

# PEACELINE



Jul-Aug  
2019

Newsletter of London Region CND • Mordechai Vanunu House, 162 Holloway Road  
London N7 8DQ • [info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org) • [www.londoncnd.org](http://www.londoncnd.org) • 020 7607 2302

## Threatening Iran with ‘Obliteration’

President Trump called off the bombing of Iran ‘at the last minute’ on 21 June. But the next day he said war remained “always on the table until we get this solved” because “we’re not going to have Iran have a nuclear weapon”.

Meanwhile he planned to use the economic weapon, saying “Iran right now is an economic mess, they’re going through hell. The sanctions have hit them hard, more sanctions are going to be put on, a lot more”.

Then he returned to threatening war saying “an attack on anything American will be met with great and overwhelming force. In some areas, overwhelming will mean obliteration”. Iranians pointed out that such “obliteration” could only be done with nuclear weapons.

But Trump claimed to offer Iran a ‘way out’ saying “when they agree not to have a nuclear weapon, they’re going to have a wealthy country”.

Throughout the crisis, and for years past, Iran’s leaders have repeated that it “has never pursued and will never pursue nuclear weapons. The Islamic Republic considers the possession of nuclear weapons a grave sin and believes the proliferation of such weapons is senseless, destructive and dangerous”. Its Supreme Leader says eliminating nuclear weapons is an “urgent necessity and a universal demand”; for anyone to use them would be a “great and unforgivable sin”.

Giving life to its words, Iran has repeatedly backed the setting-up of a Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone. It took part in negotiating the nuclear weapons ban treaty and voted for it in 2017. And since 1974 international nuclear inspectors have continuously monitored its nuclear facilities.

With the end of the Cold War and the devastation of Iraq in the Gulf war in 1991, the ‘problem’ of Iran’s nuclear programme was raised.



Among the loudest voices doing that has been Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He warned the Israeli parliament in 1992 that Iran was “3 to 5 years away” from getting a nuclear bomb. He repeated that formulation for years on end. Every time his ‘expiry date’ came and went he simply

## Commemorating the Bombing of Hiroshima

Tuesday 6 August

**Tavistock Square WC1  
and other London venues  
See back page & website**

‘reset the clock’ and began again. 20 years later, in 2012 he told the United Nations General Assembly that if Iran crossed a “clear red line” on his cartoon bomb it would have enough material for a nuclear bomb within a year. For 50 years Israel has been the only state in the Middle East with nuclear weapons. In 1981 it bombed an Iraqi nuclear research reactor. It said this was to prevent Iraq from developing a nuclear bomb. The United Nations Security Council, including the US and Britain, “strongly condemned” the attack “in clear violation of the Charter of the UN and the norms of international conduct” and resolved that Israel should open its nuclear facilities to international inspection and compensate Iraq. For 38 years that resolution has remained in force but has never been implemented.

The international nuclear inspections regime comes out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968. Under it, the 5 ‘official’ nuclear weapons states, including the US and Britain, commit to getting rid of their nuclear weapons. All other signatories agree to be ‘non-nuclear weapons states’ and to negotiate a ‘Safeguards Agreement’ with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) whose in-

**DSEI Arms Fair  
‘No Nuclear’ Day  
4 September  
[www.cnduk.org](http://www.cnduk.org)**

spectors then continuously check their nuclear facilities for compliance.

Iran signed the NPT in 1968. Israel hasn't signed it. The United States is spending \$1.5 trillion on its nuclear weapons modernisation programme. Its deputy defense secretary said "nuclear weapons remain the most important mission we have". Britain has just 'celebrated' 50 years of having nuclear-missile-carrying submarines and is building a new fleet of them to last another 50 years.

The 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences agreed to work for a nuclear weapons-free Middle East. The US, Britain and Russia were to be its guarantors. The 2010 Conference agreed to convene a meeting on it by the end of 2012. The US pulled the plug. A 2016 conference was blocked by the US and Britain. The two 'guarantors' are key to blocking it.

Following the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, US President Bush declared 'War on Terror' targetting all those he said were responsible for the attacks. Then in his January 2002 'Axis of Evil' speech he changed the targets to be states he said were sponsoring terrorism and producing weapons of mass destruction. He named Iraq, Iran and North Korea.

He also greatly expanded the grounds on which he said the US could use force. Every US president since then has declared that 'all options are on the table' in dealing with Iran.

Promoting his Iran policy at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2018 President Trump used almost identical words to those of President Bush in 2002.

