



SNP CND

ROADMAP FOR TRIDENT REMOVAL



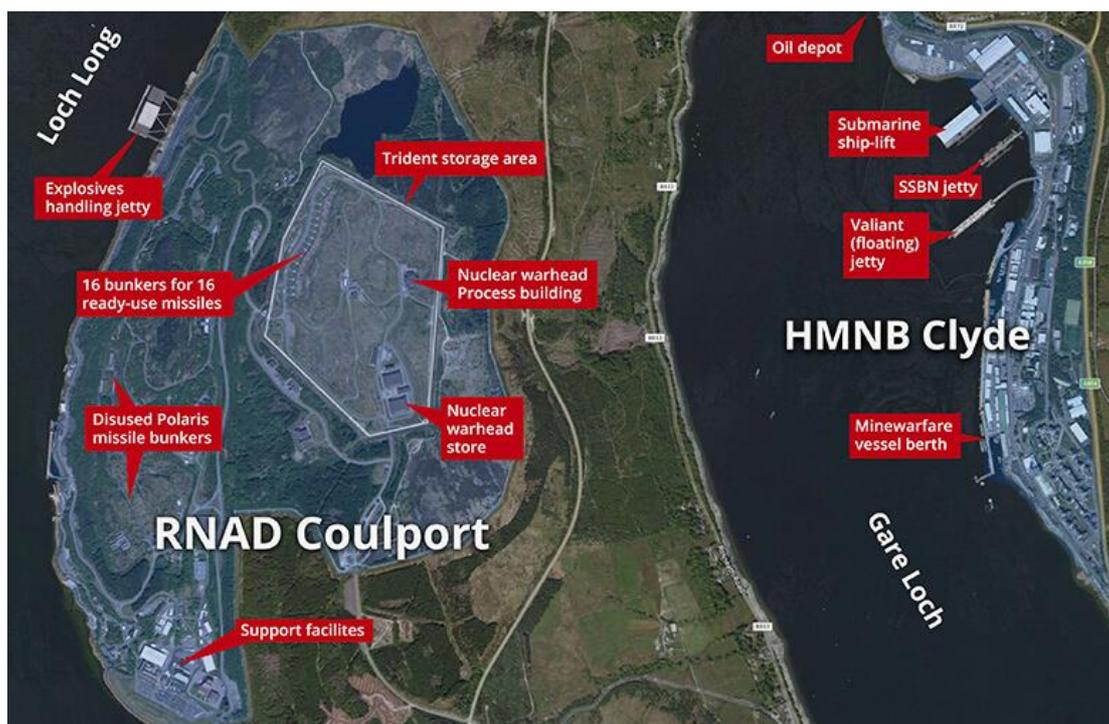
ROADMAP FOR TRIDENT REMOVAL

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Thanks to all our supporters throughout Scotland whose generous donations have made this publication possible.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROADMAP



The development of a roadmap has been the main work stream of SNP CND over the past few months. This position paper is not the final word. SNP CND recognise that it will be fed into the SNP's democratic processes. With the publication of the Trident Removal Road Map it is hoped that more SNP members will choose to join the hundreds who, since 2014, have joined SCND and thereby become involved in developing and promoting our anti-nuclear work generally and the Trident Removal Road Map in particular.

What particularly enthused delegates was the prospect of a detailed roadmap outlining some of the practical steps that take us to Trident removal.

SNP CONFERENCE MOTION "ROADMAP TO NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT"

- Conference welcomes the continued support for nuclear disarmament and, with the impending inevitability of independence, we need to set out a clear timetable for removal of nuclear weapons from Scottish soil and waters.
- Conference believes that we need a practical description of the process and timescale to safely remove nuclear weapons at the very earliest opportunity on Scotland regaining our independence.
- Conference therefore agrees that we should develop a credible road map that has at its end point the removal of the Royal Navy's nuclear armed and nuclear powered submarine fleets from Scottish soil and the repurposing of related support bases on Scottish soil.
- Conference calls on the Scottish Government to work with the STUC to undertake a diversification study that will set out the positive contribution the skilled workers of Faslane and Coulport can make to the Scottish Defence sector free of nuclear weapons.

