings at as many union conferences as our resources will allow. One of the resources we are able to draw on is the help of the CND groups in the resorts where the conferences take place. TUCND would like to express our appreciation to Bob and Nancy Orel in Bournemouth, Duncan Blinkhorn in Brighton and to Peter and Lillian Sweeney in Blackpool for their tolerance and hard work on our behalf. A special mention is warranted, however, for Mrs Vi Brown, from Blackpool CND, whose support is both a blessing and an inspiration and without whom, it would be difficult to maintain the profile we do at conferences at what is a key venue for conferences.

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# TUCND NEWS

Issue No 7

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## MARKING THE NUCLEAR CONVOY ROUTES

Nuclear Weapons are transported in convoys of lorries from the submarine base at Faslane, near Helensburgh to Burghfield near Reading on a regular basis. The deployment of Trident has meant that this traffic is becoming more frequent and that the risk of a serious accident involving nuclear weapons is increasing.

CND, together with TUCND and Nukewatch organised a campaign to make the public aware of what was happening to build up the number of people involved in tracking these convoys of lorries.

Nukewatch is an independent network of volunteers who track and



## DON'T BE CONNED, DON'T SUPPORT MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The press in this country are making great efforts to persuade people in this country that they should support sending troops to the former Yugoslavia. We are being told that we have to provide military support, and specifically air cover, for the convoys of humanitarian aid. This is very dangerous. The same press has been carrying grossly one-sided picture of the situation.

Atrocities have been occurring on all sides in this civil war and yet Serbia has been singled out for a UN war crimes commission. All sides have been collecting people in camps yet the press has concentrated almost exclusively on Serbian camps and

equating these camps to those set up by the fascists in the second world war.

The situation in Bosnia and the rest of the former Yugoslavia is not yet a full scale civil war. Some of the things being advocated by the British press and by Britain's government, could well turn what is an already awful situation into full scale war with terrible results.

### HOW THE SITUATION AROSE

Germany pressed very hard indeed for the EC to recognise Croatia. That helped the process of establishing Croatia as a separate regime regardless of whether it was

economically viable and regardless of the probable consequences. Germany and Britain also lobbied hard for an early recognition of Bosnia, which sits between Croatia and Serbia. It was clear that the Bosnian population were deeply divided and that it was unlikely that they would be able to retain the integrity of their state. Predictably the day that Bosnia was recognised by the EC the civil war began.

The antagonism which had developed between Croatia and Serbia made it clear that neither would feel they could live with the existence of an unstable regime in between them. What we are seeing now in Bosnia is a



⇒ monitor nuclear traffic and publicise the risks involved. It is because of the activities of this group that the dangers inherent in the practice have been made public knowledge.

One of the aims of this campaign is to build up the Nukewatch network which, although it has done sterling work so far, has to expand if it is to become more effective. Nukewatch itself has been reorganising itself so that it can accomodate such an expansion.

The Faslane Peace Camp, which is sited just outside the Faslane submarine base, has been one of the principle driving forces behind Nukewatch and has gathered a great deal of information on the routes these convoys take, on the type of material carried by them and the reasons why the Ministry of defence are prepared to take the risk of this form of transport.

A very significant peace of information was released last year by the US Congress. Because of the US Freedom of Information Act some of the Congressional hearing on military policies are held in public and a far great proportion of the papers relating to military policies are made available for public scrutiny.

It was revealed at one of these hearings that it is possible for the trident warhead to be detonated by accident. The warhead is built around a small fuel tank, used for manoeuvring as the warhead reenters the atmosphere. This contains a volatile aero-fuel. Also packed around the nuclear material is some conventional high explosive. In the case of the original design for Trident, this was quite a volatile substance. In the case of an accident, the fuel could

ignite the conventional explosive and that could trigger a nuclear explosion or could spread radioactive dust over roughly ten square miles.

The US has decided to change the design of their warhead to make them safe, Britain however, has decided not to change their design. Should one of these lorries be involved in an accident therefore, there is a remote possibility that it could result in the destruction of an area the size of Tyneside with millions of lives being put at risk. These convoys of nuclear weapons pass near most major centres of population in Britain. Not so long ago one broke down on the M25, causing both sides of the motorway to be blocked for several hours. It was rumoured that the load from one lorry had to be transferred by crane to another. Had an accident occurred then, Greater London would have been the casualty.

