

briefing



Date: 31st October 2012

No.102

Subject: **NET survey on Barrow and the Trident Alternatives Review**

a. Introduction

This NFLA briefing outlines its submission to an initial survey by the Nuclear Education Trust (NET) on the BAE Barrow Shipyard and the Trident Alternatives Review. It has been completed by the NFLA Secretary on delegated authority from the NFLA Chair and the NFLA Steering Committee. The submission particularly focuses around the issue of Trident replacement and defence diversification.

b. NET Survey and Trident replacement

According to its website: “(t)he Nuclear Education Trust exists to advance education by promoting the study and understanding of, and research into, arms control and disarmament, defence and security, with an emphasis on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.” (<http://www.nucleareducationtrust.org>)

The final “Main Gate” decision on replacing the existing Trident nuclear weapons system is due to be made by the UK Parliament in 2016. In the interim period the Cabinet Office is responsible for the production of the Trident Alternatives Review, previously led by the former Liberal Democrat Defence Minister Nick Harvey and now by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander. This is due to report in early 2013 on “credible alternatives to a submarine-based deterrent”. The cross-party Trident Commission will also be publishing its report at around the same time. NFLA Briefing 92 provides background on the NFLA’s submission to the Trident Commission and it is also contained in Appendix 1 of this NFLA Policy Briefing.

If Trident were discontinued it is clear that the future of the BAE Barrow shipyard, where the submarines are built, would be in doubt. Barrow hosts one of the largest shipyards in the UK and it remains an important source of local employment. The NET survey is the first stage of a more detailed inquiry into economic alternatives for the Barrow shipyard.

This submission is also undertaken when a number of different strands are taking place in the Trident replacement debate, including:

- Announcement by the Conservative Defence Secretary of State Philip Hammond of substantial investment at the Rolls Royce facility in Derby and at Faslane and Barrow for the initial design stages of Trident replacement.
- The announcement of the Scottish independent referendum in 2014. As the current Scottish Government’s policy is to remove nuclear weapons from Scotland it has become clear that Trident submarines will be a key issue in the 2014 referendum.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES

- A pivotal time in the debate over a new civil nuclear reactor programme in England and Wales and the moves towards construction of a deep-underground radioactive waste repository.
- A planned conference on the potential development of a Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Helsinki, Finland in December 2012. It is not clear whether this conference will take place as planned at this time.
- The establishment through the United Nations Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework of a special conference on the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapons attack. This will be held in Oslo in early 2013.
- Continuing concerns over the development of Iran's nuclear programme and the potential for conflict with Israel, who are concerned that Iran is developing a nuclear weapons capability.
- Continuing tensions with North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.
- The impact of the US Presidential election on US nuclear weapons policy.

Within this context, the NFLA submission to the NET survey is attached below. NET have organised an event to launch this inquiry on December 13th in Westminster. It will be chaired by the former UK Defence Minister Lord Browne and will include speakers such as the local Barrow MP John Woodcock, former Defence Minister Sir Nick Harvey MP and representative from the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). The NFLA Secretary will seek to attend this meeting, hopefully with members of the NFLA Steering Committee.

Nuclear Free Local Authorities Submission to the Nuclear Education Trust –

Trident Alternatives Review and the future of Barrow

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the survey by the Nuclear Education Trust (NET) on the Trident Alternatives Review and the future of the Barrow shipyard and wider employment issues. The NFLA response is generic in nature, given that the key Cabinet Office report on alternatives to a 'like-for-like' Trident replacement programme is not expected to be published until early 2013, when the UK Government may potentially alter its strategy if it sees particular benefits to alternative 'cheaper' options. It also believes there is considerable information on this subject in the public sphere already, and it encourages NET to engage with this literature and its authors.

1. Background on the NFLA

- 1.1 For your information, the NFLA was established in November 1980 (1). Its initial campaign was to call for a nuclear weapons free world. That is still a key part of its terms of reference.
- 1.2 Over its 32 year history it has widened its remit extensively to consider all aspects of nuclear policy – nuclear power generation and nuclear new build, nuclear safety, nuclear emergency planning, radioactive waste management and nuclear decommissioning, alternatives to nuclear power and nuclear weapons non-proliferation. It believes only by practical engagement, within the duties of local government, can it be a sensible voice for its member authorities in the nuclear policy field and sustainable energy and waste alternatives.
- 1.3 NFLA has been heavily involved in the Ministry of Defence's Submarine Decommissioning Project, which is looking for a long-term strategy for dealing with the stock of redundant nuclear powered submarines currently stored at Rosyth in Fife and Devonport in Plymouth. These are similar sites with some of the same issues as Barrow, and to which this submission will refer to (2). NFLA believe it is in NET's interest to engage with the MOD staff involved in this project.

2. NFLA and its association with Mayors for Peace

- 2.1 In the area of nuclear weapons policy the NFLA particularly works closely with the Mayors for Peace (3), an international local authority organisation led by the cities of Hiroshima and

Nagasaki. As of 1st October 2012 the Mayors for Peace had 5,418 members worldwide, effectively representing a worldwide population of around a billion people.

- 2.2 Manchester City Council is a Vice President of Mayors for Peace and Glasgow City Council is an Associate Board Member of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Association. The Mayors for Peace campaigns for a nuclear weapons free world largely through the operation of its main agreed policy - the '2020 Vision' (4). This sets out a roadmap for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and timetable for the reduction and abolition of nuclear weapons. The NFLA strongly supports the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision and, in co-operation with it, lobbies national state delegations at meetings of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Conferences.

