



Quaker Peace
& Social Witness

Action Briefing



TRIDENT: 2016 IS DECISION TIME!

- Parliament will vote in 2016 on whether to continue Trident patrols
- “Main Gate” decision in 2016 on £31 billion of Trident contracts
- The International Court of Justice will rule in 2016 whether to hear case brought by the Marshall Islands against the UK for breach of Non-proliferation Treaty
- Political party and trade union branches across the UK will debate Trident
- Party conferences in 2016 may vote to change policies on Trident
- 2016 elections to Scottish parliament may strengthen opposition to Trident
- UN Working Group will report in 2016 on next steps towards a worldwide ban on all nuclear weapons

IDEAS FOR ACTION - WHAT YOU CAN DO (click for more info)

- [Talk about Trident](#) to your family, friends, colleagues, neighbours...
- Join the '[Trident Letter-Writing Network](#)' for tips and advice on writing
- [Attend a 1-day workshop](#) on 'Having Productive Trident Conversations'
- [Write to your MP, local newspaper](#), trade journal or newsletter
- [Attend the 'Stop Trident' national demonstration](#) on 27th February
 - Help [organise a coach-load](#) to the demo
- Take part in [CND 'Action Days'](#) and/or Lobby of MP Surgeries
- Open the Meeting House to a [public meeting or 'Trident Trialogue'](#)
- Attend the [public meeting](#) on Trident at Friends House, 19th February
- Sign the '[Scrap Trident](#)' petition and collect more signatures
- Join in demonstrations and direct [action at Burghfield](#) atom bomb factory
- Get your local bookshop to host [The Truth About Trident](#) book tour
- [Support young Friends cycling](#) the route nuclear warheads
- [Take Trident to court](#) via Trident Ploughshares 'PICAT' project

FRIENDS, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Get involved: www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/peace/nuclear-disarmament or contact Tim Wallis | timw@quaker.org.uk | 0207 663 1067 | [@DisarmQuaker](https://twitter.com/DisarmQuaker)



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Talking about Trident

The people we are most likely to influence about Trident are those who are closest to us. Most people have not thought about this issue for decades, younger people may not yet have thought about it at all. You may be the only one who can talk about Trident to those who love and care about you. These conversations can be difficult, but they are where we can make our biggest contribution to stopping Trident.

Some pointers to having more productive Trident conversations are below. Try these out with friends and family, adapt them as you see fit, experiment! When you feel ready, try having Trident conversations with MPs or others who are not necessarily starting from a position of respect or willingness to listen. Do not expect people to be converted, but sometimes they may surprise you.

Ten Steps to having more productive Trident Conversations

1. *Prepare* – Do your homework before attempting a difficult conversation like this! You may know in your heart what is right, but to communicate with someone who disagrees we need to understand the arguments we are likely to encounter and be prepared for them.
2. *Open* – How to start a Trident conversation? Having a prop such as a leaflet, briefing or book might help. Perhaps you can refer to a recent news item or make a connection with something you know the other person cares about.
3. *Listen* – No matter how strongly we feel about an issue like this, the most important thing is to listen. No one will listen to you if you are not also listening to them – *really* listening so that they feel heard and you have actually understood where they are coming from.
4. *Affirm* – Listen out for things you can agree on and affirm these at the outset. If you cannot find any points of agreement, you can at least affirm their right to have an opinion on the subject and that their opinion is as valid as any other opinion.
5. *Clarify* and paraphrase – Don't assume they are merely toeing the party line that you have heard many times before. Listen out for nuances and points you can pick up on later. Reflect back to them what you are hearing so they can confirm that you have understood them correctly.
6. *Question* – The best result you can usually hope for in these conversations is to get people to question their own assumptions and beliefs. Where did they hear this or that? Does it sound right to them? Try to get them to think about facts versus opinions and how to do some fact-checking.
7. *Follow* arguments through to their logical conclusion – People often hold views about things which they have not fully thought through. We can help people think about what else must logically be true if what they are saying is true...



8. *Feed* – No one likes to admit we are wrong about something. New information allows us to re-think our existing views without being pushed into the corner of being 'wrong'. What new information can you give them?
9. *Explore* possible alternatives – As well as feeding in new information, we can help people explore ways of looking at something that they may never have thought about. This is a more creative approach and suits some people better than trying to rely on facts and figures.
10. *Summarise* – Ending a Trident conversation can be as difficult as starting one, especially if you still strongly disagree with each other. Is there anything you can now agree upon beyond what you might have identified in the 'affirming' stage (step 2)?

QPSW Workshops: 'Having More Productive Trident Conversations'

Starting in March 2016, QPSW will be offering one-day training workshops around the country for Friends who would like an opportunity to practice the 'ten steps to having more productive Trident conversations'. These workshops will help you feel more confident about having productive Trident conversations. If you would like to host a workshop at your local Meeting, please contact Tim Wallis at the address below. Dates and venues for these workshops will be posted on the BYM website.

Writing to your MP and local press

Most MPs take the views of Quakers seriously. Therefore it may be helpful for you mention that you are a Quaker or attend a Quaker Meeting when you write to your MP. Maybe you can get your local or area meeting to write the letter, or to agree a minute which you can include with your letter.

Letters to local newspapers can reach a surprisingly large number of people and are much easier to get printed than letters to national newspapers. You can also write something for a local newsletter or magazine produced by any group you are involved in to reach another audience. The more you write, the more people will hear the message. Apart from talking with people one-to-one, this is the most important way you can help stop Trident!

