



Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases

No. 61 Winter 2017

Raising public awareness, scrutiny and accountability of US Visiting Forces and their Agencies in the UK and world-wide

Brief look at local, national and international news:

Dear friends

We apologise for the late arrival of this newsletter at such a very important time.

AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TIME

The new president of the USA has said, in a statement on the White House website on his first day in office, that he intends to develop a “state of the art” missile defense system to protect against attacks from Iran and North Korea - although he has not gone into detail about this proposed new system. Under a plan entitled ‘Making our Military strong again’ he has also stated he intends to increase spending on the US army, navy and air force. He previously proposed cutbacks in US NATO military spending while calling for increased military spending from other NATO countries. (On his first full day in office, however, US defence secretary James Mattis “emphasized the United States’ unshakeable commitment to NATO”.)

On a similarly warlike note, White House press secretary, Sean Spicer, reinforced, on 23 January 2017, the message of Rex Tillerson, the new US secretary of state, who told his confirmation hearing the White House needed to send China a “clear signal” that its access to disputed territories in the South China Sea was “not going to be allowed”.

This is deeply concerning for us in Europe, as we are told to expect, for example, a new US Air Force base to replace Mildenhall and host the US and UK Boeing RC-135s, reconnaissance aircraft

designed to execute intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operations.¹ It is also deeply concerning for those already challenging the impacts of US bases elsewhere, for example, in Okinawa, Japan, where an anti-base activist has been detained for three months on relatively minor charges and on Jeju island, South Korea, where the US military have built a base to be used in its strategy to contain China in the Asia-Pacific through aggressive US missile defense system equipped destroyers. Protesters express their concerns, as we do, that the bases make their countries first targets as well as destroying fragile eco-systems. They do not want their lands to be used in future wars.²

¹ US looks to joint RC-135 base with the UK’, Tim Ripley, *IHS Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 19 January 2017
<http://www.janes.com/article/67072/us-looks-to-joint-rc-135-base-with-the-uk>

² Look at the website of Save Jeju Now: No War Base on the Island of Peace, <http://savejejunow.org/about/>

Or contact us for a copy of their newsletter.

HERE IN CAAB

Here in CAAB we feel the need to maintain focus at this important time and to have some criteria for saying that there is credibility in what we put into the public domain. We have decided that we need to adopt a more formal constitution, allowing us to decide more effectively what we are doing and who is doing it.

It is impossible to produce a newsletter of 8 pages giving anything but a taste of the huge and complex issues to do with US hegemony, US military policy and the US military industrial complex. For more information or references, go the CAAB website at www.caab.org.uk or contact us (details for how to do this on p. 8).

NEXT MEETING**Saturday 1 April 12:30-4:40 pm****Carlton Hill Meeting House, Leeds****starting with Bring and Share lunch**

- to agree a final draft of the constitution and to elect officers.

Come along and/or contribute
your ideas in writing.

Keep in touch!

To this end, we met on 14 January at Carlton Hill Meeting House in Leeds and agreed a draft of a constitution, to include a clear and specific statement of our purpose and a re-statement of our commitment to non-violence.

Our next meeting is on Saturday 1 April 12:30-4:40 pm at Carlton Hill Meeting House, starting with a Bring and Share lunch. We aim to agree a final draft of the constitution and to elect officers. You are very welcome to come along and to contribute your ideas.

Very important information about the US bases in the UK has been put into the public domain since our last newsletter. In particular, the article 'Inside Menwith Hill: The NSA's British Base at the Heart of U.S. Targeted Killing' (Ryan Gallagher, *The Intercept*, 6 September 2016) has links to and analysis of documents proving NSA/NRO Menwith Hill's role in illegal targeted killing. Along with other news, we present extracts from some of these important resources. Please contact us for full paper copies.

CAAB hopes to run a stall at Otley Green Fair on 22 April from 10am to 4pm with newsletters, information and items to sell. Entry to the Fair is free and all are welcome!

