

30 QUESTIONS...



AND ANSWERS ABOUT CND



1 What is CND?

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is

a British peace movement which started in 1958 as a result of public outrage both against nuclear weapons and against the testing of such weapons in the atmosphere.

2 What are its aims?

CND's aims are set out in its Constitution. It opposes all weapons of mass destruction, especially the British ones for which we are responsible, but has as its final aim 'complete and general disarmament'. This is

a United Nations goal, meaning that we work for a world in which no country can attack another because as a minimum it will not have the military means to do so.

3 Does CND believe in change by violence?

No. Its demonstrations have always been peaceful, and its spirit is of non-violence,

especially when direct action (fasts, sit-ins, tax refusal, etc.) has been undertaken.

4 Is it unilateralist or multilateralist?

This is a false distinction which is played upon by those who want to divide the peace movement. CND, realising how little has so far been achieved by negotiation, nevertheless supports all genuine disarmament processes both by negotiation (multilateral, bilateral, regional) or through the United Nations. At the same time it believes that every country can and should take its own disarmament steps, here and now, without waiting for agreement by anyone else.

In Britain today that means at least rejecting Trident submarines or any 'independent' British nuclear weapons or American Cruise missiles. Ending arms sales abroad, promoting peace education in universities and schools, and supporting redeployment schemes for those in military industries are only a few of the many other steps which our country could take without prior agreement with any other country.

5 Wouldn't independent action like this make us weaker to an attacker?

Not at all. The world has enough weapons to blow everyone up many times over. Both the Americans and the Russians could cut back on their nuclear arsenals at once without any negotiations and without the slightest loss to what militarists call 'security'. In fact, the only way out of the vicious spiral of the arms race is to act for peace and so encourage others. British

nuclear weapons are not genuinely independent, are vastly expensive, encourage others to join the nuclear gang and can present no real threat to either superpower. To use them would invite our annihilation. They did nothing to deter the Argentines from occupying the Falkland Islands!

6 How does CND see the 'Soviet threat'?

Realistically, unlike the simplistic position of our critics which leads them to accept the inevitability of nuclear weapons, and perhaps nuclear war. No one can prove that a Soviet threat does not exist – but, at the same time, political and economic consider-

ations make a military move by the Warsaw Pact outside their present area of influence in Europe very unlikely. Even if one believes in a 'Soviet military threat', nuclear weapons are worse than useless for defending the populations of the west.

7 Does CND oppose NATO?

CND looks on both the major military blocs of East and West as sharing responsibility for the arms race as they feed on the fear of

the other. CND works for the dissolution of both and is therefore opposed to NATO and aims at a British withdrawal.

8 Is CND pacifist?

Some members certainly are, and the Society of Friends (the Quakers) is perhaps the largest of the pacifist groups. But most are not and believe in some forms of

military defence. All are agreed that present world military policies protect no one but only make nuclear calamity more likely. CND has supported discussions about alternative defence systems – not all of which are military.

9 Does CND support the Soviet Union?

CND does not support countries – it rejects militarism everywhere. Thus CND opposes new Soviet military developments like the SS20, and it has condemned the invasion of Afghanistan. But, because it regularly tries to show how the arms race looks from the

Soviet side and so often exposes Western military propaganda, it is denounced by Western militarists as being pro-Soviet. It believes in dialogue with all sides including the Warsaw Pact countries and their peoples.

10 Why isn't there a CND in Russia?

It is claimed by the USSR and similar countries that peace and disarmament are the policy of their governments and hence there is no need for a CND in those countries! In fact, CND doesn't believe that the idea of either disarmament as a unilateral process or of peace movements critical of their own governments has been accepted in these societies.

We welcome the signs that such independent movements are now emerging, especially in East Germany, and believe that our strategy can create a situation of greater detente and

co-operation, which in turn will help the democratisation of these countries. From the Russian point of view, they see themselves encircled and confronted with two hostile blocs – China and NATO – , and in that atmosphere self-criticism is seen as disloyalty.

But, before we get too self-righteous about our freedoms, it is well to remember that in many parts of the Western military bloc – from South Korea to Turkey – no 'independent' peace movements could possibly exist.