Between the 14th and the 19th of September a "marking the routes" campaign took place where by groups throughout the country were asked to leaflet their local communities and display posters. Local newspapers, throughout the country were contacted with information about the convoys and the campaign against them and a large number took it up.

The Nukewatch network has been considerably expanded as a result of this campaign and will be increasing its activity considerably, as a result.

If you would like further information on this, please contact Nukewatch, care of

**TUCND**

**65 Bishops Rd**

**Newcastle Upon Tyne.**



**Yugoslavia - Continued from page 1**  
direct result of a process which began with the recognition of Croatia and of Bosnia.

The type of Croatian nationalism promoted by the political leadership campaigning for a separate state was reminiscent of the nationalism which ending in Croatian support for Hitler. Franjo Tudjman the Croatian president, has published a book where he praises Hitler and expresses openly anti-semitic views.

A number of Fascists have travelled from Britain to fight in the Croatian army. 200 neo-fascist members of Le Pen's party have gone from France. The Croatian fascist party has formed an armed group and taken the name of the wartime fascists - the Ustasi. According to a recent Guardian article it is the Ustasi who have been placed in charge of the camps being run by Croatia in Bosnia.

Given Yugoslavia's history it was inevitable that Serbia would regard it as a racing certainty that they would be involved in a military confrontation with them. Hence their refusal to allow the former Yugoslav army equipment or personnel to be passed over to Croatia.

### HELPLESS BRITAIN?

Viewing the press would give the impression that Britain has been a

According to an article in the US magazine 'The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists', a campaign is under way to persuade the US government that it needs new types of nuclear weapons to use against a "despotic Third World power" should it threaten US interests. A number of top level scientists and military advisors have, according to the article, "quietly begun a cynical campaign to convince the administration that the United States should develop a new generation of smaller nuclear weapons". The article goes on to say "these nuclear advocates are actually searching for any broad based rationale that can be used to perpetuate the nuclear machine and its antiquated doctrine".

The problem that these nuclear advocates are faced with is that the Gulf war proved dramatically the capacity of both the existing US war machine and of modern conventional weapons. It made it clear that nuclear

helpless bystander when in truth our government have clearly played a very important role in creating the situation there.

Bosnia has been carved up largely by the Croats and the Serbs - the principle fear in both cases was that there would be an unstable regime between them which could be used to advantage of the other. By far the greater amount of land has been grabbed by Serbia - 65% and Croatia and the rump of the regime which gained recognition, which the press are referring to as the Muslims, need to regain some of that. Serbian leadership in Bosnia have expressed a willingness to surrender some of it. However Britain, Germany and the US are studiously avoiding the call for a negotiated settlement on the areas which will be controlled by which groups.

Instead what has happened is that relief supplies are being passed to some of the beleaguered people in some of the Croatian dominated areas currently under attack by Serbian forces. For instance the relief flights into Sarajevo, according to the commander of the UN forces there, "didn't change the situation at all. In fact, , if anything, it started to feed the fighters".

Croatia has been amassing heavy artillery, tanks and other military equipment for what appears to be a counter offensive to grab land in

Bosnia. They have been covertly helped in this by Germany. The German army has, for instance, lost 1,400 military vehicles. There is also a scandal being reported in some of the German press over the possibility that Leopard tanks may have been sold to Croatia. What Croatia does not have, however is aircraft. Any major military offensive by Croatia in Bosnia would require either air support of their own or the former Yugoslavia airforce, currently in Serbian hands, to be neutralised.

The US are now talking about barring Serb aircraft from Bosnia which would in effect make a major military offensive possible. This is also being promoted by Britain and by a number of other European states. That would, in effect, be military intervention on the side of Croatia.

The two instances which are used to justify increased military intervention by the UN are the shooting down of the Italian relief aircraft and the killing of two french troops when a UN aid convoy was fired on. The aircraft was shot down over a Croatian controlled areas and it was in a Muslim held area that the convoy was fired on. It is in the interests of both those groups to have such an air exclusion zone enforced.

