

HEDDWCH



Number 86 > April 2024 > CND Cymru > Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

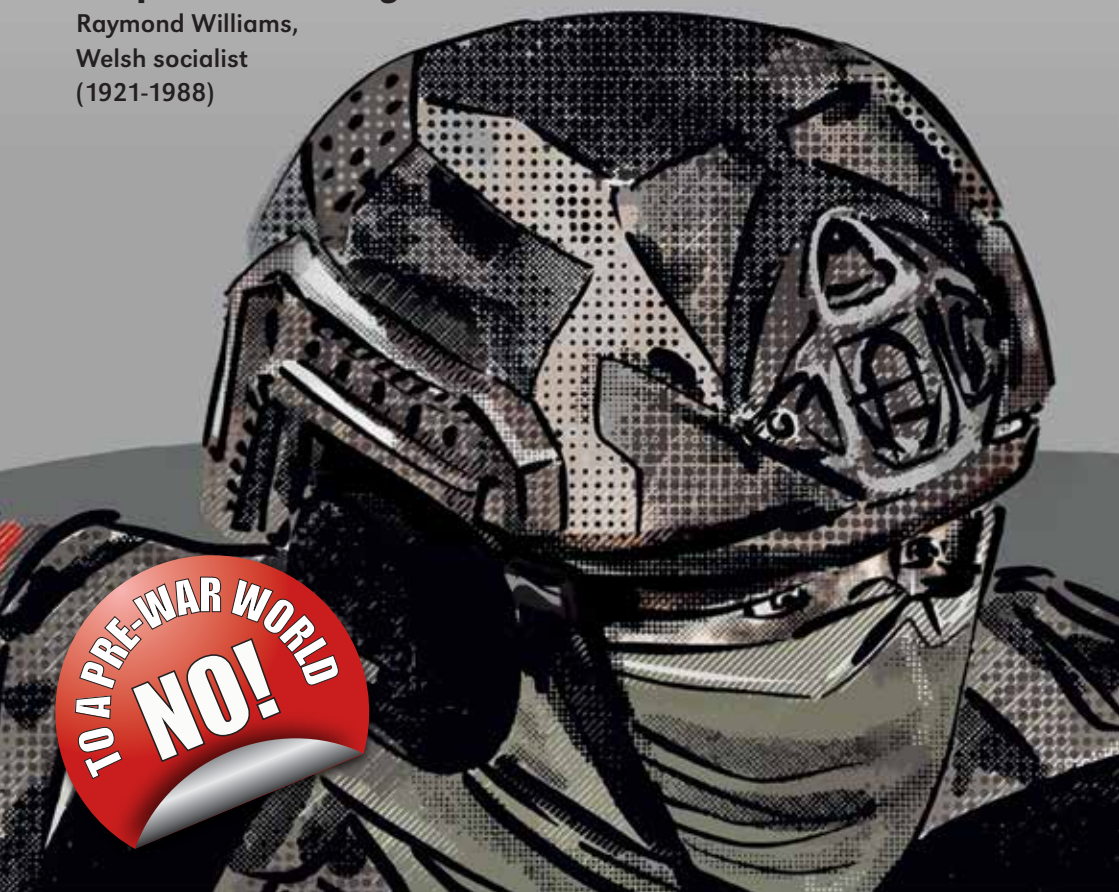
Grooming for total war?

“...we have come full circle, moving from a post-war to a pre-war world. An age of idealism has been replaced by a period of hard-headed realism...”

Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Defence, 15 January 2024

“To be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing.”

Raymond Williams,
Welsh socialist
(1921-1988)



AND DEATH SHALL HAVE NO DOMINION

Dylan Thomas 1943



Why Gaza protests must continue

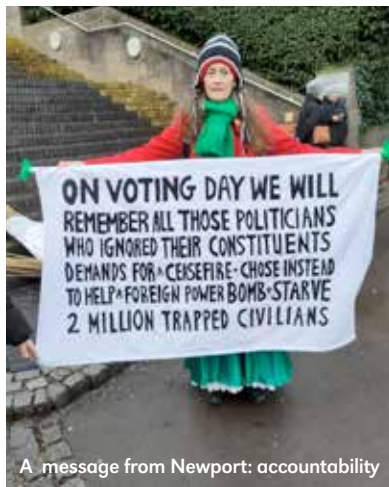
According to *Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor*, in the first 3 weeks of the Gaza War over 25,000 tonnes of explosives were dropped on the Gaza Strip, compared with the 15,000 equivalent tonnage dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

