



# West Midlands

CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

## Mailing

March/April 2023

### *A Poisoned Legacy?*

At our January meeting, John Cooper, Director of Fellowship of Reconciliation UK, spoke to us about the ongoing campaign concerning the long-lasting aftermath of British nuclear testing in the Pacific.

In the 1950s a total of 33 tests were carried out on Kiritimati ("Christmas Island") and the Malden Islands – 9 by the UK, 24 by the USA. The testing was needed for propaganda and scientific purposes. Britain first carried out tests in Australia before moving to carrying out atmospheric tests in the Pacific; Kiritimati was described as "uninhabited", but this was far from being the case. The USA tested there in preference to the alternative Texas, and France also carried out many tests in the region. The first UK explosion in 1952 contaminated the land and also the sea, which the population depended on for their livelihood. This first bomb was 50 times the size of Hiroshima. (See video <https://bit.ly/3Dm4AC9> )



Dramatic Footage of Britain Testing An Atomic Bomb (1952) | War Archives

There then followed more tests in 1968 – 240 times more powerful than Hiroshima. As well as the fallout from the bombs, barrels of radio-active waste were dumped into the sea, the area was regularly sprayed with DDT, and vehicles were abandoned all across the island. In October 1958 a moratorium on atmospheric testing was declared, but the poisoned legacy remains – including the impact on the environment and on animals. Ernest Cox, a civilian working for the UK Atomic Weapons Research Establishment visited soon after the testing and noticed no flies, no lizards, no booby birds, and dead fish being washed up.

Today, 48 of those present at the tests are still alive, as well as about 800 descendants. Researcher Dr Becky Alexis-Martin - spoke to survivors. They remembered being put under a tarpaulin during the tests and described health problems and food poisoning. The military personnel were ordered not to eat the local food and the Duke of Edinburgh was advised not to drink the water.

There are many testimonies of those who survived and are still living in these islands (see ICAN website <https://bit.ly/3RdNzzG>), which are currently at risk from rising sea levels. Articles 6 and 7 of the TPNW call for reparation both for the victims and for the environment.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation and Christian CND are inviting you to join in the e-action to petition the Home Secretary <https://for.eaction.org.uk/PacificIslanders> asking for the UK to cooperate in the ongoing research into the impact of the tests, and to offer financial assistance to states seeking to address the impact of nuclear testing on their population and environment.

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Follow us on Twitter : @westmidlandscnd

## **BITS FROM ABROAD**

President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that **Russia** was suspending its participation in the New START treaty with the United States that limits the two sides' strategic nuclear arsenals. Putin stressed that Russia was not withdrawing from the treaty but the suspension further imperils the last remaining pillar of arms control between the United States and Russia, which between them hold nearly 90% of the world's nuclear warheads.

*Reuters, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2023*

<https://reut.rs/41hQEUK>

International atomic monitors in **Iran** last week detected uranium enriched to levels just below that needed for a nuclear weapon, according to two senior diplomats, underscoring the risk that the country's unrestrained atomic activities could prompt a new crisis. The International Atomic Energy Agency is trying to clarify how Iran accumulated uranium enriched to 84% purity — the highest level found by inspectors in the country to date, and a concentration just 6% below what's needed for a weapon. Iran had previously told the IAEA that its centrifuges were configured to enrich uranium to a 60% level of purity.

*Bloomberg 19th Feb 2023*

<https://bloom.bg/3kcbxiR>

**Israel** said on Friday that "all possible means" were on the table to prevent Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon and it demanded that the international community do more to stop Tehran's proliferation of advanced weapons.

*Reuters 17th Feb 2023*

<https://reut.rs/3xyF35B>

**Saudi Arabia's** Foreign Affairs Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan al-Saud says everyone will start thinking about how to protect themselves, in reference to Iran obtaining nuclear weapons.

*MEED 20th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/418abGu>

How Dangerous Are **Pakistan's** Nuclear Weapons As Islamabad Plagued By Unstable Govt, Bankruptcy? Analysis.

*Eurasian Times 19th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3INSJHk>

**North Korea** has increased its stockpile of weapons-grade plutonium from 50kg to 70kg, South Korea's new defence paper estimates.

*Al Jazeera 16th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3Sd2WZL>

## **FROM THE MEDIA**

Penrith MP Dr Neil Hudson champions Cumbria's nuclear industry. Dr Neil Hudson, MP for Penrith and The Border, has attended the Nuclear Industry Association's Nuclear Week in Parliament. The event sees hundreds of parliamentarians and industry representatives engage across a range of events, promoting the opportunities that nuclear energy presents to the UK. It is run by the Nuclear Industry Association with input from private companies, government bodies and publicly sponsored organisations.

*Carlisle News and Star 3rd Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3Ew8B7V>

THE convener of Scotland's nuclear-free local authorities (NFLAs) has written to Net Zero Minister Michael Matheson asking him to reject nuclear power at Scotland's two new green freeports.

*The National 15th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3K5bwYJ>

A NORTH campaign group, which was set up ten years ago to oppose the transport of nuclear material from Dounreay, plans to broaden its remit and change its name. Highlands Against Nuclear Transport (HANT) is set to become Highlands Against Nuclear Power (HANP) in a bid to extend its role to include proposed new nuclear plants, nuclear weapons and the proposed Geological Disposal Facility (GDR). However, HANT chairman, Tor Justad, stressed the new body would continue to campaign on nuclear transport issues as well.