3. Existing studies on Trident and defence diversification

- 3.1 NFLA would like to point NET in the direction of a number of excellent summaries that have already been done in this area, which set out strategies that can be developed for diversifying the defence industry into other areas, such as the promotion of renewable energy. The NFLA particularly notes the 2007 report commissioned by CND Scotland and the Scottish Trades Union Congress on the economic and employment consequences for Scotland of cancelling the Trident programme (5). This report goes into some considerable detail into the employment infrastructure for Trident and redeployment of staff into other employment areas. It firmly argues for the development of 'arms conversion' projects to move the workforce on to delivering civil projects, particularly those tackling the effects of climate change and promoting renewable energy. The NFLA supports this report and recommend a similar report could be developed by NET for Barrow and the area of North Lancashire and South Cumbria.

- 3.2 The NFLA also recommends that NET consult the detailed work and analysis on defence diversification conducted by Dr Steve Schofield for CND, BASIC and the Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) (6). Dr Schofield has written in detail about moving the defence sector to civil regeneration projects and the development of renewable energy, specifically in reference to Barrow. NET would benefit considerably from bringing his expertise in to this specific project on Barrow. NFLA supports a recent opinion piece of Dr Schofield on the issue of defence diversification:

"Rather than a failed and potentially costly model, the focus should be on how government can signal fundamental changes in the economy through its own research and development and procurement priorities. Conversion then could be seen both as an investment function and as part of a new security paradigm, releasing scarce resources for new industries that will provide both employment and guaranteed, indigenous sources of energy supply." (7)

- 3.3 NFLA believes the NET study would greatly benefit from Dr Schofield and John Ainslie from CND Scotland sharing their considerable research and expertise in this area with it. The reports they have developed on a number of military sites including Faslane, Coulport, Barrow and Menwith Hill provide much of the way forward in the field of defence diversification.

4. NET's project overview

- 4.1 The NFLA notes the following overview to this particular survey on the Trident Alternatives Review and Barrow:

"In Barrow, and some other UK local economies, there is a high dependence on nuclear weapon defence related industries and the Government's Trident Alternatives Review due to report late this year will determine whether there are:

- credible alternatives to a submarine-based deterrent?

- submarine-based alternatives to the current proposal, e.g. modified Astute using cruise missiles?

- alternative nuclear postures, i.e. non-CASD [continuous at-sea deterrence], which could maintain credibility?

4.2 Our independent survey and research aims to take evidence and listen to a spectrum of views on the economic future for Barrow in the context of the Trident Alternatives Review.”

4.3 The rest of this submission will briefly set out NFLA’s views on such matters.

5. NFLA’s response to the Trident Commission

5.1 Before commenting on some of NET’s queries around Barrow and defence diversification, it is useful to know about the NFLA’s views on Trident replacement and the Trident Alternatives Review. The NFLA have made a separate submission to the Trident Commission – the independent cross-party Parliamentary grouping supported by BASIC (British American Security Information Council) – on its views around Trident replacement. This is attached as Appendix 1 and it is this document that forms the basis of its approach to UK nuclear weapons policy (8).

5.2 This submission outlines NFLA’s full support for the development of a Nuclear Weapons Convention at the United Nations and the encouragement of steady moves towards the reduction and eventual elimination of the UK’s stockpile of nuclear weapons and the parallel end of the Trident submarine programme. As a principle therefore NFLA seeks to see the eventual reduction and elimination of the UK’s nuclear weapon stockpile in as timely a period as is practical and possible.

6. Economic and industrial implications for not choosing a ‘like for like’ Trident programme

6.1 For an area like Barrow, where the BAE shipyard is such a fundamental driver for the local economy, any of the options other than a ‘like for like’ replacement of Trident will mean a potential reduction in the workforce and economic benefits to the area of continuing to build Trident submarines. Even a ‘like for like’ replacement only guarantees a relatively stable amount of employment for around the next 35 years whilst the programme is delivered, leaving longer-term concerns over the level of employment at the Barrow facility. Considerable work would therefore need to be undertaken by central government, local government, development agencies and the private sector whatever decision is taken in the short, medium and longer-term.

6.2 Land, ship or air alternatives to building Trident submarines may be built at other sites than Barrow. They may require some of the specialist staff based at Barrow who design some of the specialist components for such an alternative, but it is likely the shipbuilding staff that would construct new Trident submarines would not be required in the same quantity.

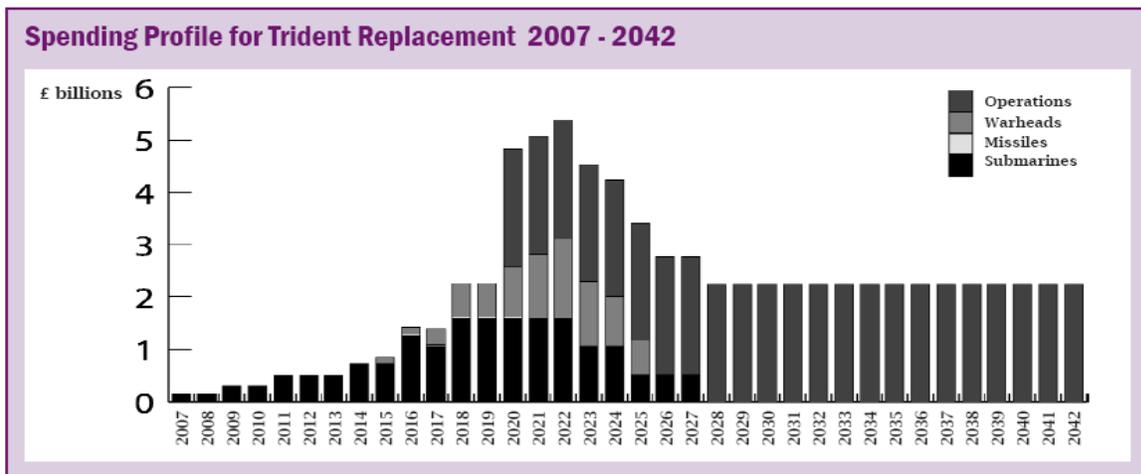
6.3 A modified Astute submarine carrying cruise missiles would give Barrow some hope that submarine building at the site would continue, but it again may not require as much staff as currently works at the shipyard.