The response of Israel's far right government to the brutal 7 October attack by

Hamas has been a prolonged and indiscriminate war resulting in the displacement of 1.9 million people, the death of over 30,000 civilians including 11,000 children, and the denial of essential supplies such as power, food and water. This has involved serial breaches of international humanitarian laws and the laws of war. These laws apply universally, whether to individuals, groups, or nation states. In no court of law is vengeance a legitimate defence.

The core values of all nuclear disarmament campaigns have been human rights and the need to control and ban weapons of mass destruction through a rules-based world order. The United Nations is the vehicle by which we will implement the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

We have to call out injustice when we see it if we are to retain any moral compass. Politicians who blame protesters rather than the perpetrators of war crimes do not deserve our support. The west must stop arming Israel and bring about a genuine, just and lasting peace: no more parroting of platitudes whilst taking no action. A ceasefire is not the end but the beginning.



A message from Newport: accountability

Photo: Peter Adamson

Israel's repeated ignoring of UN resolutions over many years, and the US and UK's abstentions and vetoes in the Security Council, undermine basic democratic principles with their double standards. A just peace for the Palestinians would benefit the whole world, including Israel.

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Trident test flops...

On 30 January 2024 the latest test launch of an un-armed Trident missile from the nuclear submarine *HMS Vanguard* proved to be £17 million pounds' worth of damp squib. Yet again.

An earlier attempt: the 'catherine wheel'

WARS AND RUMOURS OF WARS

Netanyahu guards the scene of the crime. 'Nothing to see here, folks... Move along please! Haven't you got other wars to attend to?' It seems we have. Instead of diplomacy, strategy or endgame (let alone principle) we escalate and militarise. Politicians and retired generals invoke the spectre of imminent war.

- Soon NATO will be fighting Russians in the streets of Europe, warn military 'experts'.
- The Russians have a new space bomb, say the US Republicans. (Putin's rebuttal of this charge may be predictable, but some western analysts are sceptical too).
- Grant Shapps in his 'pre-war' generational mode boasts of 'the largest sustained increase in defence spending since the Cold War - injecting a further £5 billion last year to replenish our stocks and modernise our nuclear enterprise...'
- Arms giant BAE Systems, well established in Wales, recorded sales of £25.3 billion for 2023.
- Chief of the General Staff Patrick Saunders says preparing for a potential land war will have to be a

'whole-of-nation' undertaking. He praises European nations closer to Russia for 'prudently laying the foundations for national mobilisation.'

- Others call not for conscription but for a citizens' militia (always handy in a coup!).
- The *Telegraph* reports, 'Warheads to be housed at RAF Lakenheath for first time in 15 years, Pentagon documents reveal, as Moscow warns of 'escalation' .

• On 26 January 2024, the Warfare Combined Command of NATO posted:

'In a significant display of military prowess, NATO announced its intention to conduct Steadfast Defender 2024 in the coming months, the largest military exercise in Europe since the Cold War. With approximately 90,000

troops from all 31 NATO allies, as well as partner Sweden, participating, the exercise is poised to test and refine NATO's defence plans...'

(More MoD embarrassment ensued when the leading British aircraft carrier couldn't join the party, because it had broken down).

- Following the death of Vladimir Putin's opponent Alexei Navalny on 16 February, NATO policy is to ramp up sanctions and rattle sabres. This plays into Putin's narrative, and he responds with a threat of nuclear war.

• The military-industrial complex funds and redirects university courses towards military ends: 16 Australian universities are being given \$128 mn to train engineers for the AUKUS pact. *AUKUS to Cardiff! See p9.*

• In January 2024, for the second year running, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists sets the Doomsday Clock at 90 seconds to midnight. As countdowns to catastrophe go, that may be looking a bit optimistic.

PHILIP STEELE

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT



A Ukrainian drone ignites a Russian oil depot 2024

Remarkably, there is limited research and publicly available information about the connection between climate change and militarism, but the impact of war and the arms industry on climate change can be observed on various levels, whether that's the resources and energy required for arms production, or the pollution and CO₂ generated through military training and conflicts. The potential damage that war inflicts on the environment and how climate change itself can lead to future conflicts and wars also need to be considered.