The roadmap itself is based on two key documents, one Scottish and the other international. SCND's *Disarming Trident: A practical guide to de-activating and dismantling the Scottish-based Trident nuclear weapon system* and the 2017 United

Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons have informed the process. Additional SCND/STUC publications, notably on defence diversification, have informed formulation as well.

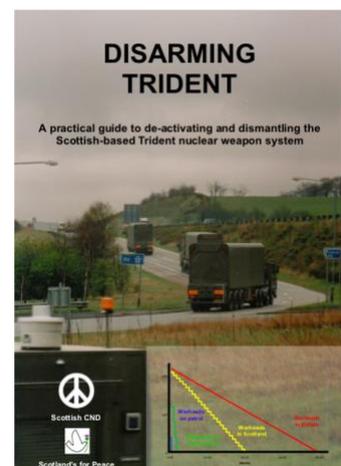
With the death of SCND's co-ordinator, John Ainslie, we lost not only the creator of the iconic Big Sandy puppet, which was a regular sight during the 2014 independence referendum campaigning, we also lost the author of a whole series of peer reviewed reports and articles on nuclear weapons in general and their relationship to Scotland in particular. The technical challenges pertaining to the disarming of Trident were resolved in Ainslie's *Disarming Trident*, published by Scottish CND and freely available on the SCND Web site

It is important to say at the outset that the technical steps which are outlined in Ainslie's work are seen as perfectly credible by a wide range of security experts, even amongst those, and there are some even within the SNP, who may hold to the view that nuclear weapons are "a deterrent". In October 2012 the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee published a report which acknowledged that Scottish independence could lead to nuclear disarmament for Britain and said that the timetable in the *Disarming Trident* report is realistic. The Committee was a cross party committee and they took expert advice from scientists.

TRIDENT REMOVAL: THE KEY STEPS

Ainslie's *Disarming Trident* describes an eight step process. However, the first three, for the purposes of this article, will provide the main focus. They can be achieved relatively swiftly, though as Ainslie pointed out, the whole process including dismantling the warheads, would take four years.

- Step one is ending operational deployment of the four Vanguard Class submarines that carry the Trident missiles. One submarine is always on patrol.
- Step two is removal of the keys and the triggers which would then be secured in a safe place on land.
- Step three is to disable the missiles. If key aspects of the guidance and control system are removed then a targeted launch is impossible. It should be noted that the actual missiles are rented from the US Navy.
- Step four is to remove the nuclear warheads from the submarine. This of course occurs at the moment on a regular basis.
- Step five is the removal of the missiles, another regular occurrence, and would be done in a matter of days.
- Step six is disabling the arming and firing systems of the war heads. That is another existing job.
- Step seven will involve removing the warheads from Scotland and sending them south to the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield.
- Step eight is the dismantling of the warheads at Burghfield.



All eight stages are done from time to time already for maintenance. All the technical stages could use existing infrastructure and personnel.

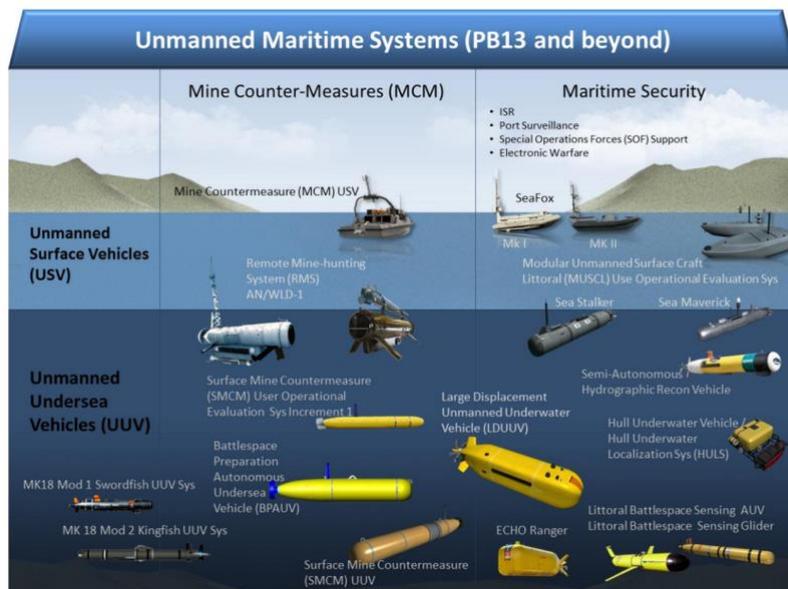
Periodically the missiles are sent back to a US Navy refit facility in Kings Bay, Georgia. Indeed, as Ainslie once said, from time to time a particular Trident missile may spend some of its lifetime on a Vanguard Class Royal Navy submarine and at another time, said missile with the same serial number, may be on a US Navy Ohio class submarine.