6.4 Other alternatives, like moving away from Continuous-at-sea deterrence (CSAD) and reducing the amount of Trident submarines from four to three, as had been mooted by the previous UK Government (9), could also see medium and long-term reductions in BAE Barrow staff in the design area of the facility, though it may mean more regular routine maintenance of Trident submarines would be required, given a smaller number of submarines. However, the current UK Defence Secretary has said that the UK will maintain CSAD ‘for decades to come’ in a recent announcement of £350 million to spend on the design phase for Trident replacement (10). The NFLA would strongly support moving away from CSAD as a positive policy to show that the UK Government is serious in moves towards multilateral disarmament of nuclear weapons.

6.5 At present, the NFLA does not feel in a position to make more detailed comments on these alternatives, and the economic and industrial implications on choosing them, until the UK Government Cabinet Office review is finally published and compares in detail all these options

with keeping the status quo of a 'like for like' Trident replacement. It believes that it may be possible to provide a 'cheaper' alternative to a 'like for like' option. Again though as a principle it wishes to see the eventual phasing-out of Trident and is not particularly in favour of any alternative option unless they are part of a commitment to reduce the UK's nuclear weapon arsenal and move towards the eventual scaling down of its nuclear weapons programme.

- 6.6 The NFLA notes the heavy financial implications of taking any of the four options for Trident replacement will have an impact on the nuclear weapons policy of the next UK Government and the UK Parliaments of 2015–2020 and 2020-2025. A spending profile for Trident replacement for a 'like for like' alternative is clearly going to be the most expensive of the four options and the graph below (11), produced by BASIC (British American Security Information Council), shows the heavy financial commitment to Trident replacement, particularly towards the beginning of the next decade. As MOD spending has already been reduced by over 20% in the lifetime of this Parliament, and the Chancellor has previously said Trident replacement needs to be met within existing MOD budgets, the NFLA would not be particularly surprised if a future Government post-2015 does actively consider one of the cheaper options that the Cabinet Office review may provide, prior to the 'Main Gate' decision on Trident. The extent of the UK's public debt suggests that continuing pressures on the MOD budget may well continue for the next decade or more, meaning political decisions are likely to be a factor in Trident replacement, as much as economic and industrial decisions.



7. MOD figures on jobs and Trident cancellation

- 7.1 The NFLA would point NET to consider the latest publication of figures released by the MOD under the Freedom of Information Act that highlights the amount of jobs directly dependent on Trident at Faslane and Coulport, which has some bearing on the situation at Barrow shipyard and the terms of the political debate over its future. These figures were published in the Sunday Herald (12).
- 7.2 The report noted public statements from Ministers, MSP's and the Parliamentary Scottish Affairs Committee of between 6,000 and 11,000 jobs dependent on Trident in Scotland. The released figures actually suggest just 520 civilian jobs work on the Trident programme at Faslane and Coulport. The NFLA notes the comment of Stephen Boyd, Assistant Secretary of the Scottish TUC, to the release of these figures: "Suggestions that as many as 11,000 jobs would be lost to Scotland if Trident were not replaced are inaccurate...Our study concluded that the reduction in direct and indirect civilian employment across Scotland would be less than 1,800 and that this reduction would not take place until after 2022." (13)

John Ainslie from CND Scotland added: "The loss of 520 posts would be a serious blow to those directly affected, but far more jobs would be created if the same money was spent on anything else. Each year the UK government is spending two billion pounds of our money on nuclear weapons." (14)

- 7.3 The key point to make here is the complexity in determining how many actual jobs there will be in developing a 'like for like' Trident replacement programme and the wider supply chain with the political claims that are made on both sides of the debate. NET needs to actually determine, and independently verify, the jobs on site that would work in Barrow, with the wider supply chain and whether these jobs are actually dependent solely on Trident replacement alone. The widely differing figures noted above are indicative of the political debate around what constitutes specific jobs on Trident replacement.
- 7.4 NFLA reiterates that the study is not simply focused on Barrow but the wider region and the supply chain into the Barrow shipyard. There is a whole raft of interlinking nuclear policy debates taking place in Cumbria to which the jobs impact of Trident replacement is just one. These include the huge amount of nuclear decommissioning that is already taking place at Sellafield and across nearby West Cumbria, the potential development of a deep-underground radioactive waste repository, as well as the jobs potential of developments in renewable energy, microgeneration and energy efficiency that is present in the 'Energy Coast' Cumbria project and across the north west of England (15). How much of the Barrow shipyard workforce is essential to maintaining and working on the Trident submarine programme and are other staff flexible enough to be retrained to work on some of these other job-intensive projects? It may be argued that there is a national need to keep the design team involved in the maintenance and development of the Trident programme, but can the wider construction staff be moved to other areas of job creation? The NFLA argue NET needs to focus its study in this area.
- 7.5 A further factor the NFLA would like to raise is the continuing issues with dealing with redundant nuclear-powered submarines which were constructed at Barrow. An exhaustive decade-long MOD consultation has taken place to determine what to do with 27 redundant submarines currently stored at Rosyth in Fife and Plymouth in Devon (16). The NFLA has been an active participant in the Advisory Group for this project. A final decision on what to do with these submarines is expected to be made by Ministers in 2013. The sensitivity and problems that this lengthy consultation has shown is a clear concern from many groups, like the Nuclear Submarines Forum, that new submarines should not be built to add to the radioactive material legacy that the redundant submarines clearly have. As a matter of principle, NFLA would have considerable sympathy with this view as we exemplify in our similar concerns over a new civil nuclear reactor programme creating new stockpiles of radioactive waste.