One of the main reasons for the lack of information or open data about the climate-militarism connection is that nations are reluctant to share data for 'security' reasons.

Consequently, accountability for the actions of militaries worldwide is scarce, and since the 1997 Kyoto Protocol in the United Nations Climate Change Conference, countries are not obliged to include their defence administration, nor arms industry, in their emission reduction targets.

The arms industry

Although scarce, there is robust research showing the link between climate change and the arms industry. An estimated 5.5% of global emissions come from military activities, which are equivalent to 2.2 billion tonnes of CO₂. To put that into context, the aviation industry produces 2.2% of global emissions, and its impact on the planet is consistently scrutinised.

Upon closer examination, consider the emissions from F-35 Fighter jets, often practising above the land and western coasts of Wales. On average, one F-35 flight emits the same amount of CO₂ as an average car in a year.

Climate and environmental harm

The United Nations announced in 2020 a direct link between climate change and war, with Assistant Secretary-General Miroslav Jenča stating, 'Climate change worsens existing conflicts and is likely to lead to new ones.' Since 2008, the UK has exported £1 billion worth of military equipment to 39 out of the 40 countries most vulnerable to climate change effects, including countries like Pakistan and Somalia.

And what about nuclear weapons, a growing threat to populations worldwide? Climate change is a slow-burning disaster which openly threatens every community. Although we focus on that as the biggest threat, both existential crises are intrinsically linked. Recent

research from University College London highlights the current danger of a nuclear impact, with the largest weapons able to blanket most of the planet with cloud, causing global temperatures to fall by 10°C, thereby destroying agriculture internationally.

The above only scratches the surface of these issues, but we do need to start ensuring accountability regarding the links between climate change and the arms industry, and the ways in which wars are ruining our planet.

RHUN DAFYDD



DIVESTMENT

DON'T BANK ON THE BOMB!

And now for the good news! On 22 February 2024 a new PAX/ICAN report called *Untenable Investments* showed that the number of investors in the 24 companies building nuclear weapons continues to drop – for the third year in a row! It looks like the existence of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is beginning to bite.

- The total number of investors dropped from 306 to 287.
- The total value of all investments is actually higher than last year – but that increase is from loans and shareholding.
- US investors still dominate the top 10. Vanguard remains the biggest investor, with \$72.4 billion invested in shares and bonds of the

companies most involved in the nuclear weapon industry.

- Outside of the US, the top investor is Canada's Sun Life Financial, with \$8.7 billion invested in nuclear weapon producers
- There are almost no investments from banks in countries that have joined the TPNW.



BRIAN JONES

CAN YOU HELP US?

If you're interested in helping us out at CND Cymru, please email Brian Jones.

brian.jones@phonecoop.coop for further information and discussion. Thanks!

Volunteer with IT skills

We need an enthusiastic volunteer (or volunteers) to keep the CND Cymru website

working and up to date. Our website is a vital element of CND Cymru's work in sharing information about peace and disarmament. We're hoping that there's someone out there willing to donate 2-3 hours a month to help keep the website up to date, refresh the "front" page with new photos, upload blogs, get to grips with the SEO, etc...

Film festival proposal

It has been suggested that CND Cymru should organise film screenings and events as part of the International Uranium Film Festival in 2025. A great idea, but we do need volunteer(s) to assess the logistics, financing, promotion and locations of such an undertaking. Similar experience is not necessary, but would be valuable.

Letters

Singing for Gaza

Charlotte Church had been unable to find a venue in Cardiff: the response from choirs had been mainly 'Gaza? Too political!'; so when Côr Cochion sang with her at a vigil in Cardiff, I told her about our beautiful Bedwas Workmen's Hall.

It was a truly life enhancing, positive event, where the pain we all feel from helplessly

watching the tragic genocide was eased by singing together. I have never witnessed such a diverse audience and performers, from the homeless choir, the Muslim community, seasoned campaigners, and children.

The next day Charlotte experienced the full fury of the tabloid press, for daring to stand up for Palestine. The *Daily Mail* (supporter of Hitler and Mussolini in 1933) and

the *Sun* savagely attacked her gentle song, "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free" as antisemitic, and caricatured the beautiful concert as a call for the destruction of Israel.

