

April 1983

CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament] and the General Election

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Summary:

This paper, written by Jon Bloomfield for the CND National Council in April 1983, discussing CND strategy for the general election. He states that 'our intention should be to make peace the number 1 issue in the General Election'.

Credits:

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C.N.D. and the General Election.

Background.

Our intention should be to make peace the number 1, issue in the General Election, with opposition to Cruise and Trident being the central campaigning focus. The three papers by James Hinton, Ian Davison and Alan McKinnon all agree on this. My own belief is that the greater our success in achieving this, the more likely we are to get a positive, overall result. I do not think we should call for tactical voting, but we can say to our regions that their more concentrated efforts should go into marginal constituencies with pro-nuclear bomb M.P.s.

Problem.

Once the election campaign is underway there is a danger that C.N.D. as an organised campaign might be squeezed out of public view. The issue won't be but we might as we are not a party, We must not let this happen. We have to have a clear, simple and visible presence throughout the country. Our election campaign needs a national and local dimension with plenty for members to do.

Suggestions.

1. Visibility and presence. *a house window poster for every member/supporter in the country.

*a mess flyposting in every town and suburb.

*CND groups to organise election forums in every constituency

Aim for these to be the biggest campaign meetings in the election.

*In the last week distribute a peace leaflet in 100 specifically selected seats which have pro Cruise/Trident MPs who are most vulnerable.

2. Nationally. *Organise 30/40 rallies in every sizeable town in Britain (6/8 in London boroughs) with our most well-known speakers and supporters.

*Regular press releases and challenges to the parties.

*A touring bus going to factories and shopping centres and colleges and dole offices as well as visiting marginals.

3. Slogans. I agree with the two part theme. We must emphasise Cruise and Trident. But I'm unhappy about "Don't vote for World War III". It is too exaggerated and apocalyptic. A bit like 'The end is nigh'. Of those on offer 'Stop the Arms Race' is better but can't we say 'Vote for Peace - Stop Cruise Cancel Trident.' It is simple and direct. If this has legal problems perhaps another slogan with peace in it could be suggested.

Overall our intention is to make Cruise, Trident and peace the issue in people's minds above all others as they decide how to vote. The more we achieve this, the fewer people are likely to vote for pro Cruise and Trident candidates.

Jon Bloomfield. April '83.

Nat. Council