Once one side begins to suffer major losses in such a war, it is at that stage that their camps potentially become death camps. That will be what we

have created should we allow our government to support an air exclusion zone or some other form of military intervention.

What is clear is that this war will continue for some considerable time unless the parties are brought the negotiating table and it is that which our government should be campaigning for.

### LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES FOR EUROPE

This war could potentially have devastating consequences for politics in Europe. There is the possibility for countries bordering the former Yugoslavia to be drawn into the conflict themselves. This war is also being used as a justification for maintaining high defence budgets in a number of European countries including our own.

It is very important indeed, therefore, that people active in both the peace movement and the labour movement do what the can to prevent an escalation of this war and to prevent our government aiding such an escalation by encouraging an air exclusion zone in Bosnia.

TUCND have produced a short pamphlet on the situation in the former Yugoslavia, which available free if you send a stamped addressed article to our national office.

of Kuwait, the recently ousted military Government in Thailand, Pol Pot in Cambodia could not have survived to blight the lives of millions of people without the financial, political and logistic support of the US and in some cases Britain. The situations which these nuclear advocates envisage using these new 'mini nukes' in are a direct result of the foreign policies pursued by the US and by countries such as our own.

It is improbable that these new weapons will be developed but the fact that such a powerful lobby has been amassed to advocate them demonstrates a serious problem, not in a "despotic Third World power", but in the US government.

## MINI-NUKES ADVOCATED IN THE USA

weapons were not required to achieve their military aims. The mainstream of the US military are, therefore, pursuing a policy of reducing the number of nuclear weapons. Gen Colin Powell, the Chair of the Joint Chiefs of staff, indicated a reduction of 6,400 nonstrategic nuclear weapons, reducing the arsenal of such weapons to 1,600. Although it should be remembered that this figure will include many outdated obsolete types of weapon and that nonstrategic weapons still make up a quarter of the US nuclear arsenal, the dominant trend is still towards a radical reduction in the number of nuclear weapons in the US. The Chief of Staff for the US army, Carl Vuono is quoted

in article in magazine Foreign Affairs as saying that "the preeminence of conventional forces has been most recently and persuasively demonstrated in the Gulf war.....Changes in the international and domestic environment should create an even more pronounced role for conventional forces in the future".

What the nuclear advocates do not refer to in using 'despotic Third World powers' as a reason for a new generation of nuclear arms is that these regimes have been shaped and often bankrolled by the US government. Despots such as, for instance, Savimbi in Angola, Suharto in Indonesia, Pinochet in Chile, the late General Zia in Pakistan, the Emir



The decision by Germany to pull out of the European Fighter Aircraft project, was welcomed by CND National Council at it's July meeting, which implies that they would like to see Britain do likewise. This decision threatens to create a serious rift between CND and those trade unions whose members would be directly affected by cancellation of the project, and who are therefore campaigning for its continuation. This article aims to set out TUCND's position.

The case put forward by the unions involved in the project is that cancellation would mean not only the loss of some 40,000 jobs within the industry, but also the loss of the skills of those workers to Britain's manufacturing industry. Also that cancellation would spell the death-knell of the British Aerospace industry.

It is also argued that as an Interceptor Fighter Aircraft, the EFA is essential to the defence of Britain, and that if Britain were to cancel the EFA the government would then have to purchase an alternative aircraft from abroad, probably the USA.

From the perspective of the peace movement, however, there are some compelling arguments for the