HARROGATE MAGISTRATES COURT: R V LINDIS PERCY

We described in previous newsletters (Nos 59 Spring 2016 and 60 Summer 2016) how Lindis Percy was arrested under section 35 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 - use of Dispersal Powers - on 8 March 2016 at the weekly Tuesday pm demonstration at NSA/NRO Menwith Hill (started in 2000 and in its seventeenth year in July). She was demonstrating in the way previously agreed with North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and the Ministry

of Defence Police (MDP) and implemented over the previous two years. She was later charged and bail conditions were imposed.

This was the first time this law had been used by the NYP and the MDP at Menwith Hill and represented a betrayal of the trust built up over the previous three years, following eight years of struggle to maintain the 'right to protest'.

Although the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act has a clause which allows peaceful assembly, the use of Dispersal Powers at Menwith Hill could have serious implications for the policing of other demonstrations. It was important to bring this to court to rule on whether the MDP could use Dispersal Orders. It was also abundantly clear to Lindis from the start that the officers did not know what they were doing and erred many times in law.

Lindis defended herself. Throughout the lead up to the trial (14 September 2016) the Crown Prosecution Service caused many delays by ignoring Directions by the Magistrates to disclose documents and CCTV - see our last newsletter (No. 60, Summer 2016) for more details. CCTV of both incidents was not forthcoming despite many requests and three applications by Lindis for an Intervention hearing. The CCTV recordings were finally produced on the first day of the trial but heavily edited and not dated or timed.

It was abundantly clear who was in charge of this case - the 'third party' (the American authorities): Brandon Halstead (the US Judge Advocate from Menwith Hill) appeared at several hearings, instructing Beth Richardson (the Crown Prosecutor), and the magistrates allowed this. At trial he sat behind her.

Lindis made an application for the CCTV to be produced in a credible format and for Brandon Halstead to be cross examined in the witness box about the CCTV. He said he could not appear in the witness box as he had to have permission from the US authorities. He was in total charge of the CCTV. The Magistrates refused the application but did allow Lindis to ask him questions where he was sitting. There were no MDP officers in court. Lindis had requested at the first hearing in April and on the day of the trial that the case be heard by a District Judge as there were complex points of law to be argued. This was denied.

The case ended a day early on a point of law. The result was that the Magistrates agreed on a simple point of law, argued by Lindis. Beth Richardson offered no evidence and Lindis Percy was awarded costs.

The case established that the MDP cannot use Dispersal Orders again – at least at Menwith Hill. This was because the Magistrates ruled that the area where the Tuesday demonstration takes place was private land and DOs can only be used in a public space. Lindis had argued that the land in question had restrictions – the RAF Menwith Hill Byelaws 1995. The case should never have come to court.

4 July 2017

NSA/NRO Menwith Hill

'Independence from America Day' demonstration

Tuesday 4 July from 4 – 8pm

- speakers, music, food, reading of Declaration of Independence -

All are welcome!

Come along and support the weekly demonstration at NSA/NRO Menwith Hill, 6-7:30pm

Demonstrations continue at Menwith Hill as we aim to maintain the 'right to protest' and to:

- Challenge the US 'Missile Defense' programme
- Challenge US mass surveillance
- Challenge the US drone/targeted killing programme
- Challenge the lack of accountability of the MDP – paid for by the US but supposedly accountable to UK law
- Show support for other groups with similar aims.

There has not been a return to the protocol for policing the demonstration implemented before 8 March 2016. The MDP claim to have been handed authority to police the demonstration on the highway by NYP. The legal issues surrounding this hand over of jurisdiction are complicated and affect other demonstrations. They are being examined.

**BARBARA PENNY -
THE CASE OF R V STEPHEN HIGGINS**

HAS BEEN POSTPONED . . .

Newsletters Nos 58 Autumn 2015, 59 Spring 2016 and 60 Summer 2016 reported the case of Steven Higgins, an employee at NSA/NRO Menwith Hill, who pled not guilty at Harrogate Magistrates Court and York County Court to Grievous Bodily Harm against Harrogate Quaker Meeting member Barbara Penny. It is alleged that he deliberately ran her over with his car at Menwith Hill where she was part of a regular CAAB demonstration on 11 August 2015.