THE DEVELOPING CYBER THREAT TO THE SLBM CONCEPT

The facts as outlined above regarding refit and upgrade definitively undermine the supposed “independence” of the supposed “deterrent”.

New developments in cyber technology mean that support for Trident removal and, crucially, non-replacement by the proposed Dreadnought class, should garner support from beyond the anti-nuclear movement and beyond Scotland too.

We can be fairly sure that when the Trident missiles find their way from Kings Bay to Faslane, Britain’s own cyber-warriors will conduct sweeps to ensure that the software has not been hacked and tampered with. It should also be remembered that hacking in the cyber age is something carried out by “friends and allies” as well as potential adversaries. Indeed, a feature of cyber warfare/cyber competition is a blurring of who a potential adversary/competitor/adversary actually is.



Technical advances make it increasingly difficult to hide submarines in the oceans of the world. In relation to Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) this is particularly significant. Indeed, there is already some initial discourse around the “need” to develop a new dimension to international nuclear disarmament and control policy to take

account of these potentially “destabilising” developments. Destabilising in the sense of making the SLBM platforms far easier to detect.

The rationale that underpins the concept of SLBMs in the early days of the Cold War was the difficulty in detecting the submarines that, when all is said and done, are merely mobile launch platforms. This, so the theory goes, made them invulnerable to a first strike.

The advent of relatively cheap cyber technology means that to keep SLBM’s in the nuclear game not only requires the co-operation of the nuclear powers who have SLBM’s, but also other states, including non-nuclear states, particularly of course, coastal states. They will all, we repeat, all, whether nuclear armed or no, have to agree NOT to develop undersea detection technology to ensure the SLBMs concept remains credible. The feasibility of such an ask is highly questionable, particularly when one considers the growing support for the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Early in 2019 anti-arms trade protestors demonstrated against an international undersea warfare conference that took place in Glasgow. At the time we noted that some of the very people who have or will have the ability to make SLBMs obsolete would in all probability been amongst the attendees at that conference! The looming obsolescence of the SLBM concept is something that should be of concern to all in the UK, whether a supporter of Scottish independence or not, whether an opponent of nuclear weapons or a supporter of “the deterrent”.

Bear in mind that hundreds of millions if not billions have already spent/earmarked on the replacement for the current Vanguard class boats. The new Dreadnought class is due to be introduced in the 2020’s with, so it is claimed, an operational lifespan of over 30 years. One has only to consider the great strides in cyber technology over the last decade to consider the detection implications for SLBMs over the next three decades. It is widely accepted that the advent of cyber technology changes the nuclear paradigm, making it less predictable. It is widely accepted that a key feature of any effective nuclear arms control arrangement is predictability.

When applied to the SLBM platform there are other issues that need to be taken into account. During the Cold War a core mission of the Royal Navy was to provide Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) assets, mainly to cover the northern approaches. Surface and air assets dealt with the detection and the nuclear-powered but conventionally armed hunter killer fleet provided much of the firepower.



The Northern Approaches

The technology to develop the detection dimension of an anti-submarine warfare capability is now much greater and much cheaper than during the Cold War. Almost any coastal state with a developed economy could afford to operate a credible detection capability. Additionally, cyber analysts are certain that the multinational info-tech giants who are in the process of developing their own oceanic communication infrastructure nets will, as a matter of course, develop related capabilities for their own use. They will want to detect electronic “patches” put on their own oceanic infrastructures by states who will presumably piggy-back on their infrastructures.

TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

On 7 July 2017 an overwhelming majority of the world’s nations adopted a landmark global agreement to ban nuclear weapons, known officially as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The Treaty was debated at the United Nations headquarters in New York in March, June and July 2017, with the participation of more than 135 nations. It opened for signature on 20 September 2017. It is permanent in nature and will be legally binding on those nations that join it. It will enter into international legal force once 50 nations have signed and ratified it. To date 70 have signed it and 24 have ratified and made it law in their country.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons." Scottish CND is a member of ICAN.



Setsuko Thurlow and Beatrice Fihn of ICAN with the Nobel Peace prize certificate and medal.

With the steadily growing number of states who are signing the Treaty, the Scottish National Party's anti-nuclear policy shifts the SNP decisively from the international diplomatic periphery to the mainstream of the United Nations discourse on nuclear weapons. Moreover, as the TPNW continues to gain widespread international diplomatic momentum, international support for the pro-nuclear position of all of the unionist parties shrinks. Globally the pro-nuclear club's ability to pressure the non-nuclear majority is on the wane.

Needless to say, the TPNW treaty is seen as unwelcome by key members of NATO's nuclear club. Importantly though, in some of the non-nuclear NATO member states the TPNW is gaining support at parliamentary level. Moreover, a key aspect of the terms of the TPNW allows existing nuclear states to become signatories, provided they put in place provisions to eliminate their stockpiles of nuclear weapons. We recognise that more work is required to ensure that the technical dimension of a Trident Removal Road Map is calibrated to fit the requirements of the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Meantime we will address some other factors that will inform the timescale and the politics of how the Removal Road Map is developed.

CURRENT SNP DEFENCE POLICY

Current SNP defence policy sees Faslane as the HQ, though of course, not the only base, of the Scottish Navy. Moreover, it also sees Faslane to be the main administrative hub of the all of Scotland's defence forces. This is an eminently sensible decision that will underpin a distinctive Scottish defence diversification strategy, something we will come to shortly. However, the future, post-independence role of Faslane as a guarantor of Scottish Defence force and infrastructure jobs will be influenced by the timescales of the removal of the Vanguard nuclear armed fleet and the Astute nuclear powered hunter killer fleet. The longer these fleets linger in Faslane the greater the difficulties in developing a distinctive Scottish Defence Force support infrastructure.

Some may argue that NATO membership binds Scotland to these fleets. We contend that this is only true when Scottish NATO membership is perceived as a binary opt in or out option.

In 2013, by the narrowest of margins (15 votes), the SNP Conference changed its policy from non-alignment to membership of NATO. Given the narrowness of the vote and given that an anti-nuclear defence policy is hard wired into SNP thinking, an independent Scotland's NATO membership will be contingent on fairly swift removal of the Vanguard boats and also removal of the Astute fleet. So NATO membership for SNP Defence and Foreign Policy is not a binary choice between membership and non-membership.

In reality the prospect of Scottish membership of NATO should be viewed as a tool akin to the way the prospect/threat of NATO membership is used by other states. We use Finland for illustrative purposes. Non-aligned Finland uses the threat of NATO membership to ensure good neighbourliness by their Russian neighbour. Conversely Finland shows a bit of “diplomatic ankle” to ensure that NATO engages positively with Finland. This type of diplomatic strategy is hardly original. For instance, Elizabethan foreign policy used the prospect, rather than the reality, of a marriage to the Virgin Queen to some effect, at least during Elizabeth’s child bearing years.



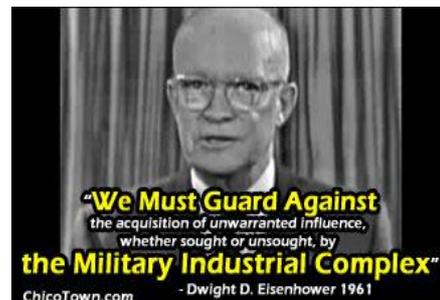
Finnish soldiers taking their military oath.

Finland is proof that the prospect/threat of NATO membership is a credible diplomatic strategy. Of course, perfectly understandably, elements within some Finnish institutions, notably in its armed forces, pine for NATO membership. Not because it will make Finland any more secure than it is today. Rather because it will greatly expand career progression and opportunities for Finland’s defence force officer cadre.

