

VIEWS OF SCOTTISH LABOUR LEADERSHIP CANDIDATES ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS

carried out by the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - banthebomb.org

Summary

Ken Macintosh and Tom Harris say the UK should retain nuclear weapons

Ian Davidson says Trident should be scrapped

Anas Sarwar says the UK should be looking at alternatives to Trident, including a non-nuclear defence policy

Davidson and Sarwar both say the Scottish Labour conference should look at Trident

Lewis Macdonald says the UK should keep Trident as a bargaining counter for disarmament and the issue should be dealt with at the UK Policy Forum.

Johann Lamont did not reply.

CANDIDATES FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY



Johann Lamont MSP

Johann Lamont did not respond to the survey which was sent by post, by email (twice). A message was also left on the answering machine in her office.

Further information:

www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/lobby/MSP2011/lamontjohanna.htm



Ken Macintosh MSP

Thank you for your letter asking for my views on nuclear weapons and on Trident in particular.

I support the Government's announcement to proceed to the initial stages of Trident's renewal. Much as I would prefer a world without nuclear weapons, Britain's independent nuclear deterrent has been at the centre of our peace and security for over half a century and as long as there are other countries with such capability, I believe the UK needs to retain this weapon to protect the Scottish and the British people.

We should indeed aim for a world free of nuclear weapons and I believe that a multilateral process is the best way to achieve that. The nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) has three pillars; non proliferation, disarmament and the right to peacefully use civil nuclear power and I believe that these principles have provided a sound framework around which Labour Party policy has been developed. I also believe that the most robust response to today's threats is for the UK to remain committed to the NPT and to be an active disarmer alongside our allies and other countries with nuclear weapons.

The Government has announced that it will look again at our defence capability and at the financial issues surrounding how we best maintain a credible independent nuclear deterrent. I agree with such a review. We should examine any new evidence on this matter but what is absolutely crucial is that this process is evidence-based and in the interests of national security.

I believe that if there is a different way of maintaining our defences which keeps our country just as secure and costs less then it will certainly be worth looking at.

I hope this is helpful and I would thank you again for writing to me on this important issue.

Best wishes,
Ken

Further information:

www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/lobby/MSP2011/MacKintoshKennith.htm



Tom Harris MP

I believe that the UK should retain an independent nuclear deterrent, while other countries possess nuclear weapons.

I'm proud of Labour's record in Government which led to the UK being widely recognised as one of the most forward-leaning nuclear weapon states in generating momentum for disarmament. It is however a gradual process.

To some, the renewal of Trident may seem a contradictory approach to the UK Government's overall aim on nuclear weapons. Yet, there is no evidence to suggest that unilateral nuclear disarmament by the UK would encourage any other countries, such as North Korea, to abandon their nuclear ambitions, nor would it encourage others to disarm any faster. The issue is how we create the right security environment to act as a catalyst for even greater multilateral nuclear disarmament.

By signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the UK has done more than any other recognised nuclear weapon state to gradually reduce our deterrent.

In the last parliament I signed Early Day Motion 660 'Parliamentary Scrutiny of Trident Replacement'. This requests that the decision to renew Trident should be presented before Parliament for proper scrutiny.

Further information:

<http://www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/lobby/MPs/harrist.htm>

CANDIDATES FOR THE DEPUTY LEADERSHIP OF THE SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY



Anas Sarwar MP

(1) The UK government should cancel their current proposal to renew Trident
Yes / No

I believe the UK Government should look at alternatives to trident including a non-nuclear defence policy and should be actively seeking multi-lateral nuclear disarmament.

(2) The UK government should scrap Trident
Yes / No

I believe that trident is undesirable in a 21st century country and we should be looking at alternatives and supporting others to do the same.

(3) The UK government should support a Nuclear Weapons Convention (a global ban on nuclear weapons)
Yes / No

I agree that the UK government should support a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

(4) The Labour Party should welcome the Trident Alternatives Review being carried out by Defence Minister Nick Harvey MP
Yes / No

The Labour Party should welcome the Trident Alternatives Review.

(5) The Labour Party needs an open and democratic conference discussion on Trident ahead of the next Westminster General Election
Yes / No

Yes, if delegates wish to have a conference debate on Trident then that should absolutely happen.

(6) The Scottish Labour Party needs its own open and democratic conference discussion on Trident ahead of the next Scottish Parliament election
Yes / No

Yes, if delegates to Scottish Conference wish to have a debate on Trident then that should absolutely happen.

Further information:

www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/lobby/MPs/anas%20sarwar.htm



Ian Davidson MP

(1) The UK government should cancel their current proposal to renew Trident

Yes

(2) The UK government should scrap Trident

Yes

(3) The UK government should support a Nuclear Weapons Convention (a global ban on nuclear weapons)

Yes

(4) The Labour Party should welcome the Trident Alternatives Review being carried out by Defence Minister Nick Harvey MP

Yes

(5) The Labour Party needs an open and democratic conference discussion on Trident ahead of the next Westminster General Election

Yes

(6) The Scottish Labour Party needs its own open and democratic conference discussion on Trident ahead of the next Scottish Parliament election

Yes

Statement

I've voted against renewal of Trident when chance given.

Further information:

www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/lobby/MPs/davidsonian.htm



Lewis Macdonald MSP

Thank you for your emails regarding Trident and nuclear disarmament. I am sorry I did not reply sooner, but I hope you were able to hear all the candidates at the very well-attended Glasgow hustings on Monday evening.

While I appreciate your questionnaire schedule is long past, I would offer my general view that Britain should use its nuclear weapons as a bargaining counter to achieve nuclear disarmament, while at the same time continuing to pursue a rigorous policy of preventing further nuclear weapons proliferation.

As far as Labour policy development is concerned, I would like to see a strengthened and more accountable policy forum process, and I believe UK defence policy in general and Trident in particular should be fully considered by party members through the (GB) National Policy Forum in its next policy cycle.

Regards, Lewis Macdonald

Further information:

www.scotland4peace.org/Binthebomb/lobby/MSP2011/macdonaldlewis.htm