Steven Higgins was committed for trial to Leeds Crown Court on 9 January 2017. However, at a pre-trial review Stephen Higgins' lawyers obtained a delay to the trial until August 2017 by questioning the quality of the CCTV footage of the defendant's car running over the victim. They also want an expert to look at the CCTV footage. This means that there will have been a two year delay between the incident and the trial.

Barbara's compensation case can also not be settled until this court case is over. We continue to send her our very best wishes as this case drags out even longer.

EXTRACTS (OUR EMPHASES) FROM . . .

INSIDE MENWITH HILL: THE NSA'S BRITISH BASE AT THE HEART OF U.S. TARGETED KILLING

'Now . . . top-secret documents obtained by The Intercept offer an unprecedented glimpse behind Menwith Hill's razor wire fence. The files reveal for the first time how the NSA has used the British base to aid a significant number of capture-kill operations" across the Middle East and North Africa, fueled by powerful eavesdropping technology that can harvest data from more than 300 million emails and phone calls a day.

Over the past decade, the documents show, the NSA has pioneered groundbreaking new spying programs at Menwith Hill to pinpoint the locations of suspected terrorists accessing the internet in remote parts of the world. The programs – with names such as GHOSTHUNTER and GHOSTWOLF – have provided support for conventional British and American military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. But they have also aided

covert missions in countries where the U.S. has not declared war. NSA employees at Menwith Hill have collaborated on a project to help “eliminate” terrorism targets in Yemen, for example, where the U.S. has waged a controversial drone bombing campaign that has resulted in dozens of civilian deaths.

The disclosures about Menwith Hill raise new questions about the extent of British complicity in U.S. drone strikes and other so-called targeted killing missions, which may in some cases have violated international laws or constituted war crimes. Successive U.K. governments have publicly stated that all activities at the base are carried out with the “full knowledge and consent” of British officials.



A spy satellite launched in 2009 and operated from Menwith Hill. Its role was to intercept communications flowing across “commercial satellite uplinks,” according to NSA documents.

.... According to top-secret documents obtained by The Intercept from NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden, Menwith Hill has two main spying capabilities. The first is called FORNSAT, which uses powerful antennae contained within the golf ball-like domes to eavesdrop on communications as they are being beamed between foreign satellites. The second is called OVERHEAD, which uses U.S. government satellites orbiting above targeted countries to locate and monitor wireless communications on the ground below – such as cellphone calls and even WiFi traffic.

.... As of 2009, Menwith Hill’s foreign satellite surveillance mission, code-named MOONPENNY, was monitoring 163 different satellite data links. The intercepted communications were funneled into a variety of

different repositories storing phone calls, text messages, emails, internet browsing histories, and other data.

... To keep information about Menwith Hill’s surveillance role secret, the U.S. and U.K. governments have actively misled the public for years through a “cover story” portraying the base as a facility used to provide “rapid radio relay and conduct communications research.” A classified U.S. document, dated from 2005, cautioned spy agency employees against revealing the truth. “It is important to know the established cover story for MHS [Menwith Hill Station] and to protect the fact that MHS is an intelligence collection facility,” the document stated. “Any reference to satellites being operated or any connection to intelligence gathering is strictly prohibited.”

.... Especially in remote parts of the world where there are no fiber-optic cable links, it is common for internet connections and phone calls to be routed over satellite. Consequently, Menwith Hill became a vital asset in the U.S. government’s counterterrorism campaign after the 9/11 attacks. Since then, the base has been used extensively to tap into communications in otherwise hard-to-reach areas where Islamic extremist groups such as al Qaeda and al Shabaab have been known to operate – for example, in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, Somalia, and Yemen.

Crucially, however, Menwith Hill has been used for more than just gathering intelligence on people and governments across countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Surveillance tools such as the GHOSTHUNTER system were developed to directly aid military operations, pinpointing the locations of targeted people or groups so that they could then be captured or killed. ... **The NSA’s documents describe GHOSTHUNTER as a means “to locate targets when they log onto the internet.” It was first developed in 2006 as “the only capability of its kind” and it enabled “a significant number of capture-kill operations” against alleged terrorists.** Only a few specific examples are given, but those cases give a remarkable insight into the extraordinary power of the technology.

