

# Christian CND Annual Report November 2016

Our campaigning year divided into two parts: the months leading up to the July vote on Trident, when the emphasis was on persuading Parliament to vote against Renewal and the months since, when we have looked for a different focus. We still have great hopes for the decision to be cancelled. The international campaign, through which 123 nations recently voted to launch negotiations on a ban treaty, will become the aim of much of our work, together with great efforts to change hearts and minds of the population to realise that Trident detracts from the security of the nation. It does not make us safe.

The other item that changed the way we looked at the year ahead was the receiving of a large bequest that will enable us to move forward in ways we could not consider before. We still have to decide the best way we can use this generous gift. Preliminary decisions included the division of the initial bequest into six annual amounts to help with additional staffing and events. Extra money that came in has been used to consider requests for grants for other campaigners who need small amounts of funding to undertake a particular project. We held an EGM on June 6th in Oxford to gather ideas from other CCND members.

## Parliamentary Work

Following the well-attended CCND Nuclear Exits Meeting in the House of Commons last November, we planned another Parliamentary meeting, this time on Nuclear Ethics. It took place on 21st April with speakers, Rev Dr. Sam Wells, Ruth Cadbury, MP, Rebecca Sharkey from ICAN and Seema Malhotra who chaired the meeting.



Emily Thornberry MP wasn't at the meeting but did put in a brief appearance for a photograph

Tim Wallis from Quaker Peace and Social Witness launched the publication of his book, 'The Truth about Trident' and many of us took advantage of the half price

offer to send a copy to our MPs.

On 13th July, we joined the CND Mass Lobby of Parliament. This was preceded by a short liturgy in St Martin-in-the-Fields followed by an hour-long vigil in Parliament Square.



CCND banner in Parliament Square

On 18th July, CCND together with the other Christian Peace organisations, vigiled for 2 hours, displaying placards with Church Statements condemning Trident.

## Work in the Churches

Although Church leaders have made statements opposing the use and possession of nuclear weapons, many ordinary church-goers are not aware of this, and indeed know little about the subject.

We have found a useful way to reach out to church members is by attending their denominational conferences. For a number of years, CCND has had a presence at Anglican Synods and the RC Justice and Peace Conference in Swanwick as well as the Christian Arts Festival, "Greenbelt". This year, we added "Spring Harvest" in Minehead at Easter, a gathering of Evangelical families, where we found a great deal of interest in our campaign. We hope to expand this area of



CCND stall at 'Spring Harvest'

work next year, but will need help from members to do this.



Banner at London Interfaith Meeting

We were also delighted to attend the 2nd London Interfaith Meeting commemorating the 71st Anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at "The Church of the Lord" in South London. We have felt in the past a lack of contact with the Black-led Churches and intend continuing the contacts made.

Some of our Executive were also present at a meeting of Catholic Bishops on 24 May, just before the release of a statement in July from the Catholic Church condemning Trident Renewal. We have also had regular columns and letters published in the religious press.

## Changing Hearts and Minds

Together with QPSW, Christian CND organised a series of three training days on Communication. The intention was to enable participants to spread the disarmament message via personal contact, the traditional media and social media. We were fortunate in obtaining the services of professionals and experts in these fields who led workshops teaching us the skills we needed.

Although the numbers attending were not large, we have produced a pack of material with hints and suggestions

provided by our workshop leaders. We were also represented at the Darlington Northern Friends Peace Board day on communication to learn more about the media as a tool for peace.



## Events and Demonstrations

CCND took part, as usual, in the annual Ash Wednesday Witness at the Ministry of Defence and many of our members came to London for the National "Stop Trident" March and Demonstration on 27th February. The preceding Liturgy at Hinde Street Methodist Church was particularly appreciated.



'No Faith in Trident' service at Hinde Street Methodist Church

As well as the "No Faith in Trident" events in

Parliament Square around the Trident vote, we took part in actions and demonstrations at Burghfield on the Faiths Day on 27th June. On Hiroshima Day, some of us

joined the International Fast at the MOD and we had a display in Tavistock Square during the London Region Annual Commemoration, which this year had an Interfaith theme. Many of our members took part in their own regional events. A vigil was held at Aldermaston to mark the beginning of Advent, immediately after the 2015 AGM which was held at the Burghfield Church Hall.



Prayers in Tavistock Square on Hiroshima Day

CND held their AGM in Manchester on October 22nd this year, where we had a stall and also held a workshop the next day on Campaigning in the Churches.

## International Work

There was no NPT Conference this year, so we did not have an Embassy Walk, usually part of our preparation for this. However, we were represented at the recent Conference on Humanitarian Effects of Nuclear Weapons, and the International Peace Bureau Conference, Berlin.

Our contact and work on publicising the Marshall

Islands lawsuit against the UK, ended disappointingly with the case being thrown out on a technicality, however it gave us a number of opportunities to point out the appalling effects of nuclear weapons, even at the testing stage. Our headline, "Britain in the Dock", attracted press and radio interest.

## Publications and Materials

Three issues of our journal, *Ploughshare* have been produced, containing reports of past events and useful campaigning information. *Ploughshare Plus*, a news update and reminder of forthcoming events, is sent out between the main journals. *No Faith in Trident* window posters were printed for our members. The new and colourful *Trident Mind Map* is proving popular and a set of *Church Statements*, suitable for placards, has also been produced.

We know many of our members continue to work and pray for peace. We apologise that their efforts are not reported here. Please let us know what you have done so that we can be more representative of you all in future.