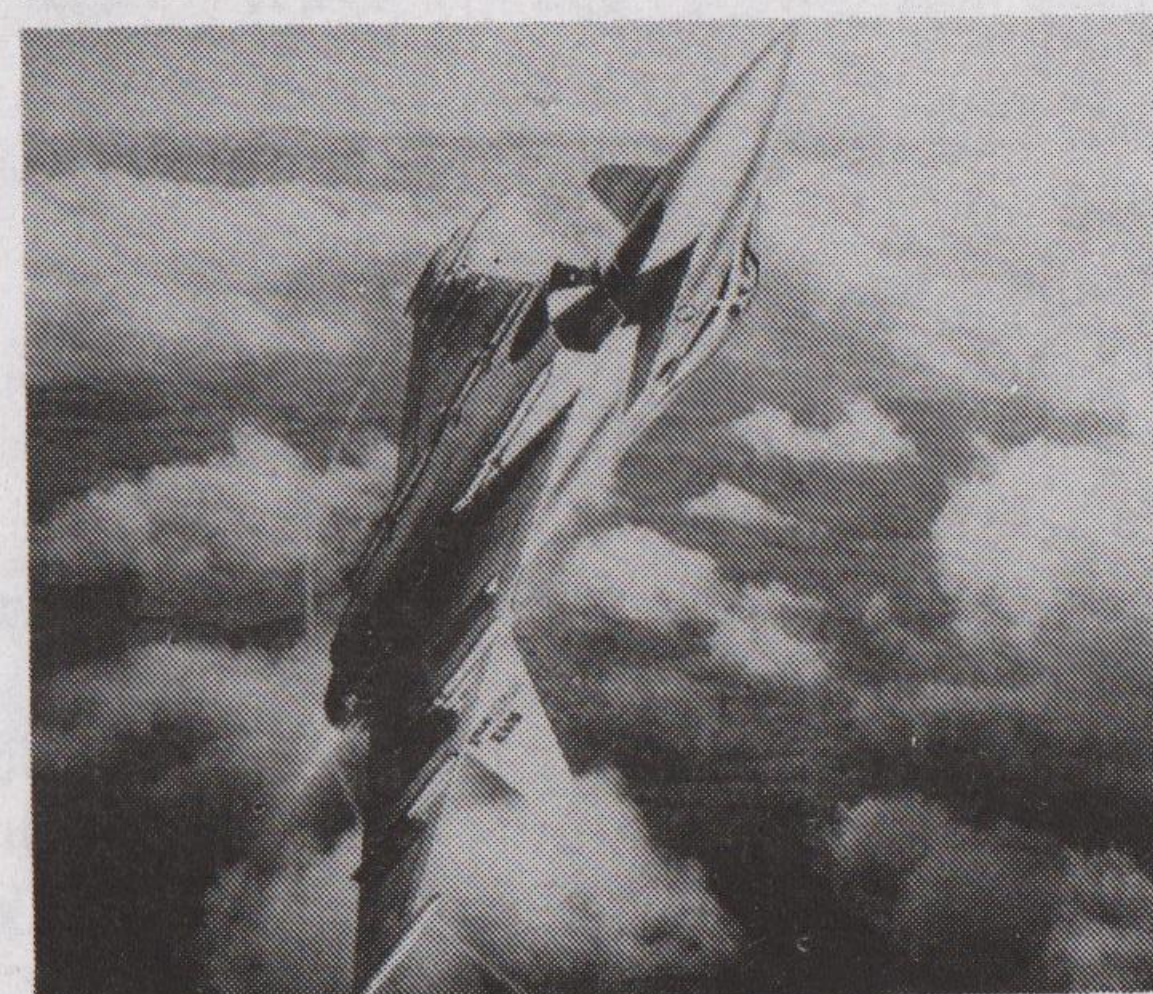
## THE EUROPEAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

cancellation of the EFA, notwithstanding the problems which this would pose for the industry.

Firstly, this could make an immediate contribution towards

realising the Peace Dividend which we were promised when the cold war came to an end, but which seems to be rapidly evaporating. The EFA is just one aspect of Britain's massive defence spending over decades, which has distorted our economy, and is largely responsible for the problems we are facing today.

For how long are we to continue wasting our country's resources, and the skills of our workers on producing weapons of mass destruction, whilst the whole fabric of our society is falling apart for lack of resources. It is



of little use simply to talk of Arms Conversion, unless we are prepared to grasp the nettle, and begin to reduce the British economy's dependence on defence contracts such as the EFA (and even more ludicrously Trident).

The second question which arises is whether the EFA is essential to Britain's defence requirements in the post cold-war period. The EFA was originally conceived as a counter to the Soviet Mig 29, and surely that particular threat no longer exists. (It has even been suggested that we could purchase the Mig 29 as an alternative to producing the EFA) It should also be borne in mind that the EFA is not just a fighter aircraft, but can also be used in a ground-attack role.