8. The location of Barrow and defence diversification

- 8.1 Like many nuclear reactor sites, Barrow is in a relatively isolated area of the country which creates issues of attracting external investment. This has - like West Cumbria, Argyll & Bute, Anglesey and Caithness, to give similar parallel examples - made it over-reliant in the past to the nuclear submarine shipyard site in the town. Like some of these areas, there has already been considerable contraction in the workforce at the Barrow shipyard following previous defence cuts. The workforce has already significantly reduced from 15,500 in 1990 to 5,800 by 1995 (17). By 2007, the current workforce was as low as 3,200 and this has not significantly changed (18). The NFLA would see this decline in staff as indicative of the need to find alternative employment and economic solutions to the area. Even a 'like for like' Trident replacement programme will only guarantee jobs for perhaps another 30 – 40 years, whilst the deep and continuing cuts in the MOD's budget remain a real source of issue as to whether there will be any huge benefits from Barrow remaining so reliant on the military for its employment profile.
- 8.2 As the design team (of around 600) for Trident submarines is embedded in Barrow a hard look has to be taken as to the national interest of retaining such specialist staff, even if it is to ensure the safe maintenance of existing submarines and future decommissioning of redundant submarines. The NFLA believes specific and detailed research needs to be undertaken about the value of retaining the specialist skills set of this team whilst longer-term strategies for nuclear weapon disarmament take place.
- 8.3 Any review of Barrow also needs to consider the wider supply chain to the Trident submarine programme and its flexibility for defence diversification. As noted above with the similar case of

Faslane and Coulport, is Trident at these two Scottish sites simply made up of the 520 staff the MOD note work on the site, or the 11,000 staff that it is claimed work on ancillary suppliers in the wider area? Is it possible that many of the companies in the supply chain have the ability to diversify into different engineering sectors like renewable energy and climate change mitigation – with sufficient support from regional and national agencies? If this is the case, and the NFLA argue this is possible given further detailed research of the Barrow area, it may leave a much smaller number of staff where intensive retraining programmes and regeneration projects can be focused on by local development agencies, along with targeted national and European Union financial support.

- 8.4 It should also be noted that, through the local Council and regional development agencies, with national and European funding, considerable defence diversification in the form of the regeneration of the Barrow and Furness Peninsula has already taken place since defence cuts began to bite in the 1990s. This has been particularly focused around the commencement in 2007 of Barrow's £200 million Dockland regeneration project. Due to be completed by 2020, the project includes a new 'Barrow Marina Village' which will incorporate an £8 million 400-berth marina, 600 houses, restaurants, shops, hotels and a new state of the art bridge across Cavendish Dock. A large watersports centre is also being built. The possible development of a cruise ship terminal in Barrow could allow it to become a hub for the increasing amount of cruise ships stopping in Cumbria as a gateway for tourists to visit the nearby Lake District. (19).

9. An obvious alternative - nuclear decommissioning and renewable energy production

- 9.1 In terms of practical defence diversification projects for Barrow, NFLA recommend that NET use Steve Schofield's detailed 2007 study for BASIC – Oceans of Work: Arms Conversion Revisited' as a blueprint. This highlights the alternative economic opportunities that exist in the Barrow and wider area for a move away from dependence on the shipyard (20).
- 9.2 Dr Schofield's study "...puts the case for arms conversion as integral to a 'national needs' programme of civil research and development and manufacture, including a major investment in offshore renewable energy, for both the security of supply and to help tackle the growing international threat from climate change." (21)
- 9.3 The study goes into considerable detail into a variety of ways by which Barrow is well suited for the development of onshore and offshore wind production, tidal and wave power and energy efficiency demand management projects. Barrow is also close to many nuclear facilities in West Cumbria, particularly Sellafield, and through retraining using the National Skills Academy for Nuclear, there must be scope for many Barrow employees to be available for the consider nuclear decommissioning that is taking place in the area.
- 9.4 The NFLA has conducted its own recent national analysis of how to take forward a wide renewable energy mix, energy efficiency projects and community led microgeneration projects. The report that considers these issues in England gives a whole raft of ways to take these policies forward and the employment and economic benefits that arise from them. As a Local Authorities organisation, the NFLA sees Councils and relevant economic development bodies as playing a critical part in this process. NFLA encourages NET to consider its report as examples of defence diversification projects for large parts of the Barrow workforce. (22)
- 9.5 Notwithstanding this, Barrow is already becoming a significant hub for energy generation and handling. A number of offshore wind farms located off the Barrow coast form one of the highest concentrations of wind turbines in the world, including Walney Wind Farm, currently one of the world's single largest offshore wind farms. (23) There are considerable opportunities for other renewable energy projects where the isolated geography of Barrow may become of a benefit to it, such as in the field of tidal or wave energy production. As a former coal mining area, studies should also take place on its suitability as a location for geothermal energy.
- 9.6 NFLA also recommend NET consider the 'Manifesto for Anglesey' developed recently by the pressure group 'People against Wylfa B'. This gives a good summary of alternative energy

projects, nuclear decommissioning and other employment opportunities instead of building a new nuclear reactor on the island. There are some obvious similarities here with Barrow. (24)