*John O'Groat Journal 9th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/40QpBPH>

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**ICAN is organising a Hiroshima G7 Youth Summit at the end of April. It is open to young people from around the world who are motivated to engage in activities towards nuclear disarmament. Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/3xyEOHA>**

**Introduction to Social Media  
Join CND for a workshop on Wednesday  
30<sup>th</sup> March 19.00**

<https://cnduk.org/events/cnd-groups-workshop-introduction-to-social-media/>

## **TRIDENT AND RELATED NEWS**

A nuclear engineer glued broken submarine bolts back together in an “unforgivable” error. The unsatisfactory repairs to HMS Vanguard's cooling pipes were discovered after a bolt fell off whilst being tightened during checks inside the reactor chamber. It is understood that the bolts, which were providing insulation onto elements of the pipework, snapped off after being over-tightened and were then glued back on by staff at Babcock, a defence contractor. However, Navy sources criticised the nuclear engineering company for a lack of “transparency” for having reported an issue, but failing to disclose all the details. They said: “Nuclear engineering is meticulously managed and while the effect of this failure is insignificant, the actual act is unforgivable. “Instead of replacing the bolt, they glued it back on and that's not right,” they said.

*Telegraph 31st Jan 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3jZsPje>

Three senior ministry of defence officials have received more than £200,000 in performance bonuses despite not being able to get a Scottish-based nuclear submarine back in service more than seven years after it started undergoing a refit and refuelling. The MoD had hoped that HMS Vanguard would be returned to Royal Navy service at Faslane last summer but The Sunday Times has learnt that the repair and refuelling project for the Trident missile-armed vessel has hit new snags. However, the three top executives at the ministry's Submarine Delivery Agency, which is responsible for keeping the navy's submarines in working order, were paid performance bonuses last year. Its chief executive, Ian Booth, received £95,000 on top of his £290,000 salary before he retired just before Christmas, according to the agency's accounts. Its technical director and financial officer each received £55,000 bonuses.

*Times 29th Jan 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3l4RgDV>

Nuclear submarine steel cut milestone supports jobs across the UK. A significant milestone has been reached in the build programme for the Dreadnought ballistic missile submarine programme.

*MOD 9th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3YTERto>

## **CND will return to Lakenheath on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May**



**Join CND at Lakenheath to say no to the return of US nuclear bombs to Britain!  
More information to follow.**

## **NUCLEAR POWER**

**Turkey:** A nuclear power plant is being built in the earthquake zone. Not far from the earthquake region in southern Turkey, President Erdoğan's government is currently building a nuclear power plant with Russian help. Critics speak of a useless and dangerous prestige project.

*Der Spiegel 7th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3YoGC1H>

The development of the new **Sizewell C** nuclear power station has reached a 'significant milestone' with the creation of an access route on to the site. Work began on Tuesday to remove trees on Goose Hill to make way for the access road, including mature Corsican Pine, Scots Pine and some semi-mature pine trees, none of which are indigenous to Suffolk. The new station will sit on a six hectare space, or 5% of the Sizewell Marshes Site of Special Scientific interest (SSSI), while the remaining 95% is being protected and managed for wildlife.

*East Anglian Daily Times 15th Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3kflxH1>

National Grid says it is investigating after local wildlife rescuers say multiple swans have been killed near Burnham-On-Sea after striking the new **Hinkley** Point C power lines running across the Somerset Levels. 116 of the new T-pylons are being constructed along the Hinkley Connection route, stretching 57 km from Hinkley Point power station to Avonmouth.

*Burnham-on-sea.com 1st Feb 2023*

<https://bit.ly/3YwIzUH>

## What's On

### March-April 2023

The next **Mailing** is due to be sent out at the beginning of May.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March at 19.30. Please e-mail [wmcndall@gmail.com](mailto:wmcndall@gmail.com) for the zoom link.

**Hereford Peace Council** – Meetings at 11 – 12.30 on the second Monday of the month at Friends Meeting House, King Street, Hereford.

**Leominster Community Centre** – weeks beginning 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September: exhibition on the development of nuclear weapons and the protests against them.

**Malvern Churches Justice and Peace** group Prayers for Peace, 12 noon on 2nd and 4th Monday of the month (except Bank Holidays), Lyttleton Well Prayer Room, Church Street, Great Malvern.

Read the latest CND Campaign magazine here:

<https://bit.ly/3E9R9WB>

Latest video from Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space can be seen here featuring Ken Jones from the War Industry Resisters Network:

<https://bit.ly/3I50tMB>



## Noticeboard

### Peace Posters

Hereford Peace Council produces monthly posters on peace topics, to be displayed as widely as possible. The posters are not dated. The current posters are:

***Today humanity is just one misunderstanding away from nuclear annihilation.*** UN Secretary General, António Guterres

***I only want to live in peace, plant potatoes and dream!*** Finnish author and artist, Tove Jansson

### CND and XR together on 21<sup>st</sup> April



The Doomsday Clock stands at 90 seconds to midnight, the closest to nuclear and climate disaster we have ever been. **CND is supporting Extinction Rebellion's 'The Big One'** - a series of protests actions, vigils, and events taking place in central London from 21 April. Getting 100,000 on the streets will show the government how serious we are. **More details to come. Save the date and get the latest news at** <https://bit.ly/3HyaXDT>

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Our website: <https://wmcnd.org.uk/>