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Put an end to 'the refusal of consciousness'

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Mary Kaldor, the British spécialist on military policy, is a historical leader of European Nuclear Disarmament (END). Recently, Kaldor published the essay « Dismantling the Global Nuclear infrastructure » at *openDemocracy.net.* Mikael Böök (Finland) comments.

Consider prof. Kaldor's viewpoint:

*"The problem with arms control proposals is that they treat nuclear weapons as though they were part of the normal armoury of states - they naturalise nuclear weapons. And yet we cannot ascend to the top of the mountain without changing those fundamental assumptions and without rethinking the implications of possessing nuclear weapons in to-day's globalised world."***[1]**

The link between nuclear weapons and great power status can be broken in Europe, by the peoples of Europe. We need a pro-European movement for European Nuclear Disarmament. Pro-European means being in favour of establishing a democratic European state - a real European Union.
Some of the so called fathers of the European Union envisaged such a state, among them Altiero Spinelli and others in the Manifesto of Ventotene (1941) and in the Treaty Establishing the European Union (approved by a great majority in the European Parliament in February 1984, but scrapped by Mrs Thatcher &Co). Mary Kaldor, with her vision of European Nuclear Disarmament, might one day be called a mother of the EU, if we manage to turn the denuclearization into the constitutional issue it deserves to be.

In short: The criminalization of nuclear weapons needs to be inscribed in the basic treaty (the constitution) of the EU. Henceforward, this new great power, the EU, should be identified by its denuclearization.

We should occupy ourselves with things that can be changed. Nuclear weapons definitely belong to this category. Abolishing them is a concrete and limited goal, dependent on our will. It is certainly more difficult to take control over the earth's climate to change it in a certain direction, than to deconstruct the nuclear weapons area by area, starting here in Europe. (It is our duty to get rid of our nuclear weapons, anyway, because it is a prerequisite of the good life.)

Besides, it is contradictory and hypocritical to order new nuclear missiles and invest billions in missile defense**[2]** on the one hand, and to pretend to tackle the climate crisis, on the other hand. It is a terrible example of what has aptly been called ' refusal of consciousness'. The party is over, as a wise person wrote about the general situation already in 1975. In 2009 it is already too late to say so, because by now now even the orgies of the Nachspiel**[3]** have come to their end.

What can be done now, at this moment?

1. The Lisbon Treaty does not criminalize the new French M51-missiles with their new 'oceanic' nuclear warheads; nor does it forbid the British Trident modernization program. It breaks no link between nuclear weapons and the great power status, nor does it decouple the EU from the nuclear weapons of the USA,or the nuclear strategy of NATO. Therefore, European citizens should support the NO to Lisbon Campaign of the Irish Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA).

2. Another thing to do is to see to it that the issue of the European (and not only the North East Asian, or Middle East) nuclear free zone is on the agenda, in the public consciousness, at least, when the leaders of the security council

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member states will be discussing the nuclear issues, at the request of president Obama, on 24 September. **[4]**

"We need a new generation of politicians, diplomats and citizens who fully understand what has happened in today's world, where nuclear weapons are fast becoming a metaphor for military power in general." Again, Mary Kaldor hits the nail on the head. Hopefully her words come through to my foreign minister, young Alexander Stubb. Greetings from Finland.

Added 6 September: It is necessary to strive towards a Nuclear Weapons Convention **[5]** However, I do not believe that the process of nuclear disarmament will ever start with an NWC. An NWC will, hopefully, come in the middle of the process, and will enhance the pressure on states which risk to be the sole nuclear states left on the globe. (It is considered, for instance, that Israel does not support a NWC.)

Thus I am not trying to say that those who work towards a NWC are mistaken or misguided, but I continue to maintain the view that general nuclear abolition must start to happen somewhere, to begin with, and then spread from there to other places. That 'somewhere', for us who live in Europe, must be our country and ourselves. We also need to understand that European Nuclear Disarmament and European Union presuppose each other.

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[1] Cf Mary Kaldor : *Dismantling the Global Nuclear infrastructure,* in openDemocracy News Analysis, August 7, 2009 .

[2] *"Missile defence is the biggest pork barrel of all, the magic pudding which won't run out however much you eat. The funds channelled to defence, aerospace and other manufacturing and service companies will never run dry because the system will never work."* Cf. George Monbiot's column "The Magic Pudding" , August 19, 2008..

[3] *"Nachspiel"* is a German term used to describe the harmful consequences of an act or a conflict. In Swedish, which is the mother tongue of the author of these lines, the imported term is often used in another sense. It means a 'party after the party" of people who do not return home after the bars closed. Instead, they go to one of them to finish the evening by drinking bad alcohol, left over from the evening, and leading a rowdy nightlife. According to the Urbandictionary.com, the word "Nachspiel" may also have this connotation of 'party after the party' in English.

[4] Cf. Deen, Thalif : Obama to Bolster Nuclear Disarmament at U.N., Inter Press Service (IPS), August 12 2009

[5] A model NWC is available in all official UN languages, there.

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