

The argument can be won across the spectrum

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We've come up this morning from Wales which, as you'll know, still has a Labour government.

Although of course we have cuts, our budget having been slashed by the government here, we at least have an administration that doesn't deliberately prioritise the victimisation of the vulnerable. Labour in Wales still gets a 50% headline poll rating and our First Minister Carwyn Jones gets 55%. It's a good place for a socialist to live.

Leaving aside an invariable 20% vote for the Welsh Conservatives, we still see Plaid Cymru as our main opposition, but support for them peaked in the early years of devolution and is falling fast. Welsh Labour has more or less taken its ground, and treads a fine line between nationalism and pro-independence.

Our slogan in the last Assembly election was Standing up for Wales – Sefyll Cornel Cymru – and it worked very well. We'll keep a close eye on the referendum north of the border, because if Scotland votes yes, that will cause problems for Wales.

One of these raised its head already last summer when our popular First Minister said that he was keeping a welcome for Trident in the harbour at Milford Haven, if the SNP boot it out of Faslane.

This provoked an outcry, a debate in the Assembly, a CND Cymru demo outside it, and eventually, fortunately, a change of heart. But I was concerned by one aspect of this incident.

I'd emailed Carwyn to protest, and within ten minutes I had a phone call from an adviser telling me it was just a wind-up, to get at Alex Salmond over independence. Now Trident isn't something to be flippant about, as Carwyn would know if he wasn't nearly 20 years younger than me. He doesn't have the memories that I do, of the feelings of my parents' generation after the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

So I was glad this week to see the video put out by the International Campaign against Nuclear Weapons, including footage I first saw in the 60s in the film *The War Game*. Everyone should see those images and learn that nuclear weapons bring a whole new dimension to war.

The argument can be won across the spectrum –

For the idealist, who would like to see all nuclear weapons dismantled and all countries signing up to a total and perpetual ban;

For the realist, who knows we have to fight a war from time to time, but if funds are limited would rather spend them on something they can at least take out of the cupboard and use, maybe some planes to go on their aircraft carrier or some body armour for their soldiers;

And for the cynic, who sees here a soft, cuddly, green policy that will entice all kinds of unaffiliated voters to support it, and maybe stay with the party and vote for it again.

These are all valid arguments and we must use them all.

What we need to use them for, is to build a weight of opinion in the party that the people at the top of the party who agree with us, and there are some, can point to, as showing what the party wants.

I am certain that a majority of members want to see Trident decommissioned.

At the last full National Policy Forum meeting, last June, Trident was much discussed, and I did not hear one CLP rep speak in its favour. I don't know what the next phase of the NPF has said about it, but presumably something will appear on the Your Britain website and give us the opportunity to comment on it.

To party members, certainly this website is a poor substitute for a motion-based conference. But to the country at large, it is a good piece of marketing, good for the Labour brand and right in tune with the One Nation outreach stratagem. A website on which anyone can post, with the promise that their submission will be read by our policymakers, is a very empowering offer.

So get on there and write - remember that the views of members, CLPs and party groups count for more, and community groups are popular too - so go back to your constituencies tonight and log on.