Add to this the fact that we must produce at least 500 of these aircraft for the project to be viable, and that only about a third of those are for our own use, the question arises as to who the others will be sold to. Will the British government, as in the past, be prepared to sell these to anyone who wishes to buy them. With the world already awash with weapons, the ethnic conflicts taking place around the world, do we really want to add to the carnage by exporting more weapons to countries whose people are crying out for the necessities of life?

Each EFA built will cost over £25 million. Could this money not be put to better use, by introducing an urgent programme of Diversification within the industry, aimed at recapturing the civil aircraft market, or diversifying into products which could utilise the skills of the workers concerned?

Surely by insisting that the EFA project must continue at all cost, we are refusing to face up to a problems which affects not only the jobs of defence workers, but also the future of those in other sectors of society, whose employment is jeopardised by our continued high spending on so-called "Defence".

absorb the production runs which would make some of the weapons systems viable; and if we buy them off the shelf abroad the balance of trade suffers. That means we have to export as hard as we can.

It is no accident that the five security council members are also the five biggest arms exporters, amongst the world's heaviest spenders on weapons, and the five countries who have declared they have nuclear weapons. So long as we adhere to the militarist stance we have maintained over the past forty years we will be faced with the impetus to sell weapons abroad, and that means selling them to virtually anyone who will have them.

The only real way of preventing this trade is to remove our dependency on it, and the only way to do that is to reduce the amount of equipment we buy.

A fairly accurate analogy is with a heroin addict. It's unrealistic to expect him or her not to try and fund their habit by selling heroin: the only way to stop the sale is to cure the habit.

## CND AND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

CND is not a pacifist organisation, although there are many pacifists within its ranks. Trade Union CND has probably a smaller proportion of pacifist within its ranks than the rest of CND. A number of TUCND's activists are employed in the manufacture of weapons and a large proportion of Unions affiliated to CND have members either working for the defence industries or working for the MOD. So TUCND's policy on conventional weapons is a sensitive issue, possibly more sensitive for TUCND than for the rest of CND, so we have a responsibility to be clear about where we stand.

CND's policy is to campaign against all weapons of mass destruction. This has been part of CND's constitution since it's inception and was reaffirmed in a constitutional amendment moved by Bruce Kent at the 1988 CND conference.

There are two reasons why this happening. Firstly, modern conventional weapons can be as devastating as small nuclear weapons and are designed to work in the same

way. Secondly weapons are also part of a nuclear defence policy.

### WHAT CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS CAN DO

According to Colin Powell, Norman Swartzkopf's superior, the US didn't need nuclear weapons in the Gulf war because they could achieve most of the results they desired by using conventional weapons. Fuel Air Bombs (FAB), for instance, spread an aerosol of flammable liquid over half a square mile or so and burn everything within that area. It also burns all the air out of the area and so kills people sheltering in bunkers or all but the heaviest of armoured vehicles. The graphic pictures of burnt bodies which appeared in the press towards the end of the Gulf war were of a column of vehicles which the Iraqis were looting and which the US bombed with FAB's. The effect is very much like that of a nuclear weapon.

Modern Multiple Rocket Launchers (MRL's) can carpet bomb an area in a very short time with a range of different missiles. They can in theory, ➔

## ARMS CONTROL NOT THE ANSWER TO REGIONAL ARMS RACES

Peace Research Institute, and depends upon the information gleaned from local newspapers and specialist press.

There have been a number of instances where breaches of international embargoes on arms sales, in some cases by state run enterprises, have left governments producing feeble excuses. A German shipyard sold designs for submarines to South Africa. A French company supplied Iran with missile-firing gunboats and there was a recent case where the German defence minister resigned over the sale of tanks to Israel. None of these instances would have come to light had it not been for unforeseen slip-ups in the delivery schedules.

Since the proposed register will be compiled from the same sources as the

US government register it is difficult to see how it can carry any credibility.

To a lesser extent the same is true of the Labour Party proposals. Britain, for instance, has sold radar to South Africa ostensibly for civil aviation purposes. This equipment, however is similar to that used for a number of military purposes. While there was an embargo on selling weapons to Iraq during the war with Iran our government defined the limits as what we could sell Iraq as being "anything that didn't go bang".