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11 Why do you think CND can succeed when there are no unilateralists in the Kremlin?

There aren't many unilateralists in Whitehall, or the Pentagon for that matter. Nevertheless, clearly the idea of unilateralism as a way of doing things is acknowledged as a genuine and important part of the disarmament process in the Final Document of the 1st United Nations Special

Session on Disarmament of 1978 – a document which our country is supposed to accept. Our problem is to create the conditions in which a unilateralist approach becomes the dominant one. No one suggests that any 'side' should give up all military defence overnight. We believe that every country can take independent unilateral first steps.

12 Why is CND opposed to 'Civil Defence'?

CND is opposed to 'Civil Defence' for two reasons. In the first place, for Britain, with so many targets, there can be no genuine civil defence. Even the Government has admitted that, in the sort of attack we might expect, thirty million people could die at once. Yet we are told to hide under the stairs and to whitewash our windows! The effect, if not the aim, of these absurd recommendations is to make nuclear war seem inevitable and even 'normal'.

More importantly, (unlike neutral countries where protection against radio-active fallout makes sense), when a nuclear weapon country starts to take 'Civil Defence' seriously, it is actually telling the other side to improve its missiles. Deterrence rests on a system – quite immoral – of taking hostages. The hostages are the civilian populations of 'the enemy'. Pretending to protect the hostages actually speeds up the arms race. The only real defence is to put every effort into ending the arms race.

13 Is CND opposed to nuclear energy?

Its constitution does not mention nuclear energy and, in its early days, many CND members did support what was then called 'Atoms for Peace'. Now, because of the obvious risks of nuclear proliferation and

the links between nuclear power and the nuclear weapons programme, the great majority of CND members are opposed to nuclear energy and have passed several Conference resolutions to that effect.

14 Wouldn't disarmament as proposed by CND create unemployment?

Not if redeployment into useful work is planned. It has been shown many times that money spent on non-military sectors of industry creates more jobs and less inflation. CND actively supports the movements for the conversion of military industries to socially useful production, and

sees this as important both for jobs in Britain and for the development of the poor countries of the world. It is in these poor countries especially that the arms race, because of the waste of talent and money involved, is already hurting millions who could have a decent life.

15 Is CND political?

Certainly, because CND wants to end the arms race and to influence political

decisions. But it is not PARTY political. In CND there are members of all the major parties and even organised groups such as Labour CND and Liberal CND.

16 What are local nuclear-free zones, and does CND support them?

The idea of local nuclear-free zones was launched in this country by Manchester City Council in 1980. Over 140 local authorities have now so declared themselves. In practice they are refusing to co-operate with government 'Civil Defence' plans, raising objections to government military planning applications, opposing nuclear waste

dumping and passage, co-operating with CND and other peace groups in making local authority facilities available, beginning to work for a fundamental change in attitudes to war by peace education in schools, and promoting twinning schemes with local authorities in other countries.

17 What does CND mean by a 'European Nuclear-Free Zone'?

CND believes that disarmament will only be achieved if we get on with it now – that's the meaning of unilateral disarmament. In Europe we believe that, instead of watching a 'numbers game' in Geneva between the two superpowers, we should be clearing the

weapons out of Europe, country by country, to create a nuclear-free Europe, east and west, which would then have a powerful effect on the peoples and ultimately on the governments of the USA and the USSR.

18 But isn't CND just like the people who wanted to appease Hitler in the 1930s?

On the contrary, those who were responsible in the 1930s for the rise of Hitler were those Western militarists who ruined the Disarmament Conference of 1932, made Hitler's rise inevitable and then made money out of helping to arm him in the expectation that he would attack Russia.

In the quite different circumstances of the 1980s CND is simply saying that nuclear 'deterrence' cannot last, that the world has weapons enough to destroy itself many times over and that it is the arms race itself which is our real enemy.

19 Is CND international?

There are CND organisations in Ireland, Scotland and Wales but not in other countries, because most countries already have their own peace organisations, many of which have a similar approach to CND. CND is affiliated to the United Nations Association and the International Peace Bureau. It has taken a special interest in the

two United Nations Disarmament Sessions of 1978 and 1982. Since the start of the European Nuclear Disarmament campaign in 1980, CND has made strong links with other European movements, especially in Germany and the Netherlands, and meets regularly with European peace workers.

