

NO RETREAT

NO TRIDENT

KICK OUT ALL THE WARMONGERS

- No to war. End the production of nuclear weapons
- For the redeployment of workers, scientists and engineers who work on Trident to projects that benefit society
- Nationalise the arms companies as part of a rational plan of production that would include protecting and expanding jobs and public services
- For trade union members to have the right to debate and discuss union policy fully
- Kick out the warmongers – build a mass political voice for the 99% based on socialism and internationalism



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ORGANISE TO STOP TRIDENT RENEWAL

The Tory warmonger government is pushing through the renewal of Trident at huge cost. The upgrade will have a destructive power 2,128 times the Hiroshima bomb, which killed 80,000 people in 1945.

In reality, Trident missiles are unlikely to be deployed. The Tories' main aim is to prop up the pretence of Britain as a 'great power'.

The four new submarines are estimated to cost £31 billion over five years, with an additional £10 billion set aside for 'contingencies'. Nearly £4 billion has already been spent on the design stage. That money cannot be used to improve the NHS, education or other vital public services.

Advocates of Trident claim nuclear weapons have 'prevented major wars'. But they have not prevented a series of 'small' proxy wars, either during the cold war or subsequently.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS DON'T BRING PEACE

Nuclear arsenals have not enabled the major powers to resolve the terrible armed conflict in Syria. Nor have they prevented the North Korean regime from developing nuclear weapons or long-range missiles.

In reality, behind the arguments defending nuclear weapons is the determination of the British ruling class to maintain their prestige, power and influence on the world stage.

Tory ministers claim that Britain's international status is enhanced by possession of an 'independent nuclear deterrent'. But the independence is a fiction. The British government legally owns the Trident missiles and warheads. But the US could pull the plug on the Trident system if it chose to. The Trident system is also likely to become technologically outdated within the next few years.

Far from bringing peace and stability, with the rise of international tension between the major powers and conflict, especially in the Middle East, the major nuclear powers are now embarking on an expansion of their arsenals. It is estimated that there are now 4,000 active nuclear weapons, with 10,300 still held in storage. US president Barack Obama is sponsoring a programme to hugely expand the US arsenal.

This proposal to renew Trident has opened up a battle in the Labour Party. Jeremy Corbyn, who was elected leader with nearly 60% of the

vote, supports unilateral nuclear disarmament and is opposed to Trident. The majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) support Britain's 'independent nuclear deterrent' and an upgrade. Shadow foreign secretary Hilary Benn is the leading advocate of this policy.

CORBYN MUST STAND FIRM

Jeremy Corbyn is right to oppose Trident. Nuclear weapons hang like a dark cloud over all of humanity. The diversion of resources to armaments from vital social expenditure is grotesque.

But faced with this challenge, Corbyn and his supporters in the PLP seem to be retreating rather than fighting for their position. Corbyn failed to sack Benn when he advocated British participation in the bombing of Syria, in direct opposition to the Labour leader's policy.

Disappointingly Jeremy Corbyn also faces opposition from several trade union leaders. Len McCluskey, general secretary of Unite, and Sir Paul Kenny, outgoing leader of the GMB, two of the biggest unions which have a powerful influence within the Labour Party, strongly support Trident renewal. They argue that scrapping it would cost jobs.

Under pressure from this opposition, Corbyn put forward an alternative proposal: the submarines should be built but should not carry nuclear weapons. This would be a massively expensive job creation scheme. Moreover, it appears completely ludicrous, like supplying rifles without bullets, opening the Corbyn leadership to ridicule.



JOBS NOT NUKES

The defence of jobs in shipbuilding and related industries requires the development of alternative lines of production, for socially useful projects. Shipyards could be used to build offshore wind turbines, tidal lagoons, etc.

Other sectors of the engineering industry should be involved in producing equipment for renewable energy production. The scientists, engineers and technical workers now involved in the nuclear weapons industry could be employed developing new energy technologies.

But it is also necessary to recognise that

Britain's military apparatus and its nuclear arsenal is organically linked to the defence of the interests and the prestige of the ruling class. The elimination of nuclear weapons requires a fundamental change in the social system, in Britain and internationally.

Only democratic socialist planning can provide a basis for the development of science and technology to satisfy the needs of the majority of society. Only global socialist cooperation can eliminate the causes of war and widespread military conflict.

For a start, Trident should be scrapped along with any other nuclear weapons. The jobs of defence industry workers should be protected, not through continued arms production, but through the development of alternative technology. The big arms manufacturers should be nationalised, as the basis for a plan of production to expand Britain's manufacturing industry in the interests of the majority.

BUILD MASS ANTI-WAR ANTI-AUSTERITY PARTY

To keep the support that thrust him into the leadership position and to build on it, Corbyn needs to stand firm and use that support to bolster his position and push forward a process of building a mass pro-working class anti-war force.

One vital demand to help transform the Labour Party in that direction should be for all political forces that have been fighting against war and austerity to be welcomed into Labour.

This means removing all bans and proscriptions against socialists but also extending the existing list of acceptable affiliated organisations to include the Socialist Party, the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, anti-austerity forces within the Green Party, and others.

It also means extending and re-building the democratic structures of the party. Mandatory re-selection means that for each election that takes place candidates must be democratically decided by party members. The lack of mandatory re-selection is therefore a major barrier to ensuring that the radicalisation and growth of the Labour Party taking place at its base is reflected in the party's elected representatives.

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