Currently the pinnacle of a career in the Finnish military will be around the “one star” General Officer rank. However, if a small country joins NATO another two levels can be added to that. A feature of NATO membership for its smaller members is many more deployments, including active expeditionary deployments, as well as senior assistant and deputy level staff appointments.

Many in the military and military related academia will inevitably press for an unconditional commitment to NATO membership. This is almost inevitable when seen from an institutional perspective rather than through the proper perspective that is the geopolitical perspective.

There are the career progression issues already mentioned, as well as, of course, Scotland’s own version of the military industrial complex. Although the concept was first widely mooted by President Dwight Eisenhower in an American context, it applies to all modern states who have mature defence force infrastructures. The influence of Scotland defence and security community, though small, almost entirely sees membership of NATO as the unquestioned orthodox position. This is another reason why very little peer reviewed academic work has been published on the overarching issue of the geopolitics of an independent Scotland.



Dwight Eisenhower's warning.

Like other NATO member states Scotland will of course be subject to the influence of what Dwight Eisenhower, the USA second most successful five star general, labelled the military industrial complex. The influence of Scotland’s military officer class will, in common with their NATO compatriots, extend beyond active service and into retirement and links to the arms industry.

Here Norway provides a salutary lesson for an independent Scotland in overblown and unnecessary defence procurement. Sweden, with its mature developed arms industry approached Norway with a proposal to develop a new fourth generation fighter platform, a clear economic win for both countries. Instead Norwegian politicians opted

to go into a partnership to buy over four dozen Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II stealth multirole fighters, the basic model of which comes in at over 130 million dollars each. The F-35 is the most expensive defence procurement scam since the scandals Abraham Lincoln had to thole during the American Civil War, when the defence procurement programme of the North was termed “the land of shoddy”. Of course, with its gargantuan oil fund the Norwegian tax payer hardly noticed the cost.

As was said during the SNP conference NATO debate in 2013, NATO membership should be considered when the last Trident-carrying boat sails down the Clyde. Such a position delivers real diplomatic leverage. It will provide an Independent Scotland real negotiating cards to play. Notwithstanding the very narrow conference decision to seek NATO membership, nothing substantial has changed. In this paper we are not committing to NATO membership nor do we rule out using the prospect of NATO membership as a diplomatic tool. We repeat, non-NATO Finland does exactly that, moreover this was confirmed to us at a recent dinner with a prominent Finnish anti-nuclear activist.

The proposition that a future Scottish Government will seek NATO membership without a roadmap for Trident removal in place is intellectually unsustainable. We have difficulty conceiving of a circumstance where a future leadership of the SNP would risk putting such a proposition to the wider membership, we certainly can't imagine the current leadership doing it.

A NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING TREATY WITH rUK

The safe disposal of the decommissioned submarine hulks has to be an integral part of the Trident Removal Roadmap. The issue of the hulks of past nuclear submarine fleets

Submarine	Location	OSD	Hull age	Status
Dreadnought	Rosyth	1980	58	Defuelled
Conqueror	Devonport	1990	50	Defuelled
Warspite	Devonport	1991	54	Defuelled
Churchill	Rosyth	1991	50	Defuelled
Swiftsure	Rosyth	1991	48	Being dismantled
Courageous	Devonport	1992	49	Defuelled (museum)
Revenge	Rosyth	1992	52	Defuelled
Valiant	Devonport	1994	55	Defuelled
Resolution	Rosyth	1994	53	Defuelled
Repulse	Rosyth	1996	52	Defuelled
Renown	Rosyth	1996	53	Defuelled
Splendid	Devonport	2003	40	Fuelled
Sovereign	Devonport	2006	48	Fuelled
Spartan	Devonport	2006	41	Fuelled
Superb	Devonport	2008	45	Fuelled
Trafalgar	Devonport	2009	38	Fuelled
Sceptre	Devonport	2010	43	Fuelled
Turbulent	Devonport	2012	37	Fuelled
Tireless	Devonport	2014	36	Fuelled
Torbay	Devonport	2017	35	Fuelled
Trenchant	Devonport	2019	32	Active
Talent	Devonport	2021	31	Active
Triumph	Devonport	2023	30	Active

List of nuclear submarine hulks.

as well as the two existing fleets and, if independence remains an aspiration rather than a near future reality, future nuclear submarine fleets as well, cannot be continued to be swept under the carpet.