20 What has the United Nations said about the arms race and its dangers?

In 1978 the United Nations, in a report accepted unanimously, declared, "Mankind is confronted with a choice – we either curb the arms race or face annihilation". In other

words, the UN, like CND, believes that the dangers of doing nothing are far greater than any risks on the road to peace.

21 Is CND only concerned with nuclear weapons?

No, it is concerned with all weapons and all methods of peacemaking from the Campaign Against the Arms Trade to the promotion of peace education. Nevertheless, CND believes that the major threat to the world is the massive stockpile of 50,000 nuclear weapons, most of which

are in the arsenals of the two superpowers. Its main efforts are aimed at getting rid of these instruments of mass destruction. In particular CND campaigns against a British 'independent' nuclear weapon of any sort, against nuclear bases in Britain and against the introduction of yet more nuclear weapons like the Cruise missile, into the country.

22 Does CND make statements about human rights?

CND is a disarmament movement and it tries to stick to that single aim, although many members, under other hats, are very active on human rights issues. One of the present CND Council members, for instance, is an ex-chairperson of British Amnesty. CND condemned the suppression

in Poland and in earlier days the American presence in Vietnam. CND has, however, from time to time, made itself unpopular by pointing out that human rights violations are not only to be found in 'the East', and that those working for peace must apply the same judgements to countries of the West, the East and the 'non-aligned' bloc.

23 What are its methods?

CND aims to mobilise the majority of people in this country and to inform them about the risks of nuclear war. Film shows, debates, rallies, leafletting, discussions, petitions, street theatre, contacts with MPs and councillors, letters to the press, school

visits, are all basic to the ordinary work of CND. At the same time, CND has special groups working with churches, trades unions, doctors, scientists, teachers, young people and many in other areas. CND is a very broad-based movement.

24 Is CND run by Communists?

There are communists in CND just as there are christians, feminists and pacifists. And of course many communists are sharply critical of the USSR. CND is not run by any single group, and the question itself sounds

like witch-hunting. Members of CND support its constitutional aims, which are critical of both the superpowers, as are many of the resolutions passed at annual conferences.

25 How many members are there?

At the moment there are over 41,000 national members, and hundreds of

thousands of people who have joined local CND groups but are not national members.

26 How is CND organised?

CND is administered by an annually elected Council which meets quarterly and on which there is a strong representation from the 15

regions and the many groups which make up each region. The Council selects an Executive responsible to it.

27 Who pays for it?

The bulk of CND income comes from membership subscriptions and donations and from the sale of booklets, badges, etc.

CND receives no outside money from any fund or organisation East or West, unlike some major British organisations critical of CND, which receive substantial funding from the British Government.

28 Has CND had any success already?

Yes. The opinion polls show that an increasing number of people agree with our ideas. The start of the talks in Geneva over the new European nuclear weapons and Reagan's 'zero-option', however minimal their likely outcome, show that we and the other disarmament movements in Europe have started to have a political impact. Similar movements to ourselves in Holland and Belgium have meant that their

governments have been forced to postpone their acceptance of Cruise missiles. In America the 'Freeze' campaign has been greatly encouraged by the European peace movement, and is having a major impact on American politics. In Britain as a result of CND pressure, the Home Office has actually had to cancel, or at least postpone, its autumn 1982 major 'civil defence' exercise — Hard Rock.

29 Can anyone join?

Certainly, as long as he or she accepts the constitution and aims of the Campaign.

CND is a movement with thousands of members. It is democratically organised, and to be effective it needs as many active members as possible.

30 How can I join?

Simply fill in a membership form and return to CND, 11 Goodwin Street, London N4.



CASH MEMBERSHIP FORM

- Adult £6
- Couple £9
- Student £3
- Youth CND (21 and under) £1
- Unwaged £2
- Please put me in touch with my local group.

Name

Address

I enclose for one year's membership.

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To the Manager of Bank PLC.

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Signed (*Delete as appropriate)

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Please return completed Bankers Order form to CND

We also have a Giro Account No. 525604006
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