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 NFLA welcomes NET conducting this study at a time when a decision over a 'like for-like' Trident replacement is being considered and more cost effective alternatives being proposed. As a matter of principle the NFLA is opposed to Trident replacement and would see developing such a policy as a positive way the UK Government can contribute to the movement for a nuclear weapons free world and reduce the possibility of further nuclear weapons proliferation.
- 10.2 NFLA is sensitive to the needs and capability of the staff in the Barrow shipyard and believes they have formed previously a national resource which should be appropriately supported into alternative economic and employment areas where transferable skills can be honed down. The core design team's role remains a sensitive national asset and may need to be considered in a slightly different context to ensure any existing maintenance and future decommissioning of Trident can be achieved successfully.
- 10.3 NFLA would be keen to engage with NET as this project develops further. It strongly encourages NET to liaise with defence diversification experts like Dr Steve Schofield. NFLA believes much information on defence diversification in reference to Barrow is already in the public sphere and it should be taken up pro-actively as a positive way forward. By undertaking such projects Barrow could move away from being a centre of the military industrial project to a leading centre for renewable energy, nuclear decommissioning and climate change mitigation technologies. It can only do this with significant local, regional, national and European financial support, particularly in these difficult economic circumstances.

References:

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- (2) Ministry of Defence Submarine Dismantling Project
- (3) Mayors for Peace website – <http://mayorsforpeace.org>
- (4) Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign website – <http://www.2020visioncampaign.org>
- (5) CND Scotland and Scottish TUC –
- (6) Dr Stephen Schofield – 'Oceans of Work: Arms Conversion Revisited', BASIC, January 2007
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- (7) Dr Stephen Schofield, 'Arms Conversion – A policy Without a Purpose', January 2011, New Era Network, <http://www.neweranetwork.info/reports/arms-conversion-%E2%80%93-a-policy-without-a-purpose-dr-stephen-schofield-jan-2011>
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- (9) Julian Borger, The Guardian, March 17th 2009, 'Gordon Brown has put Trident on the Table', <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/mar/17/brown-trident-analysis>
- (10) Guardian 29th Oct 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/oct/29/tories-lib-dems-trident>
- (11) BASIC's latest report on Trident spending can be found in the report by Paul Ingram and Nick Ritchie, 'A crisis in the financing Britain's replacement of Trident?'
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- (12) Rob Edwards, Sunday Herald / Rob Edwards.com, 'Job losses from cancelling Trident 'exaggerated''
<http://www.robedwards.com/2012/10/job-losses-from-cancelling-trident-exaggerated.html>
- (13) ibid
- (14) ibid
- (15) Britain's Energy Coast Cumbria – <http://www.britainsenergycoast.co.uk>
- (16) See reference (2).
- (17) Maggie Mort; Graham Spinardi (2004). "Defence and the decline of UK mechanical engineering – the case of Vickers at Barrow". *Business History* **46** (1): 1–22.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080%2F00076790412332170099>
- (18) See reference (6).
- (19) Discover Barrow & Furness – http://www.barrow.furness.co.uk/barrow_waterfront.asp?ID=W5
- (20) See reference (6).
- (21) See reference (6).

- (22) NFLA Policy Briefing 86 on English energy policy – http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/NFLA_Policy_Briefing_86_England_and_renewable_energy.pdf
- (23) Daily Telegraph, 9th February 2012.
- (24) People against Wylfa B – ‘Manifesto for Mon’, <http://www.stopwylfa.org/>

Appendix 1 - NFLA submission to the Trident Commission on UK nuclear weapon policy

The NFLA submission considers the three main questions requested of groups and individuals that wish to make representations to the Trident Commission.

Q1. Should the UK remain a nuclear weapon state?

For the NFLA the simple answer is ‘No’ for a number of reasons.

a) *Multilateral nuclear disarmament through the ‘2020 Vision’*

The NFLA was established in November 1980, partially to call for a nuclear weapons free world. This was at a time of mounting international concern as the ‘Cold War’ heated up. It is the NFLA’s view that now, over twenty years since the end of the Cold War, the risks of a nuclear weapons attack remains higher than ever, and the concerns over increased nuclear weapons proliferation are becoming ever more pressing. The NFLA is concerned that states like Iran and North Korea are particularly wishing to possess nuclear weapons because they feel directly threatened by the Nuclear Weapons States, and they see possession of such weapons as an effective deterrent preventing an attack on them. By signalling that they apparently intend to retain their weapons indefinitely, states possessing nuclear weapons are providing an incentive for insecure states to develop their own nuclear weapons, with the attendant proliferation risks.

For the past 2 decades, the NFLA has forged a close relationship with the Mayors for Peace. The Mayors for Peace is the largest local government organisation in the world – its 5,092 members represent around a billion citizens in 151 countries. We consider that this is a mandate which indicates that the vast majority of ordinary citizens around the world are opposed to nuclear weapons and wish to see action to eliminate them. The NFLA joins with the Mayors for Peace in its urgent call that all existing nuclear weapons states, and in this case the UK, should move actively and quickly towards a reduction in, and eventual elimination of, nuclear weapons as part of a sensible and structured timetable. In the meantime, it supports the views of a number of like-minded groups like Abolition 2000, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) (4), that the UK Government needs to take partial steps to reduce the weaponry of the UK’s ‘nuclear deterrent’ and foster the ‘good faith’ that is needed to engender the confidence for more effective disarmament steps to take place.

The NFLA works with the Mayors for Peace as it wants to see a global, hard-headed multilateral response for nuclear weapons abolition. The rapid expansion of Mayors for Peace in recent years shows how important local government across the world sees this issue, and it is a practical case-study of international multilateral co-operation that the Trident Commission is encouraged to consider.