Some see the issue of the hulks as a diplomatic hostage in relation to Scotland's future relationship with the rUK. This is an inevitable outcome of the lack of thinking around the geopolitics of an independent Scotland. Indeed this is a facet of what is widely referred to as ‘the Scottish cringe’.



Currently there are 12 submarine hulks in England and 7 in Rosyth.

The Rosyth hulks are costing approximately £1m to £4m a year, (MoD figures) to maintain. As they age the costs and dangers rise. If some are to stay in Scotland then a decommissioning strategy will need to be devised. That simple fact is not open to negotiation. Who the decommissioning treaty will be with will be a matter for negotiation. The sensible partner will be the rUK and they will engage as they know that an independent Scottish state will have other potential partners to negotiate with. Moreover, we can be fairly confident that the USA will exert huge pressure to ensure rUK compliance.

A DISTINCTIVE SCOTTISH DEFENCE DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY

The promotion of defence diversification strategies have been a feature of the British Peace Movement particularly its trade union wing. The purpose of these strategies has been to attempt to reassure unions who organise in the defence sector that their members and the communities in which they work and live will have job security. Evidence suggests workers and to some extent some in the communities remain to be convinced.

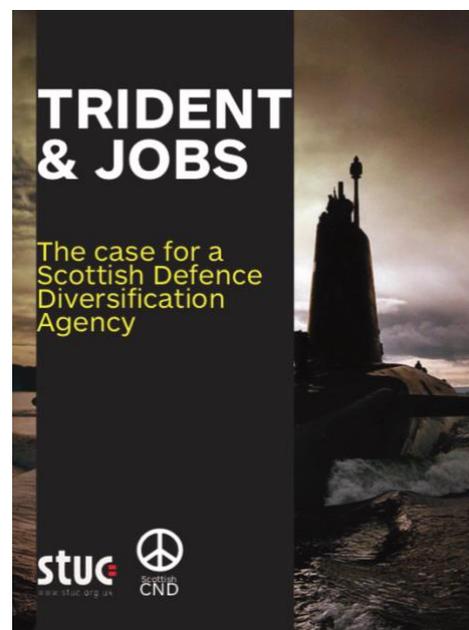
Heretofore defence diversification initiatives tend to follow a familiar pattern: an event to discuss defence diversification is organised around the publication of a defence diversification initiative. The issue fails to garner significant political traction. After a period of time the process is repeated.

One of the key failings so far is that these initiatives attempt to ride two distinct geopolitical horses. There is UK perspective and there is the emerging distinct Scottish perspective. When viewed solely from the perspective of an independent Scotland the defence diversification landscape is transformed.

Put simply, the creation of a Scottish Defence Force, irrespective of its size, will see a significant net increase of jobs in the support infrastructure necessary to maintain Scotland's Naval, Land, and Air capabilities. The only jobs that are really under threat are those that are nuclear technology specific, be they related to the Vanguard or Astute Class submarines. The number of such jobs is generally accepted as in the hundreds, certainly not in the thousands.

This is outlined in some detail in the SCND/STUC papers *Trident, jobs and the UK Economy*, 2010, and in *Trident & Jobs: the case for a Scottish Defence Diversification Agency*, 2015.

When one takes into account the need for the creation of a Scottish Decommissioning Agency, which as explained above, will almost certainly work in partnership with the rUK's Decommissioning Agency, there will be work for those who have nuclear specialisms and others will find work in the greatly expanded conventional defence force infrastructure.