'The Welsh singer, who was draped in a keffiyeh scarf in solidarity with those in Palestine, was also caught singing 'Stop the Occupation''

This outrageous misrepresentation gave us the opportunity to respond by spreading far and wide the call to support artistic freedom and the cause of Palestinian liberation.

Thanks to Bedwas Workmen's Hall, for standing up to tabloid bullying, and to Charlotte for lending her beautiful voice to the campaign.

WENDY LEWIS

A megachoir! Charlotte Church with Côr Cochion Caerdydd, the Choir with No Name and many friends sing out in the Bedwas Workmen's Hall



Photo: Martin Davis Photography

FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANITY!



*Gaza's children: homeless, buried under rubble, sick or starving
Photo: Euromed Monitor*

In Gaza, we are witnessing a humanitarian catastrophe, and we stand on the brink of mass civilian slaughter if, as is feared as I write this, the Israeli armed forces attack Rafah.

CND was born out of the fear of modern warfare's destruction of civilian populations. The dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki instantly incinerated thousands and left hundreds of thousands more civilians to die in the weeks and years following.

Systematic destruction

In Gaza today, through modern social media reporting and satellite imagery detailing the damage, we see one of the most densely populated urban civilian populations in the world forced to run from building to building as they are systematically destroyed.

The attacks by Hamas on 7 October 2024 were horrifying. But over four months of Israeli military action in Gaza have left 30,000 Palestinians dead, over 70,000 injured and an estimated 1.7million displaced from their homes and living in temporary accommodation – with over 1 million of those in Rafah.

UNRWA and other aid organisations struggle to deliver supplies due to the Israeli blockade and the ongoing destruction is impacting sanitation and cutting communications. *Médecins Sans Frontières* say there is no health system to speak of left in Gaza.

The Wall Street Journal described the Israeli bombing in Gaza as the 'most devastating urban warfare in the modern record' and UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths stated that Gaza had 'simply become uninhabitable'.

International law

What is happening to the Palestinians is collective punishment, as the Secretary-General of the UN and countless agencies have stated, from as early as October. That is why it was right that South Africa brought its concerns of the threat of genocide to the International Court of Justice, which determined that there is a plausible risk of genocide by the state of Israel.

And yet despite the growing evidence of multiple breaches of international humanitarian law by Israel, the US and UK continue to supply arms, and political cover to Israel.

This is an extremely sensitive and important topic, and I actually found it upsetting to see the House of Commons descend into farce when discussing the SNP's call for a ceasefire. Not only was the issue used disgracefully as a political football, it is now being weaponised as a pretext to demonise the Palestine solidarity movement.

That is why CND Cymru members must continue to campaign for a ceasefire.

But more than that, we must demand an end to the political and military support for a regime that is causing untold death and destruction. We must end arms sales to Israel, we must endorse sanctions on the Israeli military, and we must fight for a sovereign Palestinian state.

**BETH WINTER MP
(Lab, Cynon Valley)**

UNITED WE STAND!

The wider peace movement in Wales and beyond is currently busy reorganising and debating the way forward, to cope with turbulent times. On 17 February 2024 *Heddwch ar Waith* (Peace Action Wales) organised a public meeting in Aberystwyth, chaired by Esther Prytherch, with a wide range of speakers from many backgrounds.

Inspired by the past

Wales has a long history of political protest and religious dissent, from the revolutionary Merthyr Rising in 1831 to the life's work of Henry Richard, minister and MP (1812-1888). As Secretary of the Peace Society, he was a tireless opponent of militarism and empire.

Recent developments

Recent evidence of this spirit manifests itself in the *Academi Heddwch*, Wales's peace institute, founded in 2020. Funded by Welsh Government, it aims to promote peacemaking as part of our national and international agenda for Wales. *Heddwch ar Waith* (2023) is a new group set up jointly by CND Cymru and *Cymdeithas y Cymod* (the Fellowship for Reconciliation in Wales). It is funded by the

Joseph Rowntree Foundation and aims to support and coordinate grassroots activism for peace and justice.