### THE ONLY REAL CONTROL IS TO REMOVE OUR DEPENDENCY

For a number of reasons Britain has become dependent on the export of weapons. Britain's military can't

### COSMETIC MEASURES

There are currently two schemes which monitor the sale of weapons internationally. One is run by the United States government and depends upon information supplied by governments. The other, generally regarded as being far more accurate, is run by the Stockholm International





⇒ destroy any armoured vehicle or living thing in an area. In some cases a single launcher can achieve the same level of destruction in 15 minutes that it would take a battery of artillery to achieve in a day.

The most significant damage, however, done to the Iraqi military lines in Kuwait was done by carpet bombing with B52 bombers. This is basically the same technology that the US used in Vietnam but is available only to the US and the former Soviet Union. Iraq could have inflicted equally terrible damage on the oncoming troops had the US and others come within range of the Iraqi long range artillery (supplied by South Africa) deployed to the south of Kuwait. This what Shwartzkopf described as the nightmare scenario.

Modern conventional weaponry can be as destructive as nuclear weapons with less environmental damage and less political repercussions.

### NUCLEAR ORIENTATED CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

It isn't enough simply to possess nuclear weapons, you have to have the capacity to deliver them. You need sophisticated aircraft to carry them, other sophisticated aircraft to protect the bombers, and sophisticated radar satellite systems to guide them.

Therefore, in order to deploy nuclear weapons you need aircraft and ships and military bases designed to deploy them. You also need ships and helicopters to protect the nuclear weapons ships from submarines and aircraft. You need to have an airforce designed to prevent the nuclear sites from being attacked. You end up with a military policy and military hardware designed around fighting a nuclear war rather than one designed around defending your country. This also has an effect on your foreign policy.

Thus your planes, tanks, ships and all the rest of your equipment is designed in anticipation of fighting a nuclear war. It decides their shape, speed, size, type of electronics, type of armour, etc.

In addition, our possession of these weapons means that we have to have large numbers of them, otherwise they are not credible. That in turn means that the military structures you develop are vast, requiring vast amounts of ostensibly conventional equipment such as radar, aircraft, to both protect them and to make it

possible to use them. So having these weapons also dictates the size of your armed forces and, consequently, your defence budget. In turn it forces you to have a defence industry so large that it affects your whole economic and industrial fabric.

### WHY WE HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Nuclear weapons are not inhabited by the devil, they are inert pieces of metal and plastic. They are dangerous because they were developed to perform a dangerous purpose in world politics. Britain retains them because of the political prestige which comes from having them, and because of the inherent threat they represent to any state who would wish to challenge our position.

Thus, for instance, in the Falklands war a Polaris submarine was dispatched to the South Atlantic. Polaris is not an accurate device; it is designed to be used against cities. The only purpose, therefore, of dispatching that submarine would have been to use it against one of Argentina's cities in retaliation for their invasion of the Falklands; probably the Argentine capital.

In the military sense we possess them to use in conjunction with a conventional force.

### THAT'S WHY WE OPPOSE THEM

CND opposes conventional weapons of mass destruction because modern weapons of this nature can cause so much death and suffering we feel that their development, deployment and use can be as damaging as the possible use of smaller nuclear weapons. We also feel that the conventional weaponry is designed to fit the needs of fighting a nuclear war rather than designed to defend us. Although conventional weapons have a radically different political significance and role, they are related to each other in some fundamental ways.

Nuclear weapons are inert pieces of metal. What is inherently evil about them is the reasons for their manufacture, the military and foreign policy they are designed to support. For Britain conventional weapons are a part of those same military, industrial and foreign policies which are very closely interwoven with the fact that we have nuclear weapons.

### THE TUC

The TUC Congress this year passed a very important motion on manufacturing industry from the TSSA. There were two amendments to it from the AEEU and MSF respectively. The motion roundly condemned the behaviour of our government and of what it termed "business leaders" and blamed them for the loss of more than one fifth of our manufacturing industry since 1979. The AEU amendment expanded the argument to condemn the lack of both government and private capital being channeled to research and development.

The MSF amendment went into how a regeneration of our industry could be brought about. It condemned the failure of the "British Government and British defence industry contractors to utilise the peace dividend to invest in research, development and production of...civilian products". It went on to call for the establishment of a Defence Diversification Agency to help plan such a transition.

