

Green Party calls for new vision for armed forces in response to defence review



22 March 2021

- **Calls for refocusing on promoting peace and protecting people and places from the effects of climate change**

The Green Party has criticised the government's plans to focus the defence review away from the needs of citizens and towards robots, drones, and cyber warfare [1], warning the armed forces should instead be used to promote peace and defend people and places from the effects of climate chaos.

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley has criticised the rationale of both last week's integrated review [2] and the defence review today as being posturing about the power of Global Britain rather than a practical plan to make British people safer.

Bartley said:

"We utterly oppose the decision to encourage a global nuclear arms race by increasing the cap on our warheads. This is a ploy to defend our seat on the UN Security Council but is no substitute for the geopolitical security we had as part of the strong European bloc.

"We continue to insist that the government lives up to its legal obligation to prevent proliferation by signing up to the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons."

Bartley also argued for a new purpose for our armed forces, that have performed such an important national role during the pandemic.

"The armed forces have played a crucial logistical role in the pandemic and we are likely to need them in similar roles as climate change threatens more intense weather events.

"It is flesh-and-blood servicepeople who have supported Covid testing and who we will need to provide national resilience as the climate crisis intensifies. Cyber soldiers are no substitute for real soldiers and killer drones are a dangerous development that distances us from the moral responsibility for taking a human life.

"Greens would use our armed services to make peace not war. We would rename the Ministry of Defence as the Ministry for Security and Peace, making the promotion of peace a key foreign policy objective and linking the role of the defence services more closely to the crises that actually threaten global security.

“A central part of their responsibilities would be the defence of people across the world from the effects of climate chaos and dealing with the humanitarian and environmental impacts of climate-related disasters.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-56477900>

2

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/969402/The_Integrated_Review_of_Security_Defence_Development_and_Foreign_Policy.pdf

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