The bigger picture

CND Cymru focuses on nuclear issues and is affiliated to the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). It is at the centre of a huge network of diverse activist groups and NGOs seeking peace and justice. These include members of political groups, parties big and small and trade unions; youth groups such as the Urdd; cultural and community groups; environmental

groups; faith, interfaith and secular groups, archivists and activists, academics, internationalist bodies such as the Welsh Centre of International Affairs (WCIA) and the United Nations Association (UNA); veterans for peace; opponents of nuclear testing, nuclear power, NATO and the arms trade; conscientious objectors; supporters of human rights. We have our differences, both inside and outside CND Cymru, but we share many values in common, and in that lies our strength. Together we can speak truth to power.

SAM BANNON



Image: Heddwch ar Waith

CHALLENGE THIS 'SPACE WARS' RADAR

CND Cymru stands shoulder to shoulder with Pembrokeshire campaigners to oppose the siting of the Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC) at the Cawdor Barracks site. It is part of a network of three radar stations which will be jointly operated to track and identify objects in deep space under the AUKUS defence partnership between the UK, USA and Australia. Pembrokeshire is the UK's preferred site.

Giant dishes

This is a major development. Twenty-seven dishes will be located near Brawdy. David Webb (Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space) wrote in *Heddwch 84* that each of the 21 receiving antenna dishes would be 20 metres high and 15 metres in diameter, as well as six transmitter dishes the same size.

The government claims it is a response to the increasing danger of space warfare and a key objective of the UK Defence Space Strategy 2022. The United States has made clear its aim to dominate space and is ready to fight a war in space. Yet again, the UK wants to use our land for its war plans.

MoD's Welsh empire

There are over 60 Ministry of Defence establishments and bases in Wales. There are



*Yes to the starry darkness in beautiful Pembrokeshire –but NO to DARC.
Photo: Roy Jones*

also training areas, such as Sennybridge on Mynydd Epynt, taken over for military use in 1939. With 31,000 acres, and 6,000 acres of forested land, it is the biggest military training area in the UK.

Pembrokeshire has already been exploited for military purposes. Castlemartin covers 6,000 acres in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. The Air Defence Range Manorbier is also within the National Park and can fire the High Velocity anti-aircraft missile. Penally Camp near Tenby is adjacent to the National Park and has a training area within the Park boundaries. Another 404 acres make up the Templeton Training Area in south Pembrokeshire.

The UK Government wants to increase the defence budget to 2.5% of GDP. The average global level of investment in the military is 1.95% of GDP.

There are plans to increase the army footprint in Wales with £320 million extra investment, following a change of plan after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In March Rolls-Royce announced that 200 of over 400 jobs would be created at St Mellon's, Cardiff, to build new small nuclear reactors for AUKUS attack submarines.

A better future beckons

CND Cymru sees a different future. We believe Wales can become a Nation of Peace and play a leading role in achieving nuclear disarmament. In line with our aims, we will oppose war preparations. Wales has the resources and ability to create green, sustainable jobs and communities and that is the vision we want to make reality.

JILL EVANS

O FÔN I FYNWY MONA TO MONMOUTH



Wales demands Gaza ceasefire

On 20 March many CND Cymru and Palestine Solidarity Campaign supporters in **Ceredigion** gathered to protest about the Welsh government's involvement in military companies supporting Israel (such as QinetiQ and Thales UK/Elbit) at **Parc Aberporth** and **West Wales Aiport**. Speakers included Jill Gough and Dylan Lewis-Rowlands for CND Cymru.

The War on Gaza has seen the most intense peace campaigning **across Wales** since the Iraq War. People have taken to city streets, university campuses, town halls and village squares. There have been vigils, marches, boycotts, pickets and public meetings.

Packed buses have gone down to all the huge London marches as well. Despite efforts by press and politicians to downplay the numbers or discredit the

marchers (calling them 'hate mobs'), the marches have been thoughtful and peaceful, even as the rising death toll of innocent lives becomes intolerable.

