

Trident is centre-stage after the election

The replacement of Trident took centre-stage in the 2010 general election - nuclear weapons have not had such a high-profile in an election since the 1980s, and the public mood for disarmament has never been more favourable.

Yet for all their claims to oppose a 'like-for-like replacement' and even consider no nuclear weapons altogether, the Liberal Democrats have now joined a coalition committed to 'maintaining the nuclear deterrent'. The written agreement says 'Liberal Democrats will continue to make the case for alternatives' but new Defence Secretary Liam Fox has already said 'We have got a very clear agreement that we will continue with the nuclear deterrent.'

Despite losses nationally, several Labour CND MPs were returned with an increased share of the vote. Diane Abbott increased her share by 6% and now has a 14,000 majority and

Jeremy Corbyn increased his to 12,000 with a 3.3% swing. Katy Clark, Kelvin Hopkins, Peter Soulsby and Emily Thornberry all improved on their 2005 results.

Twenty newly elected Labour MPs responded to CND's candidate survey saying they would oppose Trident replacement. Many of these were in Scotland, including Cathy Jamieson replacing Des Browne, Graeme Morrice in Robin Cook's old seat and Ian Murray and Sheila Gilmore in Edinburgh. Other first-time Labour MPs include the NUM's Ian Lavery in Wansbeck, Lillian Greenwood in Nottingham and Teresa Pearce in Erith and Thamesmead. We also see the very welcome return of John Cryer in Leyton and Wanstead.

But with George Osborne now installed at the Treasury, we can expect severe cuts in public spending, risking the economic recovery and

hurting ordinary people. For 2010-11, the 2009 Pre-Budget Report announced that an additional £2.5bn will be added to funding for operations in Afghanistan, whilst the MoD is expected to spend over £3bn on the nuclear weapons programme, including developments at AWE Aldermaston over the coming year.

Labour CND will work with MPs and the trade union movement to resist cuts to vital services and ensure it falls instead on the tens of billions allocated over the coming years to nuclear weapons and the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

We will also be active in ensuring that a peaceful foreign policy and nuclear disarmament are at the forefront of the debate in the upcoming leadership election.

For more information about joining, email info@labourcnd.org.uk

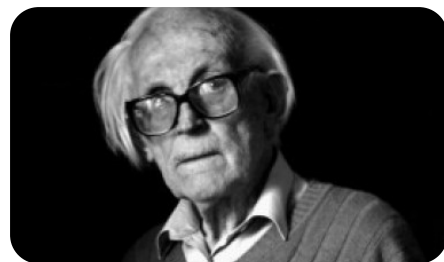
Hypocrisy and sorrow on death of a legend

Michael Foot was a real working class hero who had an immense influence on myself and many more in the Welsh Valleys. It turned my stomach to hear the hypocrisy of people like Michael Heseltine and the London press showering him with praise after his death, ranking him with Churchill.

The Tories loathed the sight of him and everything he stood for. The London press either ignored him, ridiculed him or egged on Labour to expel him. I first met Foot in the '50s when he spoke at Blackwood Miners Institute. He mentioned nuclear disarmament and was heckled. He dealt with many hostile questions on nuclear issues. I spoke to him after the meeting and asked how I could get involved. "Get on the march to Aldermaston," he said.

We trudged on our way and he never stopped talking about peace, education, taking control of our lives etc. His speech in Westminster Hall was powerful and passionate. It was out of that passion that CND was conceived. When Nye Bevan made his famous appeal against unilateral nuclear disarmament - "don't send me naked into the conference chamber" - it was Michael who picked up the banner of nuclear disarmament and carried it forward.

While he did not agree with Nye's position, they remained friends. When he passed away, his obvious successor as MP was Michael. The right wing of the Labour national executive in London did their best to stop him from going on the shortlist,



but they didn't stand a dog's chance. The people of Ebbw Vale loved him - there was no more worthy successor. He never faltered from the path for peace and justice on behalf of the people of Ebbw Vale and beyond.