Join the Trident Letter-Writing Network

Some Friends have been involved previously with the 'Dialogue Project' or other letter-writing campaigns which tried to engage particular MPs or civil servants on the Trident issue. QPSW is reviving this idea in conjunction with Pax Christi, CND, Nuclear Information Service and Fellowship of Reconciliation. Each week, people in the network receive a short briefing with the latest news or developments relating to Trident and suggestions for what you might want to include in a letter to the editor or to a specific person.

If you would like to join this network, simply send your email address to timw@quaker.org.uk with a request to be added to the list. We will also circulate samples of each other's writings and replies we have received to encourage people and share ways of responding to difficult letters.



Attend the national 'Stop Trident' demonstration in London on Saturday, 27 February

It is not often that we are all needed on the streets to make the biggest impact we possibly can on an issue like this. The 27th of February is one of those times! This demonstration is supported by Quakers in Britain, CND and more than 20 other organisations opposed to Trident. Come and march under the Quaker banner if you wish. We will be part of the 'No Faith in Trident' bloc, alongside Pax Christi, Methodists and other churches and faith groups. The march assembles at Marble Arch tube station at 12 noon and will end with speeches and music in Trafalgar Square.

Prior to the march, at 11am, there will be a brief interfaith service, incorporating some Quaker silent worship plus music and readings from other faiths, at Hine Street Methodist Church. We will then process from there to the assembly point for the start of the march at 12noon by Marble Arch tube station. For Friends arriving only at 12 and wanting to march under the Quaker banner, look out for the 'Quakers for Peace' banner!

Organising coaches and helping with the demonstration

Because QPSW is part of the organising committee for the national demonstration on 27th February, we have been asked to help with lots of practical details. If there is not already a coach bringing people to London from where you are, please contact Anne Schulthess <anne.schulthess@cnduk.org> at CND if you can offer to help organise a coach.

We also need stewards for the march. Quakers make great stewards! If you are able to volunteer your services, please contact timw@quaker.org.uk. Other offers of help on the day or beforehand are welcome. It's all hands on deck for this one!

CND 'action days' and Local MP Lobby

There are many activities being planned in the run-up to the national demonstration on 27 February and beyond. On 6 February, there will be a twitter 'thunderclap' – the previous one reached more than 350,000 people! For details, see <http://cnduk.org/component/k2/item/2307-stop-trident-days-of-action>

Public meetings and 'Trident Trialogues'

We have an important role to play as Quakers in providing a local venue as well as a safe environment for having public conversations about Trident involving those currently in favour, those currently opposed and those who are still undecided. Consider holding a Trident 'Trialogue' at your local Meeting House and specifically inviting people in these three categories to come and discuss Trident in a respectful, open and honest dialogue format that gets away from the traditional argy-bargy of debating.



For more help with running 'Trident Dialogues' or suggested formats, contact timw@quaker.org.uk

London Area Public Meeting 'Stop Trident' – Friday, 19th February, Friends House
6.30-8pm, Large Meeting House, Euston Rd, London: Stop Trident! Public meeting with speakers, presentations and open discussion about latest developments regarding Trident renewal and anti-Trident campaigning. This is one of a series of public meetings around the country in preparation for national demonstration on the 27th. Sponsored by Quakers in Britain, CND, Stop the War Coalition, People's Assembly Against Austerity, Greenpeace, War on Want, CAAT, Pax Christi and other churches and peace organisations.

Confirmed speakers include Diane Abbott, Richard Norton-Taylor, Lindsey German, Bruce Kent and Shelly Asquith. Following the public meeting, there will be a briefing for stewards and other people offering to volunteer their services at the national demonstration.

Other actions and activities

Scrap Trident petition

Sign the petition, get others to sign, collect signatures on your street or town centre. <http://cnduk.org/images/stories/petition2014.pdf>

'Nukes of Hazard'

This is a new project, coordinated by ICAN-UK, to highlight the dangers of nuclear weapons convoys travelling up and down the country on motorways and A roads between Burghfield and Faslane. These convoys roll past towns and cities, next to schools and people's homes. See <http://uk.icanw.org/action/concerns-raised-over-nuclear-safety-issues/>

Wheel Stop Trident

A group of young Friends are organising a cycling demonstration along the route of the nuclear convoys from Burghfield to Faslane. They hope to stop at Meeting Houses along the way to help raise awareness about the dangers of transporting nuclear weapons along our roads. Anyone interested in joining or helping to host them can contact the group via: wheelstoptrident@gmail.com

Public Interest Cases Against Trident (PICAT)

PICAT is a project coordinated by Trident Ploughshares and involves people going to their local magistrates court to charge the Minister of Defence with crimes against humanity committed by Trident. For more information, go to: <http://tridentploughshares.org/picat-a-public-interest-case-against-trident-co-ordinated-by-trident-ploughshares/>



June 2016 – month of direct action at Burghfield atom bomb factory

Different groups around the country will be blockading or doing other activities at Burghfield during June to highlight its role in building the nuclear warheads for Trident. Quakers will be given a specific day in June to make our contribution to this month of action. Any Friends interested in helping to organise this should contact Angie Zelter. More information at:

<http://tridentploughshares.org/june-2016-a-month-of-daily-direct-action-against-trident-renewal-please-join-us/>

Book tour: 'The Truth About Trident'

The Truth About Trident: Making Sense of the Arguments For and Against by Timmon Wallis will be published by Luath Press in association with Quaker Books. Once published (in March or April, 2016), it will provide a handy reference point for all the facts and arguments you will ever need to make the case against Trident....