West Bank youth visit Wales

Ten young people from Palestine's troubled West Bank visited **Cardiff** and **Newport** on 28-29 February and then travelled on to **mid-Wales**, under the auspices of the

Caernarfon trial for Solvay 3

Following the Teledyne trials in **Mold** and **Caernarfon** Crown Courts last year (see *Heddwch 84*), another trial of Palestine Action protestors comes to Caernarfon on 15 April 2024. Three activists are charged with scaling the roof of the Solvay factory in **Wrexham** and daubing the building with blood-red paint. Solvay supplies materials to UAV Tactical Systems, a subsidiary of Elbit Systems, which produces lethal drones for use by Israel. Solvay is reported to be involved in engineering in the occupied West Bank.

On 23 February a UN ruling by independent experts and Special Rapporteurs warned that supplying weapons which could be used to violate international humanitarian law had to cease immediately.

WCIA (Welsh Centre for International Affairs) and the Urdd. This is part of a UK tour organised by the Camden-Abu Dis Friendship Association. The youngsters will talk about peace, human rights and current conditions on the West Bank. On the Welsh leg of the tour they will meet members of Newport Youth Council and meet Jeremy Miles, the current Education and Welsh Language Minister.



Over 150 people marched through **Prestatyn** on 2 March 2024 calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Photo: David Lloyd Williams

Wales to Lakenheath

The news that US nuclear weapons are likely to be stationed at 'RAF' Lakenheath in Suffolk has alerted peace campaigners across Wales. A British CND webinar of 26 February examining the issues can be seen on <https://cnduk.org/cnds-lockdown-seminars>. Current actions including a major protest on Saturday 11 May are being coordinated by a new action alliance see <http://lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk/>

Peace message from the Urdd

The 2024 Urdd eisteddfod will be held this summer near **Maldwyn**, Powys. This year's Peace and Goodwill Message will celebrate the centenary of the Welsh women's 1923-24 Peace Petition (see *Book Review p15*). The 2024 message emphasises the importance of taking action and persistently advocating



CND Cymru members joined the last two protests at Lakenheath. Committee member Ali Lochhead is coordinating new Welsh protests at the base. Photo: Peter Adamson

for peace. It asserts that atrocities, wars, and violence must be stopped, and that cooperation, passion, and hope are the driving forces that can lead us towards a better future.

See you in Pontypridd!

Put the dates in your diary now: from 3-10 August 2024 the National Eisteddfod comes to **Pontypridd**. CND Cymru as ever will be found in the *Pabell Heddwch* (Peace Tent) and no doubt there will be protests, music, discussions and chats. Our supporters

from Rhondda Cynon Taf may like to come along to help out.

Women for peace

In March a lively meeting in **Cardiff**, hosted by the Young Communist League, recalled Welsh Women and Greenham Common. The National Museum of History marked International Women's Day with the opening of a new exhibition at **St Fagans** of the Welsh Women's Peace Petition of 1923, alongside inspiring banners from the 1980s Greenham Women's Peace Camp, many by Thalia Campbell. Visit 9 March-15 September, free entry.

Greening Ynys Môn

The news that the Westminster government is purchasing the **Wylfa** nuclear site from Hitachi was dismissed by campaigners and experts alike as a ludicrous piece of electioneering. At a public meeting in **Llangefni** on 16 March, addressed online by Dr Paul Dorfman, the emphasis was on the opportunities offered by the unstoppable rise of genuine renewables.



CND Cymru and PAWB members in **Holyhead** deliver a letter to Virginia Crosbie MP (Con, Ynys Môn) calling for a recall of the Westminster Welsh Affairs Select Committee on Nuclear Power after EDF admitted that the construction of Hinkley Point C had been a political project rather than an economic one. Photo: Phillip Steele

TELEVISION

ARMAGEDDON: HOW CLOSE ARE WE?

Jane Corbin,

BBC 2

January 2024

English language

i-Player <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001vgq5>



This documentary about nuclear weapons left me rather frustrated, as it was hard to ‘get hold of’. There was a huge amount of information within it, but it flip-flopped between delivering rather prolonged approaches to the development of nuclear weapons, and referencing the recent *Oppenheimer* film, to nuclear weapons being either fission or fusion and how the warheads are housed and transported. It was framed to the changing timescale towards nuclear Armageddon recorded by the Doomsday Clock; all with accompanying dramatic music.

The facts

In between it gave some good factual details about the history of nuclear weapons and the political landscapes which informed the various treaties and build-ups, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968 and then the START treaties with the second one signed in 2010. There were sobering facts about the total lack of negotiations to continue any exchange of information,

on-site inspections or extension of any of the treaties to contain or reduce nuclear weapons. Extremely scary.

