



**A Response by Kate Hudson, Chair of CND
to
GSF's Trident Debate of 27th February 2007**

“There is increasing public opposition to the replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons system. Very often, the opposition comes from people who supported nuclear weapons in the past, but now feel they cannot contribute to our security. There are many arguments against nuclear weapons - on moral, legal and financial grounds. There are strong security grounds too - that pursuing new nuclear weapons will put us in greater danger.

Nuclear weapons do not meet our current threats, the chief of which is terrorism. Our arsenal did not prevent the tragedy of 7/7. Nor do we currently face any nuclear superpower threat. So what possible purpose do nuclear weapons serve?

The government argues that we need them 'just in case', because we do not know what future threats we may face. That is true, but we have to recognise that pursuing new nuclear weapons will have consequences: it is not a neutral action, but one which will make the world more, not less, dangerous.

If we decide now to rearm, when we face no threats, this will encourage other nuclear weapons states to do the same, and will lead to a new nuclear arms race.

It will also promote proliferation amongst countries that do not yet have nuclear weapons. If we say we need them for our security, other countries may come to the same conclusion. By our actions we will bring about the increase in nuclear threats and dangers that we most wish to avoid.

It is not enough for the government to fall back on the old argument about 'deterrence' which implies that nuclear weapons will not be used. Our own government, and those of many other nuclear weapons states, has a nuclear first use policy, and would be prepared to use them even against countries without them. This knowledge, taken together with a recent tendency by the US and UK towards pre-emptive wars, can only lead to greater global instability.

We need government policies to actively remove the nuclear threat, not increase it. We need a decision not to replace Trident, and genuine initiatives from the government towards multilateral disarmament – supporting a Nuclear Weapons Convention to ban nuclear weapons would be a good start.”

6th March 2007

end

Kate Hudson is Chair of Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and attended the Debate 'Trident - extend, replace or scrap?', Chaired by Lord Garden, the Liberal Democrat Defence Spokesman in the House of Lords with panellists Frank Field MP (Lab), Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP (Con) and Michael Ancram MP (Con).