The NFLA fully endorses the Mayors for Peace’s ‘Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol’ (5). This seeks to see the development and approval of a Nuclear Weapons Convention at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation (NPT) Treaty Conference in 2015 and full-scale multilateral negotiation for complete abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020 – the 75th anniversary of the first atomic bombings. These deadlines were set at the 2003 Mayors for Peace Executive Conference, held in Manchester, and were realistic targets at the time. However, foot-dragging since then by the Nuclear Weapon States has meant that the likelihood of the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020 has significantly reduced, but this does not mean that the demand for the governments to negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention has become invalid.

We attach a copy of the updated Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol as Annex 1 of this submission. As part of this process, the NFLA also encourages the UK Government to show global leadership and

encourage a Special Disarmament Conference – Hiroshima has offered to be the venue for this – and also to continue to encourage its allies in the Middle East to support the UN Secretary General's programme to organise a conference on the development of a Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in 2012.

The NFLA believe the Protocol and the establishment of such conferences provide effective forums to assist discussion over international nuclear weapons disarmament and it urges the Trident Commission to invite members of the Mayors for Peace (with assistance from the NFLA) to discuss this initiative in greater detail.

The NFLA has been fully involved in lobbying the UK and other Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) for many years to seek reductions and the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons. It met with the UK Government Counter-Proliferation Minister Ivan Lewis and officials prior to the 2010 NPT Review Conference and is keen to meet with Ministers and officials again as the NPT Preparatory Conference process begins again in Vienna in May 2012. It has also initiated a national tour of a photographic exhibition on the extensive damage and the physical and health effects of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings – over 20,000 people have now viewed this exhibition in the UK (6). Thousands more have seen this exhibition around the world. The aim of the A-bomb exhibition is to educate the public on the devastating effects of nuclear weapons and the pressing need for multilateral disarmament discussions. It believes the UK Government should encourage similar educational initiatives.

b) *An 'independent deterrent', other threats and financial costs*

The NFLA remains puzzled as to what the UK's 'independent nuclear deterrent' actually deters the UK from. It has not stopped widespread terrorist attacks killing many people on UK soil, whether due to the earlier campaigns of the IRA or recent 'Al Qaeda' attacks and near misses across our major cities.

In the NFLA's view, other much more pressing threats to the UK include the growing time-bomb of climate change, the worrying developments around concerted cyber attacks and the continuing concerns over an international flu pandemic (7). There is no way that the possession of nuclear weapons protects us from any of these threats, and yet the UK Government still plans to spend billions on them.

Furthermore, if one talks about terrorism, the prospect of terrorist organisations getting their hands on small amounts of the raw nuclear materials to develop a crude 'dirty bomb' type of device is seen by the UK Government as a major threat to our national security, according to its published risk assessment (8). A conventional nuclear deterrent located on Trident submarines would not prevent such an attack in a UK town or city centre.

The financial crisis in the UK economy and the major costs of a Trident replacement should also be a key factor in why the UK should look to end its role as a Nuclear Weapon State. The UK Government has stated that the capital costs of a Trident replacement programme will cost a minimum of £25 billion. Other groups, notably Greenpeace, have suggested this is a major under-estimation and the whole life costs could reach as much as £97 billion (9). The Ministry of Defence is also going through the largest series of cuts in its history, where our conventional forces are being trimmed back wherever practical to do so.

Whatever figure is eventually decided upon for a Trident 'Main gate' decision, can it be economically justified to be spending so much on a deterrent which even senior military figures like Sir Hugh Beach have said is a waste of military resources? (10) In the Chancellor's budget statement of the 29th November the scale of the financial crisis on public spending has become even more alarming. As a local authority organisation which has seen its members have to make the most savage cuts to core services in a generation, the NFLA has to pose the question of what a figure of £25 billion - £97 billion could be better used for in these difficult times.

The NFLA would like to encourage the Trident Commission to consider the research recently published by Malcolm Chalmers for the Royal United Services Institute (11). Chalmers noted that the MOD have currently budgeted for a further 8% cut in its budget to meet the targets set down on it for

the current financial year and to avoid an impending 'budget crisis'. However, Chalmers suggests further problems may occur to the MOD budget if the costs of large-scale military spending on projects like the Trident replacement programme, the 'Joint Strike Fighter' aircraft and the Navy's Type 26 frigate project rise more than is anticipated.

Chalmers notes: "The largest, and politically most difficult, procurement programme over the next two decades will be the construction of a successor to the Trident nuclear deterrent submarines. The MoD is due to spend £7 billion over the decade to 2020 on the initial concept, design and development phases of this project, equivalent to around 11 per cent of the new equipment budget over the decade from 2011/12 to 2020/21".

According to Chalmers, spending on Trident replacement is due to peak in 2021/2 or 2022/3, when it will consume 30% of the MOD's budget, a figure likely to be maintained until deployment of new submarines in, or around, 2028. The Chalmers report argues that, unless defence spending is significantly increased, other military projects will have to fall back sharply to cope with the financial demands of Trident replacement. This may, for example, require a reduction in the number of Type 26 conventional warships if such spending models are adopted. With the continuing stress on the UK military in Afghanistan and other theatres of conflict, the NFLA urges a reconsideration of the Trident replacement programme in reference to the dramatic cuts to the MOD's budget.

c) *The damage to the planet of even a limited nuclear weapons attack*

Considerable recent research has been undertaken on the effects on the planet in the event of a limited nuclear weapons attack. It was presented to the NFLA and to the Mayors for Peace Executive Board at its recent meeting in Granollers by the Mayors for Peace Executive Director, Aaron Tovish (12).