Assumptions

The documentary assumed nuclear weapons were an accepted given. The choices of interviews were with people who did not question this, for example, an interview about Trident and Faslane with no mention of the fact that UK nuclear weapons are not independent, but the opposite – totally controlled by USA. The emphasis was that western governments were somehow reliable while ‘rogue’ countries posed the threat. For example; why only mention North Korea as having ‘unauthorised’ nuclear weapons, and not also Israel?

There was brief mention of the campaigns such as Greenham Common Women and marches in 1980s and a recent demonstration at Lakenheath; not the larger demonstrations which have taken place; against USA nuclear weapons returning to the UK but there was extremely little, beyond

for example; talking about Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW); from scientists, academics and the plethora of people and organisations who have been tirelessly campaigning against nuclear weapons and the threat they pose, not just militarily and politically but because of their vulnerability. Not to mention resource use and financial implications; while the many peaceful alternatives to security and resolving conflict and were not explored.

A confused message

This programme left me not really understanding what it was trying to say. It did state that we are in a horribly dangerous place at the moment; with 90 seconds on the Doomsday clock and with very irresponsible leaders, but not about the choices that governments are making; and why the involved countries are hell bent on ensuring that nuclear weapons are not decreased.

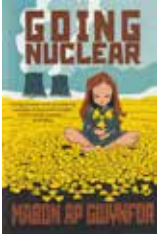
ALI LOCHHEAD

BOOKS

GOING NUCLEAR

Mabon ap Gwynfor

Publ. Mabon ap Gwynfor 2023
£13.00 210pp. Paperback.
978-1-84524-540-5
English language



The political debate about nuclear energy, as witnessed

in Westminster, the Senedd, mainstream political parties and media, takes its cues from a powerful, global nuclear lobby. The claim that Wylfa in Ynys Môn is 'the best site for a nuclear power generation in Europe' is an oft repeated

mantra, yet in terms of grid capacity and routing, proximity to consumption and economics, it makes no sense at all.

The military links with civil nuclear programmes are now boasted about by the likes of Rolls-Royce, but until recently were publicly denied. Connections have actually been in plain sight from the outset.

Mabon (Plaid Cymru MS for Dwyfwr Meirionnydd, and current Chair of CND Cymru) presents incontrovertible evidence of historical and ongoing military connections – economic, technological, political and organisational. They are part of what US President Eisenhower, as early as 1961, defined as a 'military-industrial complex' and a threat to democracy.

Mabon goes on to demolish the arguments that nuclear power is the answer to the climate crisis, that it is safe, that it is the best provider of jobs. He points out the abuses of the nuclear industry, such as the neo-colonial exploitation of indigenous peoples around the world.

This book is not some polemic rant but a well researched critique of an outdated and desperate nuclear industry. *Going Nuclear* is well written, comprehensive yet admirably concise. Let us hope that journalists, political candidates across the parties and campaigners alike take note – as well as those communities in North Wales who have repeatedly been promised one false dawn after another.

PHILIP STEELE

THE APPEAL 1923-24 The Remarkable Story of the Welsh Women's Peace Petition

ed Jenny Mathers and
Mererid Hopwood

Y Lolfa 2023 £9.99 238pp.
Paperback.
978-1-80099382-2 *Bilingual*



This book, bilingual and with photographs, traces the little known history of the campaign for peace by the women of Wales, after the First World War.

One objective in the 1920s was to persuade Congress and the President of the USA to join the League of Nations. With this intention a petition was organised, and signed by 390,296 women across Wales, in 1923. In 1924 four women from Wales took the petition to America: they spoke at public meetings and with the press, and with Calvin Coolidge in the White

House. The petition remained in its chest in Washington DC. But the chest and the petition have just come back to Wales, finally – to the National Library in Aberystwyth.

The diary of Annie Hughes Griffiths (one of the four women) has been transcribed by volunteers, and is available online. The book has been edited by Jenny Mathers and Mererid Hopwood, but ten people have contributed to this volume.

This book is a masterpiece that inspires us all.