In March 2003 the US and Britain invaded and occupied Iraq; it had no weapons of mass destruction.

Iran made major concessions in return for the promise of 'security guarantees' against the threat of attack by the US. It got no such guarantees.

Its case was referred to the United Nations Security Council in what it says were wholly unjustified circumstances. It says that the resolutions passed against it are illegal. It said the

## RIP Jill Barnett 1931 – 2019

For over 40 years Jill and her husband Ray were the lynchpins of Highgate CND - one of the few CND groups that survived the 1970s until absorbed into Haringey CND in the early 2000s.

She took part in the early Aldermaston marches with her three young children.

She was later a member of the

London CND Executive and attended its council meetings and actions until quite recently.

Her other interests were her large family, opera and Italy, foreign travel, teaching English as a foreign language, cooking and eating. She is survived by 3 children, 6 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

'nuclear issue' was only a pretext.

In July 2015 "the most comprehensive inspection and verification regime ever negotiated to monitor a nuclear program" was agreed to be applied to Iran. This was lauded as having 'dealt with the problem' for years to come. By then Iran's economy had suffered serious damage.

The 'deal' didn't have the weight of a treaty and so would be that much easier to tear up.

Iran plugged its heavy-water reactor



with concrete and mothballed most of its centrifuges. It had a stockpile of ten tonnes of low enriched uranium. This was cut by 97%. The global sanctions were briefly lifted. IAEA inspectors have consistently confirmed Iran's compliance with the deal.

Trump came to power in 2017 calling the Iran deal "the worst one ever negotiated" and saying his "number one priority" would be to scrap it. In January 2018 he gave 120 days notice of pulling out. That May he did so.

He appointed as his National Security Advisor John Bolton who said about Iran "only military action...can accomplish what is required". His new secretary of state, Pompeo, set out 12 demands which Iran was clearly meant to reject.

In August the US reimposed curbs on Iran's purchase of dollars and sale of gold. In September it reimposed all sanctions. In November it declared that Iran was to be stopped from exporting any oil. Eight countries were given 6 months to stop importing Iranian oil. The rest had to stop immediately.

That 'waiver' ran out in May. The US commander-in-chief in the region spoke of an 'imminent Iranian threat'. The combined military spending of the 'anti-Iran coalition' of the United States, Saudi Arabia, Israel and their Gulf monarchy allies is 60 times greater than Iran's.

A US aircraft carrier, bombers, surveillance aircraft and missiles were sent. 4 oil tankers were mysteriously damaged. The US blamed Iran.

In June 2 more tankers were damaged. The US blamed Iran and produced a blurred video clip. Trump said "Iran did do it. You saw the boat. It has Iran written all over it." It didn't.

British Foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt said "our starting point is obviously to believe our U.S. allies" - it was "almost certain" Iran was responsible. Britain stood alone beside Trump.

A week later Iran shot down a US spy drone, fished the wreckage out of its waters and lodged a complaint with the United Nations.

Trump said he called off airstrikes with 10 minutes to spare. War on Iran with Britain acting as apologist or cheerleader remains fully on the cards.

**Jim Brann**

# RIP Walter Wolfgang 1923-2019

## 'A man who always spoke truth to power'

London CND stalwart Walter Wolfgang, 95, died peacefully in hospital on 29 May after a brief illness. He was an unwavering opponent of nuclear weapons and war throughout his long life. Walter was active in London Region CND from its inception in the late 1950s and was a committee member until he died. An organiser of the first Aldermaston March, at the time of his death Walter was a Vice President of CND and Stop the War Coalition.

Born in Germany, Walter was sent to London in 1937 to escape Hitler's regime. He remained here all his life, becoming a British citizen in 1948 and joining the Labour Party the same year. He fought the 1959

general election as Labour candidate for the safe Tory seat of Croydon NE, later recalling:

'With the agreement of Croydon NE Labour Party my election address included the case for unilateral nuclear disarmament. We held a public debate on nuclear disarmament and my vote increased by more than the average which I put this down to the fact that some electors who didn't usually vote thought nuclear weapons were one of the main issues.'

Not everyone knew Walter was a devout and practicing Jew. He explained the relationship between his religious and political beliefs to me in a way that many of us can emphasise with:

'I believed there was more to life than that which is visible and came to

understand the spiritual side of human existence through the Hebrew prophets. I was influenced by the idea that a society which doesn't care for the disadvantaged ultimately decays and began to articulate the notion that western civilisation had taken a wrong turn. I believe that western civilisation has yet to be realised.'

