

Peace and defence

Real security for the 21st Century

We live in an era of massive military spending, yet the world seems increasingly insecure. Britain and the USA claim to be leading an international 'war on terror' but they have succeeded only in creating more fear and hatred, both at home and in the world at large.

Our existing 'defence' policy is making the world more dangerous by inciting violence and propping up oppressive regimes. Yet British taxpayers subsidise the international arms trade by almost £1 billion a year and annual British arms exports are the second largest in the world.

The first objective of all government policy should be to provide real, sustainable human security. But this cannot be achieved through military aggression.

Instead we must focus on the real underlying causes of insecurity that exist in the world, working to reduce poverty and increase trust between peoples.

The Green Party would:

- ensure that the British military is only used in self-defence or, as a last resort, within an international UN-led policing force.
- reform the military to promote real human security, by focusing on defence not aggression and specialising in crisis prevention, emergency relief and conflict resolution.
- seek binding global agreements against all weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.
- dismantle the UK's own nuclear, biological and chemical 'WMD' capability, and outlaw the use of indiscriminate weaponry such as mines, cluster bombs or 'booby trap' devices.
- end all export subsidies and increase controls on UK arms sales, especially to governments who violate human rights.

Was it right to go to war against Iraq?

No. The war on Iraq was illegal and immoral. It seriously undermined international law and has revived a dangerous global order based on military aggression.

But surely we should take a stand against brutal dictators?

Yes, but the war on Iraq was not in any real sense 'humanitarian', with thousands having been killed and no viable post-war peace plan established. Britain also supports other violent and unjust regimes. Dictators must be dealt with multilaterally in line with international law.

But is it realistic to rely on the UN?

It can be. The UN has been undermined for decades by powerful governments. Instead, Britain should support the UN in upholding international law and developing the capacity to respond effectively to global threats.

How would the Greens fight terrorism?

Democratic societies need to protect themselves against those who seek to use terror and violence against them. The police and intelligence services should therefore be well resourced and given sufficient freedom to operate. However, counter-terrorist measures should not

undermine the very principles of accountability and justice on which democratic societies are founded. We therefore oppose the use of arbitrary arrest or imprisonment and deplore the manipulation of fears about militant Islam to promote racist agendas, push through repressive policies, or justify wasteful defence spending.

Would you cut military expenditure?

Yes. The defence budget needs to be adequate to ensure security, but not more so. This means dismantling our nuclear weapons, reducing our forces and cutting subsidies to the arms industry. However, British forces should be well equipped for policing and defensive operations.

Won't getting rid of nuclear weapons leave us vulnerable to attack?

No. Nuclear weapons simply increase the stakes without deterring the terrorists or 'rogue' dictators that might seek to attack us. With the Cold War over, we should be working towards a less aggressive balance of power in the world. Nuclear disarmament is an essential first step.

To join the Green Party visit:
www.greenparty.org.uk/join

Find other policy information at policy.greenparty.org.uk
1a Waterlow Road, London. N19 5NJ. Telephone: 020 7272 4474