

## Labour Concerns Grow over Trident

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Concern is growing among Labour MPs about the Government's possible plans to replace Britain's Trident nuclear submarine system. By mid-December 2005, a total of 56 Labour backbenchers had expressed their doubts in three separate anti-Trident early day motions.<sup>1</sup> As of 28 March 2006, that figure stood at 80.

A majority of these 80 Labour MPs – 52 (up six from the end of last year) – have backed EDM 129 in the name of Alan Simpson, calling on the Government to abandon any plans 'to build a successor to the existing Trident nuclear missile system'. And a total of 32 Labour MPs now support EDM 649 in the name of Jeremy Corbyn (up only one from the end of last year), calling for a public debate on Trident's replacement.

But the real growth in Labour concern over Trident has crystallised around EDM 1113 in the name of David Chaytor, which welcomes the Government's decision to launch a public debate on the future of Britain's nuclear weapons, but calls on it to 'publish a consultation paper setting out the issues' including 'all nuclear and non-nuclear options' as the basis for that public debate. At the end of last year, only 22 Labour MPs had backed Chaytor's EDM. That figure has now nearly trebled to 61 Labour MPs.

These 80 Labour MPs are listed at the end of the paper. Of these, 56 (or 70 per cent) have rebelled so far this Parliament. Twelve are drawn from the new intake of MPs. Five of these – Katy Clark, Sian James, Linda Riordan, Sir Peter Soulsby and Emily Thornberry – have already voted against the Government in this session. The remaining seven – Gordon Banks, Roberta Blackman-Woods, Mary Creagh, Jim Devine, Nia Griffith, Sarah McCarthy-Fry and Jim McGovern – have so far remained loyal to the Government.

Of the remaining 68 Labour MPs, 64 (94 per cent) are already known to the whips as a result of their rebellious behaviour in the 2001-2005 Parliament. Only David Borrow, Laura Moffat and Bill Oiner have been totally loyal so far in this Parliament and in the previous one, while Brian Jenkins was completely loyal from 2001 to 2005, but recently rebelled on the Third Reading of the Health Bill.

A total of 63 Conservatives have now also backed EDM 1113, a huge leap from the mere 13 who had done so by the end of last year. The Tory signatories include such leading lights in the party as Michael Ancram, Michael Gove, Dominic Grieve, David Maclean and Nicholas Soames. Add in the 46 Liberal Democrats, three Plaid Cymru, two SNP, one SDLP and one DUP signatories – and it means that 176 MPs now want the Government to publish a proper consultation paper on Trident.

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\* University of Nottingham. This paper draws on research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. Further details are available from [www.revolts.co.uk](http://www.revolts.co.uk).

<sup>1</sup> Philip Cowley and Mark Stuart, 'War and Peace: Opposition to Trident and Support for Clare Short's PMB', available from [www.revolts.co.uk](http://www.revolts.co.uk) (13 December 2005).

## Labour opponents to Trident

Name of MP	Abandon (EDM 129)	Public debate (EDM 649)	Consultation (EDM 1113)
Abbott, Diane	X	X	x
Austin, John	X		
Banks, Gordon	X	X	x
Begg, Anne			x
Blackman-Woods, Roberta			x
Borrow, David			X
Caton, Martin	X	X	X
Challen, Colin			x
Chaytor, David	X	X	X
Clapham, Michael	X		x
Clark, Katy	X	X	x
Cohen, Harry	X	X	X
Connarty, Michael	x		x
Corbyn, Jeremy	X	X	X
Cousins, Jim			X
Creagh, Mary		X	x
Cryer, Ann	X	X	x
Davidson, Ian			x
Dean, Janet	X	X	x
Devine, Jim	X		x
Dismore, Andrew			X
Donohoe, Brian			x
Dobbin, Jim	X		
Drew, David	X	X	X
Efford, Clive		X	
Etherington, Bill	X	X	x
Fisher, Mark	X		X
Flynn, Paul	X		X
Gerrard, Neil	X	X	
Gibson, Ian	X	X	X
Godsiff, Roger	X	x	x
Griffith, Nia		X	x
Hamilton, David	X		
Hamilton, Fabian	X		
Heyes, David			x
Hopkins, Kelvin	X	X	
Ilsley, Eric			x
Jackson, Glenda	X		X
James, Sian C	x		
Jenkins, Brian			x
Jones, Lynne	X	X	X
Lazarowicz, Mark			x
Lepper, David	X	X	X
Lloyd, Tony	X		x
Marris, Rob			X
Marshall-Andrews, Bob	X		x
McCarthy-Fry, Sarah			x
McDonnell, John	X	X	X
McGovern, Jim		X	

Meacher, Michael			x
Mitchell, Austin	X	X	
Moffat, Laura	X		
Mullin, Chris	X		
Naysmith, Doug			x
O'Hara, Edward			x
O'ner, Bill			x
Owen, Albert	X	X	
Prentice, Gordon	x		X
Riordan, Linda	X	X	X
Ruddock, Joan	X		X
Sarwar, Mohammad		X	
Short, Clare	X		x
Simpson, Alan	X	X	x
Singh, Marsha	x		
Skinner, Dennis	X	X	
Smith, Geraldine	X		
Soulsby, Peter	X		x
Strang, Gavin	x		x
Stringer, Graham	X		X
Taylor, David	X	X	
Thornberry, Emily			x
Truswell, Paul			x
Turner, Desmond			x
Vaz, Keith			x
Vis, Rudi	X	X	X
Walley, Joan	X	X	x
Wareing, Robert	X	X	X
Williams, Betty	x		x
Wood, Mike	X		
Wright, Tony			x

*Note:* X indicates an MP who had signed the EDM by mid-December; x indicates an MP who has signed since mid-December.