DAVID HARRIES

Joan Judson 1930-2023

Joan Judson, who died on 30 April 2023 at the age of 93, was a stalwart of the peace movement all her adult life. Losing two of her three brothers during the Second World War (and particularly her youngest brother Kenneth, who was only a child when he was tragically killed in the London Blitz) was one of the life-changing experiences that left an indelible mark on her growing opposition to war as a means of solving human dilemmas.

After the war the family moved to Wales (initially to Llandudno, following her father's job in the Inland Revenue). Subsequently Joan's own work in the Tax Office brought Joan and her mother to Llanishen, Cardiff, where she spent the rest of her life.

Throughout her life Joan campaigned tirelessly for peace, justice and human rights. She was both emotionally and intellectually outraged by evidence of discrimination or oppression. The causes which she espoused over many decades included not only CND and the peace movement, but also anti-apartheid, justice for Palestine, tackling global poverty, employment rights, environmental action, support for asylum seekers, and animal rights.



Joan Judson, a consistent voice for peace.

A self-declared committed socialist and feminist, Joan was also a fervent trade unionist and a longstanding member of the Labour Party (the latter sometimes less fervent, as she struggled to remain a member when faced with issues thrown up by – for example – the leadership stance on the Iraq War or nuclear disarmament, or the official party line on left-wing radical resistance).

It was Joan's sheer grassroots dedication that made her known to many. Always quietly committed and unremittingly loyal, Joan was a familiar figure at peace demonstrations, on protest marches throughout the 1980s and 1990s, on picket lines, on door-to-door leaflet deliveries, and in support groups (such as during the miners' strike, or on the long-running

campaign to highlight the activities of the local Atomic Weapons Establishment in Llanishen). Her regular support for the Côr Cochion as they sang in the centre of Cardiff was legendary, and took the form of shaking the money bucket and appealing to passers by for donations. This sometimes led to encounters that could be challenging, and in those Joan was passionate and (outwardly) fearless in defending the causes she cared so much about.

Joan was an inspiration to us all and is sorely missed.

ALISON JACKSON

Myrla Eastland

1943-2023

Myrla Eastland, my mother, marched long and hard for peace and justice for most of her life. She was born in Mauritius and moved to Tangyanika (now Tanzania) at the age of three. She had a difficult life and witnessed the colonialist colour bar and the oppression of poor, black people in Africa, which gave her a thirst for justice and a desire to free the oppressed.

She was active in politics as a young woman after moving to London; and after moving to Llanbradach in 1978, she joined peace and activist groups and protests in Wales. I have vivid memories of our family being responsible for setting up and running the weekly CND Cymru stall in Caerphilly, for many years. Myrla and I also made frequent visits to Greenham Common to join the successful protest for the abolition of Cruise nuclear weapons sited there. Later,

she visited other parts of the UK to protest about nuclear weapons and nuclear power, including Hinckley Point, Faslane and Aldermaston and she joined the large CND and Stop the War protest in London for many years.

After the fatal accident at a nuclear power plant at Chernobyl in 1986, Myrla together with my father, Stuart Eastland, helped set up the Chernobyl Children's Project in Wales. They visited Chernobyl and organised for much needed supplies to be sent there, as well as hosting holidays for children who had been affected by the Chernobyl disaster, in Wales. It gave the children a break from the hardships caused by the accident and scientific evidence suggested that leaving the polluted air and having a holiday elsewhere extended the children's life.

JILL EASTLAND



Myrla sings out for peace with Cŵr Cochion Caerdydd



CND CYMRU

CND Cymru campaigns alongside organisations in Wales and internationally for peace, environmental and social justice, and to rid Britain and the world of all weapons of mass destruction.



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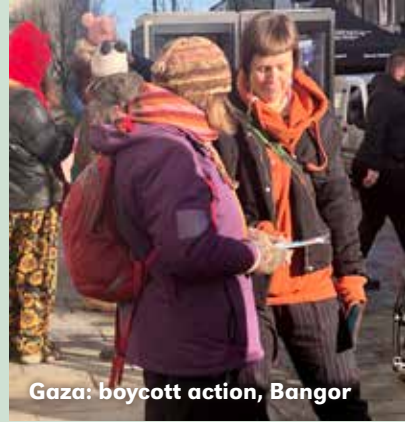
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Gaza: boycott action, Bangor

HEDDWCH

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