THE ASTUTE CLASS BOATS



Nuclear powered but not nuclear armed Astute

The terms of the motion passed at the SNP conference in April 2019 also now make it clear that SNP policy calls for the removal of the nuclear powered, though conventionally armed, Hunter Killer Fleet which is also based at Faslane. Britain has had a nuclear powered Hunter Killer fleet for some time. Four of the 7 original Trafalgar Class submarines have been decommissioned, along with the earlier Resolution class boats of the Polaris system. However, their successors, the fleet of seven

Astute class boats are based at Faslane too, something that until the passing of the Road Map motion has been overlooked. Indeed, when the Royal Navy decided to make Faslane the base of the current Hunter Killer fleet, the proposal, as is normal with new military base developments was put out to consultation. I'm told that this occurred soon after the SNP became a minority administration in Holyrood in 2007 and had no option other than to "welcome" the move. Notwithstanding, and not surprising when tested at a full conference of SNP delegates, SNP policy now calls for the removal of the Astute class boats too. However, as stated in Ainslie's *Disarming Trident*, at this time a timescale for the removal of the Astutes is a matter for further consideration.

CONCLUSION

This paper has been written as Brexit, indeed possibly a no-deal Brexit, looms. We are seeing the rapid development of a particularly delusional version of British/English national identity. Retention of the Trident totem is an integral part of that grand illusion. The resolution of that illusion is properly a matter of the future rUK when Scotland re-establishes itself as an independent sovereign state. However, the rUK needs to understand that their totem is not Scotland's totem and it will not remain on the Clyde as they struggle to come to terms with it.



Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland, supports the campaign for nuclear disarmament.



SNP CND

If the re-emergence of a sovereign Scottish State is in the DNA of the Scottish National Party then the hugely positive response of the delegates at the 2019 SNP Spring Conference to the Roadmap motion is proof that the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland is in the blood stream of the SNP.

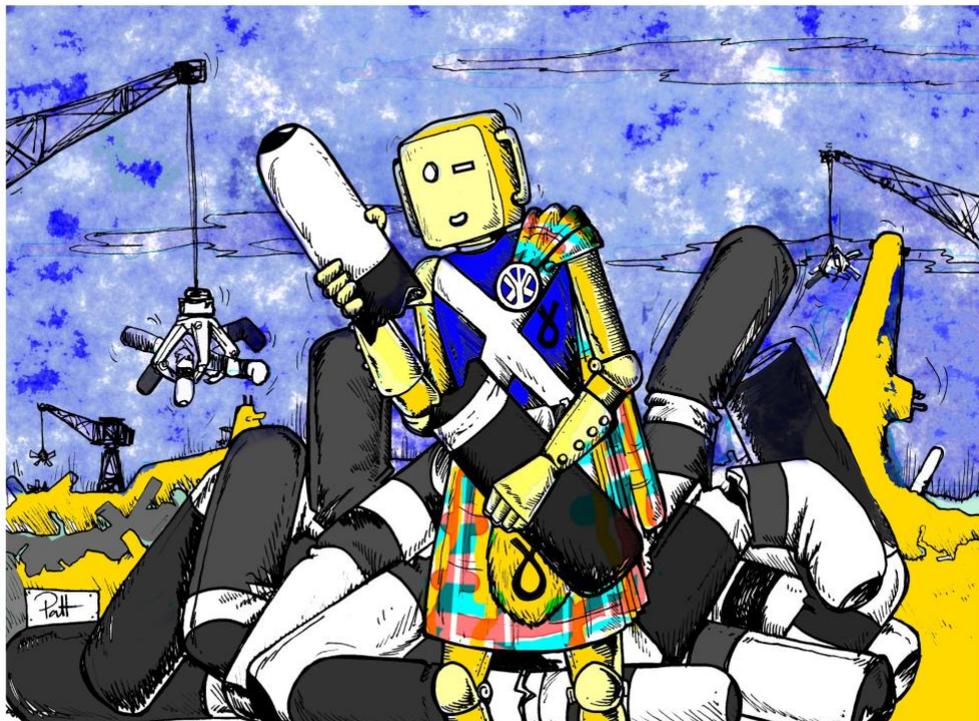
Bill Ramsay

Convener SNP CND

July 2019

NOTE: SNP CND is affiliated to Scottish CND (SCND) and is the forum where SNP members have a space to develop a distinctive Scottish Nationalist anti-nuclear perspective.

Anyone who is a card-carrying member of the Scottish National Party and joins SCND, or anyone who is a member of SCND and subsequently becomes a member of the Scottish National Party can, on request, become a member of SNP CND at no extra cost.



SEND TRIDENT TO THE SCRAP HEAP

Image thanks to @ARTofPatt