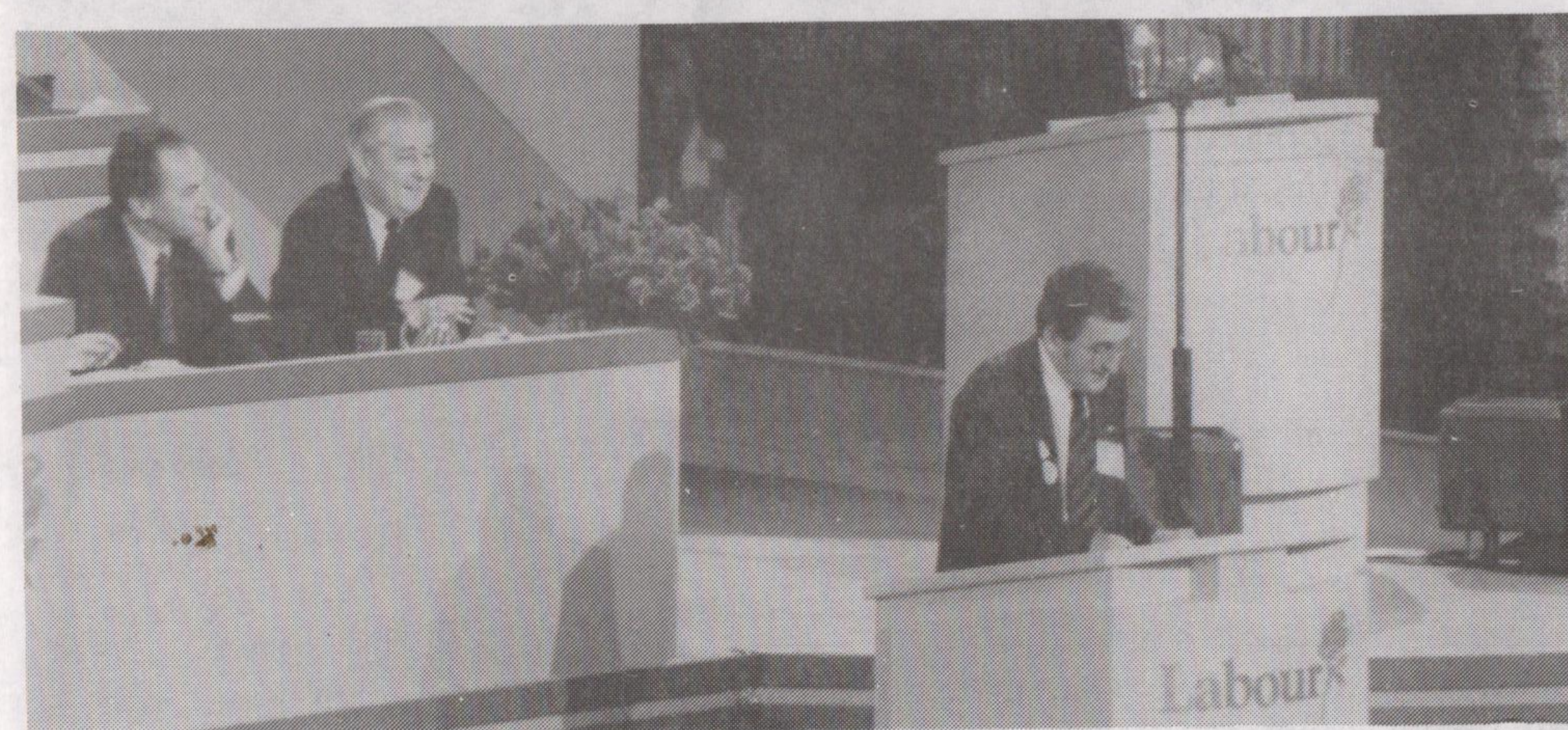
The TUC already has a comprehensive and robust policy on defence spending and on the need for

Britain has the eight largest economy in the world, but the third largest arms industry. We are also one of the top five arms exporters in the world. The production of military equipment now accounts for one in ten of our manufacturing workforce and roughly 13% of our manufacturing output. This is a huge concentration; yet the arms market is falling apart. We should understand why it is we got into this position in the first place if we are to appreciate how we can get out of it.

