Vote YES and Ban the Bomb

The referendum campaign has gone nuclear. Today all British nuclear weapons are based in Scotland. The future of these weapons, called Trident, is a central issue in the independence debate. The vote on 18 September will be an opportunity for Scotland to reject Weapons of Mass Destruction and to set an example to the world.

Independence is the key to Nuclear Disarmament

If Scotland becomes independent then London is likely to scrap Trident, because there is nowhere for it to go.

James Arbuthnot, Tory MP and former chair of the Defence Committee, said the UK should consider unilateral nuclear disarmament if there was a Yes vote. Former Prime Minister John Major said Scottish independence would mean the end of the British nuclear weapons’ programme.

If Scotland votes YES, then we can expect there to be no nuclear weapons in Britain. We have it within our power to set an example to the rest of the world.

Scrap Trident and create jobs

Trident destroys jobs. Far more people would be employed if the money which is wasted on Trident was spent on anything else. In 2012 the Ministry of Defence said that there were 520 jobs at Faslane and Coulport which directly relied on Trident. This is far less than the thousands of jobs which supporters of nuclear weapons claim. The Scottish Government plan to make Faslane a conventional navy base after independence. There would be changes in the jobs required at the base. The reallocation of posts and any decline in numbers could be managed over the 4 year transition period.

Should Scotland be an independent country?

Yes

No

Find out more in our report “No Place for Trident: Scottish Independence and Nuclear Disarmament”. To obtain a copy or to support our campaign, go to banthebomb.org or contact Scottish CND. Promoted by J Ainslie, Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 77 Southpark Ave, Glasgow, G12 8LE. Tel 0141 357 1529. scnd@banthebomb.org Twitter: @ScottishCND Facebook: Scottish CND Printed by Fasprint, 3 Ailsa Road, Irvine, KA12 8LL.

If Scotland votes YES

The Scottish Government have said that all nuclear weapons should be removed within 4 years of independence, ie by 2020. They have also proposed that the constitution of an independent Scotland should include a clause which prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons.
If Scotland votes NO

The UK government will spend £100 billion on nuclear weapons. This means £100 billion less for hospitals, childcare and vital social services. New nuclear-armed submarines will be based in Scotland until 2067. This plan is supported by the Conservative and Labour parties.

**If Scotland votes NO there will be**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>180</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nuclear weapons</td>
<td>Miles from Glasgow</td>
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<td>50 years</td>
<td>costing £100 billion</td>
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Would an independent Scotland allow Trident to stay?

Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon have both made it clear that Trident will not be a bargaining chip. John Swinney said “One of the purposes of independence is to remove nuclear weapons from Scottish land and Scottish waters.” The draft Independence Bill says that the government of an independent Scotland would not allow Trident to remain.

Most people in Scotland are opposed to Trident, as are many organisations, such as churches and trade unions. An independent Scotland is likely to reject nuclear weapons, whoever is in power.

A poll by TNS in March 2013 found that 80% of Scots who expressed a preference were opposed to spending billions on a new nuclear weapon system to replace Trident. A YouGov poll in May 2013 asked whether nuclear weapons should remain, if the rest of the UK wanted to lease Faslane after independence. 50% of Scots were opposed to this and only 35% said the weapons could stay. A poll for the British Attitudes Survey, published in June 2014, asked “Are you in favour or against Britain having its own nuclear weapons?” In Scotland only 37% were in favour while 46% were against. The results of a second question in this poll have been reported in a misleading way. Subsequent media reports that Scots want Trident to stay are not correct.

Would Trident be moved to England if we vote Yes?

It is unlikely that Trident will be moved to England or Wales, if Scotland was independent. Former defence minister Nick Harvey said “relocation would be just about the least favoured option that it would be possible to conjecture”. Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster, former Faslane commander, said that building new facilities in England or Wales would be so difficult that this was almost inconceivable.

Two new bases would be needed - a submarine base to replace Faslane and a nuclear depot to replace Coulport.

The obvious alternative for Faslane is Devonport, currently home to several submarines. But Devonport is in the middle of Plymouth which has a population of 250,000. Submarines carrying Trident missiles are not allowed in Devonport on safety grounds because of the consequences of an explosion. It would be even harder to find an alternative to Coulport. The Scottish Affairs Committee in the House of Commons said replacing Coulport would be “highly problematic, very expensive, and fraught with political difficulties.” An MoD source told the Telegraph “there simply isn’t anywhere else where we can do what we do at Coulport”.

In the 1960s the Ministry of Defence considered basing Polaris at Milford Haven in Wales or Falmouth in Cornwall, rather than in Scotland. Milford Haven was ruled out because of its oil refinery. Falmouth was eliminated because of problems acquiring the necessary land. The arguments against both of these sites are stronger today. Both would be ruled out on safety grounds.

Moving Trident to the US or France is also very unlikely. The Scottish Affairs Committee at Westminster said, “Operations from any base in the USA or France would greatly compromise the independence of the deterrent and there would be significant political and legal obstacles.”