Thank you, Michael, for your unfaltering vision of peace.

Cllr Ray Davies, Caerphilly

Marian Hobbs: Minister for Disarmament

"There are three immediate issues that we need to focus on. First to push for progress at the UN Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May, second, to build a public campaign for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and third, to encourage the Labour to play a peace leadership role by scrapping Trident.

The NPT Treaty is only a balancing act. The states that do not have nuclear weapons have made a commitment not to develop them. The states that do have nuclear weapons have committed to disarm. All the focus has been on states that might be developing nuclear weapons, such as North Korea. Even this focus is selective, Israel's nuclear weapons are ignored whilst Iran's uranium enrichment process is condemned. What is forgotten is the commitment to disarm and that is why renewing Trident is such a disgrace. The NPT Treaty is renewed every five years. This year in May, in New York, we have a great opportunity to make progress. The International Commission on

Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament released a report in December outlining a 20 point statement. We must have progress. The whole world needs to work together.

A Nuclear Weapons Convention is needed because the treaty has no time-line. We need to outlaw nuclear weapons, in the same way that landmines and cluster bombs have been outlawed. The Convention would strengthen the International Court of Justice. A people's movement is needed so that nuclear weapons are outlawed as landmines and cluster bombs have been.

Scrapping Trident would give the UK a chance to lead powerfully and clearly. People would respond if Labour took a lead. They could do it. Say No to Nuclear Weapons, No to Trident, Yes to green manufacturing, Yes to foreign aid, Yes to peace.



In September 2009, Ban Ki-Moon said, "There can be no development without peace and no peace without development. Disarmament can provide the means for both."

Marian Hobbs
*is a former New Zealand Labour MP
and was Minister for Disarmament
and Arms Control
in the 2002-2005 government.*

She spoke at the Labour CND
conference in January.

Help to bring Shaker Aamer home

British resident Shaker Aamer is still detained in Guantanamo without charge

All the other UK Guantanamo detainees have returned home. President Obama's pledge to close Guantanamo by January 2010 has not been met but, gradually, detainees are being transferred to countries willing to accept them. They are detainees, cleared for release, who can not return home.

Shaker Aamer's case is different. He has a home in Battersea, wife, four young children and family members waiting for his return.

So why is Shaker Aamer still in Guantanamo? Why is he still there after more than 8 years, many of them spent in solitary confinement?

In June 2007 the US cleared Shaker for release, without charge. In August 2007, the UK Government requested his release and return and since then, it claims to have "strenuously repeated that request." Ultimately, the Government says, Shaker's return is a decision for the US Government. So, the UK points the finger at the US. Neither wants responsibility for his shameful treatment.

Is the Government really making urgent demands for Shaker's return?

It can't be that difficult for a Sovereign State to require the return of one of its long-term legal residents. President Obama wants Shaker Aamer to be rendered to Saudi Arabia, a country he fled from as a teenager, over 20 years ago. There he would be silenced. Shaker's only wish is to come home to his family in the UK. If the Government really wanted the return of Shaker Aamer, he would have been returned long ago.

Is the Government delaying Shaker's return because he has a story to tell? Is the Government willing to have Shaker locked up to silence him?

Like all the other Guantanamo detainees, Shaker states that he was subjected to brutal torture and interrogation abroad in the presence of, or with the knowledge of, M15/M16 agents. He is a witness and a victim in cases before the courts which could show that the Government's policy may have violated international law.

Is that why Shaker is still in Guantanamo in the harshest of conditions?

His mental and physical health is deteriorating. Please help campaign for his release before it is too late. Help Shaker and his family.

Write to Foreign Secretary William Hague at King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH

Email him at private.office@fco.gov.uk

Subscribe to Labour CND

Organisations £10 ☐ Waged £8 ☐

Concessions £3 ☐ Donation

Name

Address

Tel/email

Cheques please to Labour CND, c/o Joy Hurcombe, 11 Pembury Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN14 7DN