A new generation of activists came across Walter for the first time in 2005, when he was manhandled out of Labour Party conference and detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for heckling Foreign Secretary Jack Straw over the Iraq War. Public opinion was outraged and photos of Walter's eviction circled the world.

His own comments on the affair illustrate another side of Walter – a modest man and astute observer of politics: 'I'm not very important and I'm certainly not a celebrity. But I have done a lot of things in my life that are important – considerably more so than getting thrown out of Labour Party conference, which isn't very important at all.'

This debacle brought Walter many opportunities to make his views known – opposing Israeli aggression against Palestinians, supporting refugees and asylum seekers, and warning of the rise of the far right in Europe, as well as promoting nuclear disarmament. After 2016, he never missed an opportunity to support his long-time friend Jeremy Corbyn whom he believed to be the best party leader, and Prime Minister to be, that Labour's ever had.

Walter was a special person and my very special friend. I will always remember him as a man who always spoke truth to power.

**Carol Turner**

## 'A huge loss to the movement'

**J**eremy Corbyn sent the following tribute to be read at Walter's funeral:

I am sorry I cannot be with you today. I am attending the commemorations for D-Day in Normandy. While I am there, I will be thinking about all those who suffered at the hands of Nazism and fascism, but especially Walter and his family, who were put through so much by that ideology of evil.

I first got to know Walter in the 1970s, through the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. I remember chairing meetings of the CND council. Every single council member would speak at length, all on the same topic. When nobody could take any more, I would try and bring the meeting to a close. It was always at that point that Walter would raise his hand to make his contribution.

But you couldn't say 'no' to Walter. You knew that whatever he wanted to say, it would be important and interesting. We loved him for it.

I continued to work with Walter through the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and the Campaign for Non-Alignment, in which Walter played a huge part. I will be eternally grateful for all the support he gave me, particularly at the 2005 General Election, where he spent hours on end fundraising, and telephone canvassing for our campaign in Islington North.

And I will never forget him turning up at my house with a present in hand, the very first visitor after my eldest son Ben was born.

I was so proud to be able to present him with a Labour Party Merit Award at our Annual Conference last Year, where he delivered a televised video message to the conference, emphasising the importance of peace, justice and socialism. He was an inspiring comrade, a brilliant mentor, and a wonderful friend. He is a huge loss to the international labour movement and the peace movement.

My wife Laura and I were among the last people to visit Walter in hospital before he died. He said to me: 'Jeremy, we are going to win aren't we?' I said 'yes', and he smiled. And that is how I will remember him.





# Coming Events

## London CND Events

[www.londoncnd.org](http://www.londoncnd.org) 020 7607 2302  
[info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org)

**Tue Aug 6 • Noon-1pm • London**  
CND's annual Hiroshima Day Ceremony at the commemorative cherry tree in Tavistock Square, WC1. Bring a picnic • Evening event also planned

## Local Group Events

### Bromley Borough

**Sat Aug 3 • Noon • Hiroshima** vigil and ceremony opposite the Churchill Theatre. March round Bromley and laying of flowers on the lake in the Library Gardens • **Fri Aug 9 • 1.30pm • Nagasaki** Day ceremony and vigil + peace picnic with Lewisham & Greenwich and Forest Hill and Sydenham CND groups at Archbishop Tutu Peace Garden, Chinbrook Meadows, Grove Park SE12. • **Sat Aug 10 • Noon • Bromley** CND stall at Bowie Oddity Festival, Croydon Rd Recreation Ground, Beckenham. • **Mon Aug 26 • Noon • Bromley** Peace Council/CND Bank Holiday stall at Bromley Market Square. All events, Contact: Ann Garrett [anncgarrett@yahoo.com](mailto:anncgarrett@yahoo.com);

### Croydon

**Sat Aug 3 • 12.30-1.30pm • Silent** Hiroshima vigil beside the war memorial outside the main library in Croydon. Everyone welcome. Info: Grace, [blath8@gmail.com](mailto:blath8@gmail.com)

### Kingston

**Tue Aug 6 • 8.30pm • Hiroshima** Day commemoration in Canbury Gardens on Kingston river bank. Bring white flowers to cast onto the water in remembrance of those who died, and candles to illuminate the path beside the river. Org. Kingston Peace Council/CND, [gill@gillhurle.plus.com](mailto:gill@gillhurle.plus.com)

### Sutton

**Tue Aug 6 • 7.45pm • Hiroshima** Day Commemoration at Carshalton Ponds SM5 2PZ. Org. Sutton for Peace and Justice. [sutton4peace@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sutton4peace@yahoo.co.uk)