The research puts forward the concept that a limited nuclear weapons attack it would not just have wide scale physical and environmental damage, but it would also lead to catastrophic wider damage on world food production, escalate the negative effects of climate change and affect the state that used the weapons almost as much as the state it had attacked. This shows up the fundamental weakness of the theory of deterrence in a post Cold War world. The NFLA attaches this research as Appendix 2 of this submission. The NFLA encourages the Trident Commission to consider carefully the arguments that have been made in this technical area of the debate over the possession and use of nuclear weapons.

d) *The morality of possessing nuclear weapons*

In reading some of the published submissions to the Trident Commission the NFLA has been aware that those who wish the UK to remain a Nuclear Weapon State do so out of the 'realpolitik' that it is better that we have them than not in an uncertain world. Despite all the arguments that NFLA and other organisations have made above, it is above all the view of the NFLA that possession of nuclear weapons is immoral and unethical and breaks with the judgement of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that use of nuclear weapons would almost certainly be illegal under international law (13). If the use of nuclear weapons is outlawed by international law, then it follows that the threat of using them is also illegal, and as a result the UK should seek to make the moves to being a nuclear weapons free state.

The NFLA also fully supports the Mayor's for Peace's 'Good Faith Challenge'. (13) This seeks to assert the ICJ's advisory opinion that Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) places an obligation on all state parties to achieving nuclear weapons disarmament by adopting negotiations on the principle of 'good faith'. It is the view of the NFLA that developing a new series of Trident-ready nuclear submarines and modernising the UK's nuclear weapons stockpile goes against this principle. The NFLA also support the recent opinion of Judge Mohammed Bedjaoui, who was President of the ICJ from 1994 – 1997, that Trident renewal would be a material breach of NPT obligations, as has been outlined in the appendix of the submission to the Trident Commission by the Baptist Union, the Methodist Church, the Society of Friends and the United Reformed Church (14).

Q2. If it should, is Trident renewal the only or best option that the UK Government can and should pursue?

As outlined above, the NFLA does not believe the UK should remain as a nuclear weapon state but rather develop an international nuclear weapons convention and move towards eventual and complete nuclear weapons disarmament.

All other potential 'alternatives' to Trident renewal fall by the same hurdle of international law and the ultimate aim of the NPT.

However, the NFLA would very much welcome moves by the UK Government to take Trident off a 'Continuous At Sea Deterrence' and reduce the number of Trident submarines from 4 to 3. This would be seen positively in a national and international context as part of a move towards eventual, complete nuclear weapons disarmament (15).

Considering ways to reduce the yield of a nuclear warhead or other alternatives does not again move away from the hurdle of international law.

Q3. What more can and should the UK Government do to more effectively promote global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear security?

The NFLA have noted that in recent years there has been a hugely welcome rise in civil society efforts to promote the aim of global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear security. This can be seen by the rapid expansion of the Mayors for Peace and PNND, the positive work of ICAN, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA); and the recent ground-breaking decision of the governing body of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent to work towards a legally binding agreement to ensure nuclear weapons are never used again and are ultimately eliminated (16).

These civil society groups fully support the initiative of 140 states who advocate the development of a Nuclear Weapons Convention that will provide an international, legally binding agreement to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons (17). The NFLA believe the UK should take a more pro-active role in this debate. It should not only state clearly that it would support the eventual introduction of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and would not block or attempt to delay the commencement of negotiations on such a treaty, it should also encourage the 'P5' states (France, USA, Russia and China) and non-signatories to the NPT like Israel, India and Pakistan to engage with the vast majority of the United Nations and civil society groups on this issue. The NFLA also believes the time to act is now, with real concerns that the reluctance of the P5 and other states to engage in this debate may lead to an increase in nuclear weapons proliferation and a much more unstable world.

The NFLA are disappointed with the development of the UK-French Defence and Security Treaty which commits both states to co-operation on nuclear weapons research through 'Project Teutates' for up to the next 50 years. To the NFLA this goes very much against the 'good faith' principle and indeed it could be reasonably argued is counter to the aims and objectives of the NPT. The UK Government should make it clear that, if international circumstances change and the disarmament climate improves, it would be willing to review its commitment to a 50 year lifespan for the Treaty.

Conversely, the NFLA welcomes the co-operation between the UK and Norway on improving the verification regime for nuclear weapons reduction and encourages this co-operation to prosper. The UK Government has undertaken some good disarmament initiatives in recent years, but these have to be judged against the strong desire to replace the Trident weapons programme and the lack of activity to develop a Nuclear Weapons Convention. Given the UK's leadership role previously in developing international convention on landmines and on chemical and biological weapons, the NFLA strongly encourages the UK Government to lead the P5 much more swiftly to engage on nuclear weapons disarmament.

Finally, the NFLA notes the major ongoing policy debate in Scotland, where Trident submarines are stationed. Opinion polls show higher public support for nuclear weapons disarmament than elsewhere in the UK. A growing coalition including the Scottish Government, the Scottish churches, the Scottish

Trades Union Congress and civil society groups are moving more closely together on this issue (18), and there appears a clear possibility that the presence of Trident submarines could be an issue in a future debate on Scottish independence. A recent speech by the First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond, highlighted how this issue could be brought into such a debate, when he said (19):
“Fiscal responsibility, financial freedom, real economic powers is a legitimate proposal. It could allow control of our own resources, competitive business tax and fair personal taxation. All good, all necessary but not good enough. Trident nuclear missiles would still be on the Clyde, we could still be forced to spill blood in illegal wars, such as Iraq, and we would still be excluded from the councils of Europe and the world.”