Britain has traditionally had a huge defence budget with a large and sophisticated army, navy and airforce. Unlike some of the oil producing states in the Gulf Britain is not in a position to import the bulk of the equipment we use for our armed forces. We have to produce this equipment in Britain otherwise our balance of trade deficit would increase to a level which would cripple our economy. So, traditionally Britain has produced a full range of weapons systems many of which are manufactured here too.

Strategic reasons are often given for this. In the event of war, the argument goes, we need to have a secure supplies of ammunition, and

## TUC AND LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCES THIS YEAR



conversion. The TUC did not debate defence issues this year. There was a feeling amongst most the major unions that the existing policy on conversion is what they want to see brought about.

What should be of some concern is the fact that there was little on the conference agenda that mapped out how the recovery of the economy can be managed. As the MSF amendment

demonstrated what happens to defence spending and what happens to the defence industries is key to whether that recovery occurs or not.

### THE LABOUR PARTY

There were two motions on defence debated by the conference this year, one dealing with the peace dividend and the other on Trident. The motion

on the peace dividend was passed by a substantial majority and the motion on Trident was lost by a narrow margin. The Trident motion was moved by Colin Christopher, General Secretary of FTAT. Last year FTAT seconded a motion from Bedford CLP which called for a reduction in defence spending. The motion on the Peace Dividend was moved by Ken Cameron from the FBU. Both were clear insightful contributions. Mr Cameron particularly stressed the need for money to be directed towards the civilian manufacturing base

However, it would appear that the leadership of the Labour Party are still reluctant to accept the policy as it stands.

The trade unions who opposed the motion on Trident this year would have appear to have done so because the motion could be seen as a back door reaffirmation of the principle of unilateralism. It was only until relatively close to the actual vote that the a number of major unions decided to vote for this motion. Their reluctance was on the basis of their being insufficient emphasis on the savings from a reduced defence budget being put towards the manufacturing base in the wording of the motion.

## THE ARMS TRADE - WHY DO WE DO IT?

replacements for the equipment destroyed in conflict. A major crisis arose during the Gulf war when Belgium refused to supply tank ammunition to Britain leaving us in a position where the forces we deployed in the Gulf were able only to fire enough ammunition to reset the sights on their guns while alternative supplies were organised.

### THE TECHNOLOGY RACE

However the arms race is, in many important senses a race of technology. The search to overcome or undermine the capability of opposing weapons systems is constant and feverish. The cost of the equipment is also related to the level of sophistication. This means that in order to maintain credibility as a military superpower we have to spend more and more on the development of new and 'better' equipment.

This is inherent in the production of weapons. For instance, if you draw a graph of the cost of a front-line aircraft a straight line appears, which means that the process is likely to

continue in the future. If this does happen the whole US defence budget will be devoted to one aircraft by the year 2,030 and the same will be true of the UK defence budget some 20 years earlier. Clearly we have a problem. We are not going to be able to keep one in ten of our manufacturing workforce employed building one plane; it would have to be the size of London for them to fit on it.

An increasingly significant proportion of the cost of equipment is taken up by the cost of research and development. In order to spread these costs and the cost of establishing the production line the production runs have to be as large as possible. Added to that, the experience of the people working on that production line makes a significant difference to the cost. So the longer the production runs the lower the costs. For instance the first McDonald Douglas F15 fighter took 100,000 staff hours to build. Once they reach 1,000 aircraft it is estimated they will have the figure down to 40,000 hours.

But Britain can't sustain production lines long enough to make some of the weapons systems viable if the only buyer is our own government. Thus we have to cooperate with foreign producers for some of the grander projects, such as the European Fighter Aircraft, the Merlin Helicopter and the Tornado fighter bomber. We also have to sell this equipment abroad as hard as we possibly can. Thus our defence production depends on the export of weapons.

The arms race has drained our economy to such an extent that the civilian economy is no longer competitive. Our industry cannot compete against those overseas who enjoy support from their governments. Military equipment is the only export market we have been involved with for some time. Without it our economy will be in serious trouble.

We are trapped in a dependency upon a market which is collapsing. The only serious alternative is to get out of the dependency on defence production by radically reducing our own arms production