### Wimbledon

**Tue Aug 6 • 8.30pm • Hiroshima** Day candle float on Lake Rushmere, Wimbledon Common. Short ceremony with songs and poems. **Sun Aug 11 • 3pm • Hiroshima/Nagasaki** Commemoration picnic by our Hiroshima cherry tree in Cannizaro Park, Wimbledon common **Every Friday • 6-7pm • Vigil** for Peace at St. Mark's Place, Wimbledon. Has been held for 16 years. Info: Maisie, 020 8001 5167

## Other Events

**Tues Mar 12 • 11am • Christian** CND Embassies Walk; Meet at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Sq. Visit Embassies of nuclear-weapons and non-nuclear states; 3 routes - join for a single visit or the whole route; All faiths and none welcome.

020 7700 4200 [christians@cnduk.org](mailto:christians@cnduk.org)

**Sat Jul 13 • 2.30-5.30pm • Musical** Protest - No More Arms Fairs. ELAAF Musical Protests aim to raise awareness of the arms trade and campaigns for the cancellation of all arms fair at ExCeL and elsewhere. Outside ExCeL, Exhibition Centre. Usually at West Entrance, very near Custom House DLR. Org. by East London Against Arms Fairs, Elaaf.org

**Tue Jul 16 • 6pm • Public** Meeting: "Don't Attack Iran" at Portcullis Ho, opp. Parliament with Laura Pidcock MP, Owen Jones, Abbas Edalat, Lindsey German and Kate Hudson; Org. Stop the War

**Tue Aug 6 • 11am • Hiroshima** Day Pax Christi Stall engaging passers-by in anti-nuclear discussion outside Westminster Cathedral, 42 Francis St SW1. Organised by Pax Christi, 020 8203 4884; [info@paxchristi.org.uk](mailto:info@paxchristi.org.uk)

**Aug 6-9 • Every** year, an International Fast is held from Hiroshima to Nagasaki days. In London the fast will be based in Victoria Embankment Gardens, behind the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall, with vigils on Hiroshima and Nagasaki days, and various forms of peaceful protest in the Whitehall area. Info:

[AngieZelter:reforest@gn.apc.org](mailto:AngieZelter:reforest@gn.apc.org)

**Fri Aug 9 • 6.30pm • Franz** Jägerstätter memorial event in the crypt at Westminster Cathedral, 42 Francis St. All welcome. Organised by Pax Christi. Contact: 020 8203 4884 [info@paxchristi.org.uk](mailto:info@paxchristi.org.uk) • **7.30pm • Peace** walk from the Cathedral to the London Peace Pagoda, followed by a Lantern-Lighting Ceremony at sunset. Organised by London Peace Pagoda. [londonpeacepagoda@gmail.com](mailto:londonpeacepagoda@gmail.com) 020 7228 9620.

**Sep 2-13 • DSEI**, one of the world's largest arms fairs, comes to London every 2 years. This year it runs from Sept. 10th-13th. The week before consists of daily events to try to stop vehicles bringing arms to the fair, and to demonstrate opposition to it. Each day is organised around a different theme: Sept. 2nd: Stop Arming Israel; 3rd: No Faith in War; **4th: No Nuclear (org. by CND)**; 5th: Conference at the Gates; 6th: Climate Justice; 7th: Festival of Resistance; 8th: Borders & Migration; 9th: Quaker vigil. <https://www.facebook.com/events/266188503879185/>

## Regular events

**Every Wed • 6-7pm • Women** in Black silent vigil against militarism & war; Edith Cavell Statue, St Martin's Pl WC2; [wibinfo@gn.apc.org](mailto:wibinfo@gn.apc.org)

**Every Fri • 10am-12.30pm • "No** More Fukushimas" Vigil outside Japanese Embassy, 101-104 Piccadilly. Green Park Tube **1-1.30pm • Vigil** at Tokyo Electric Power Company offices, 14-18 High Holborn (Chancery Lane tube); Info: David 020 7700 2393; [www.kicknuclear.com](http://www.kicknuclear.com)

**1<sup>st</sup> Sun each month • 10.55am • Walk** in Peace; Slow, silent 1-hour walk for peace; Speakers' Corner café, Hyde Park (Marble Arch tube); Clare 020 8755 0353; [beatrice@bmillar.com](mailto:beatrice@bmillar.com)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tues each month • 12.30-1.30pm • Refugee** Vigil in front of the Home Office. Organised by: London Catholic Worker. Contact: 020-8348 8212