The NFLA encourages the UK Government and the Trident Commission to fully engage with the developing debate in Scotland on nuclear weapons.

If the Commission would like members of the NFLA to attend a future hearing, or discuss the possibility of bringing international officers or prominent leading Mayors from the Mayors for Peace to a subsequent hearing, then please contact the NFLA Secretary.

Yours sincerely,
Councillor Brian Goodall
Chair of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

References:

- (1) The terms of reference and all associated work of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities can be found on its website – <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info>.
- (2) See the Mayors for Peace website – <http://mayorsforpeace.org>.
- (3) See the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign website – <http://www.2020visioncampaign.org>.
- (4) At the Mayors for Peace Executive Conference meeting in Granollers, Spain on the 8th – 10th November 2011 it was agreed to strengthen partnerships with like-minded civil society groups.
- (5) The Protocol is attached as Appendix 1.
- (6) The Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb exhibition was formally opened on November 4th 2010 in Manchester. It has now been exhibited in Dundee, Newry, Dundalk, Aberdeen and the Shetland Islands. Plans are in place for it to be exhibited in the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, Rotherham, Glasgow, Leeds, Hull, Oxford and London in 2012.
- (7) UK Government National Security Strategy – A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty. September, 2010. <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/national-security-strategy.pdf>
- (8) *ibid.*
- (9) In the Firing Line, Greenpeace UK, September 2009. <http://greenpeace.org.uk/media/reports/firing-line-hidden-costs-supercarrier-project-and-replacing-trident>
- (10) General Sir Hugh Beach – What Price Nuclear Blackmail? Blackaby Paper, No.9 - <http://abolition2000uk.org/The%20Blackaby%20Papers.htm>
- (11) Professor Malcolm Chalmers, RUSI – Is the UK Defence Budget Crisis Really Over? <http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/RUSIBriefingPaperSept2011.pdf>
- (12) Aaron Tovish’s paper is on the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign website.
- (13) International Court of Justice, The Hague, 1995 – <http://www.icj-cij/docet/files/95/7497.pdf>
- (14) See Mayors for Peace website.
- (15) Submission by the Baptist Union, Methodist Church, Society of Friends & United Reformed Church to the Trident Commission. <http://www.basicint.org/tridentcommission/evidencereceived>
- (16) See ICAN submission to the Trident Commission; *ibid* web reference (14).
- (17) Australian Red Cross, November 2011. <http://www.redcross.org.au/gglobal-red-cross-movement-champions-action-on-nuclear-weapons.aspx>
- (18) See ICAN submission, reference (15).
- (19) Scotland without Nuclear Weapons Report, Scottish Government, November 2009 - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/governmentresponse/Q/Page/2>
- (20) Alex Salmond speech to the SNP Conference, 22nd October 2011, BBC News Online - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-15411188>

Updated Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol – Mayors for Peace’s ‘2020 Vision’

Protocol complementary to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world by the year 2020

Desiring to establish an over-arching means of addressing nuclear disarmament in all its aspects so as to facilitate the fulfillment by States Parties of their obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and with a view to all states fulfilling the nuclear disarmament obligation found by the International Court of Justice in their 1996 advisory opinion on the legality of the use or threat of nuclear weapons;

Considering that continued exploitation of the discriminatory nature of the Treaty, wherein nuclear-weapon States Parties are exempted from the prohibition on the acquisition of nuclear weapons, is incompatible with the pursuit in good faith of nuclear disarmament in all its aspects;

Considering further that full equality under international law must be re-established by the elimination of all nuclear arsenals as agreed in the 1995 Extension Conference decision on “Principles and Objectives”;

Article I

1. The nuclear-weapon States Parties to this Protocol shall cease forthwith:
 - (a) all activities related to the acquisition of nuclear weapon which non-nuclear-weapon States Parties are prohibited from pursuing under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
 - (b) all activities which incorporate nuclear weapons into their military doctrines and practices;

and shall place all nuclear weapons and weapon-usable fissile materials in safe and secure storage at the earliest possible date.

2. All other States Parties to this Protocol possessing weapons-usable fissile material shall take those steps required of the nuclear-weapon States in paragraph 1 which apply to their circumstances.

Article II

1. The States Parties to this Protocol shall pursue in good faith negotiations on achieving nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under the following two main sections:

Section One negotiations will standardize and legally codify the measures taken under Article I, paragraph 1, (a) and (b).

Section Two negotiations will address:

- (c) the elimination of all nuclear weapons and related deployment systems, including delivery vehicles, launch platforms, and command and control systems.
 - (d) the elimination of all infrastructure associated with the acquisition of nuclear-weapon system, including production and testing facilities, and of all weapon-usable fissile material stocks.
2. The negotiations called for in paragraph 1 shall have as their objective a Nuclear Weapons Convention or a comparable Framework Agreement. Negotiations shall begin forthwith and be pursued without interruption by all States Parties until this objective is achieved. A Secretariat for the negotiations shall be established that remains in operation until negotiations are concluded.

3. Every good faith effort shall be made to ensure that all measures related to Section One are agreed and implemented before or by 2015 and that all measures related to Section Two are agreed and implemented before or by 2020.
4. All measures contained or foreseen in the Nuclear Weapons Convention or Framework Agreement shall be subject to strict and effective international control and shall provide for international institutions capable of ensuring that the nuclear-weapon free world which is achieved can be maintained indefinitely.

Article III

Nothing in this Protocol shall be interpreted as diminishing in anyway the non-proliferation obligations of any State Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; including each State's obligation to cooperate in the establishment and operation of the international institutions of Article II, paragraph 4.