.... But the lethal use of the surveillance data does not appear to have been restricted to conventional war zones such as Afghanistan

or Iraq. The NSA developed similar methods at Menwith Hill to track down terror suspects in Yemen, where the U.S. has waged a covert drone war against militants associated with al Qaeda in the Northern Peninsula.

In early 2010, the agency revealed in an internal report that it had launched a new technique at the British base to identify many targets “at almost 40 different geolocated internet cafés” in Yemen’s Shabwah province and in the country’s capital, Sanaa. The technique, the document revealed, was linked to a broader classified initiative called GHOSTWOLF, described as a project to “capture or eliminate key nodes in terrorist networks” by focusing primarily on “providing actionable geolocation intelligence derived from [surveillance] to customers and their operational components.” **The description of GHOSTWOLF ties Menwith Hill to lethal operations in Yemen, providing the first documentary evidence that directly implicates the U.K. in covert actions in the country.**

.... A crucial moment came in 2008, when then-NSA Director Keith Alexander introduced a radical shift in policy. Visiting Menwith Hill in June that year, Alexander set a challenge for employees at the base. “Why can’t we collect all the signals, all the time?” he said, according to NSA documents. “Sounds like a good summer homework project for Menwith.” **As a result, a new “collection posture” was introduced at the base, the aim being to “collect it all, process it all, exploit it all.” In other words, it would vacuum up as many communications within its reach as technologically possible.**

<https://theintercept.com/2016/09/06/nsa-menwith-hill-targeted-killing-surveillance/>

AN EXTRACT FROM ‘POSTERS FROM THE CROUGHTON PEACE FESTIVAL 2016’, PAUL MOBBS

THE USAF CROUGHTON ‘JOINT INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS CENTRE’ DEVELOPMENT

‘US military doctrine is changing. Today the political imperative behind military action is to minimize the risks to military personnel, while maximizing the ability to “project force” around the globe in support of the USA’s political

objectives. This shift in doctrine is also driving changes in how the US operates its installations. At USAF Croughton, on the border of Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire, that means its historic role as a ‘telephone exchange’ for the US military, intelligence agencies and the State Department is being upgraded and extended.

The Joint Intelligence Analysis Centre. The USA’s new military doctrine relies upon drones and small special forces units. An essential part of that process is a large increase in the use of surveillance technology. As the (so called) “precision” use military and intelligence operations increase, it requires that far more data be gathered from an area to ‘fix’ and ‘follow’ the targets under surveillance – either to collect intelligence or undertake some form of “kinetic action” (the military euphemism for capture/kill strikes). That in turn requires more communications links and large banks of computers to process all the information gathered from satellites, drones and monitoring stations. It also requires analysts to review the output from data processing to decide how to react.

That is what the new Joint Intelligence Analysis Centre at USAF Croughton is for. The existing US/NATO centres at Alconbury and Molesworth are being closed, and the staff redeployed to Croughton. New communications links will also tie Croughton’s equipment into key sites across Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. **This new JIAC facility will begin construction in 2017, and is scheduled for completion in 2020....**

Perhaps more importantly, the UK government does not ask questions about what the site is being used for. Recent Parliamentary inquiries and questions from MPs have found that the Government denies all knowledge of the activities carried out at Croughton – hence why the site should be called a “USAF” base rather than “RAF”.

“Persistence of gaze” - The US military’s new doctrine is creating change across NATO. In Sigonella, Sicily, the US airbase has just become the new home for NATO’s ‘Alliance Ground Surveillance’ (AGS) system. This uses seven Global Hawk drones (plus additional ‘in kind’ intelligence resources provided by the



Global Hawk Drone

UK) to create a seamless, '24/7/365' zone of surveillance across North Africa and the Middle East . . .

Time-critical response. Shifting information takes time. It takes much longer to shift data via satellite than via undersea cable because the cables have a much greater data capacity. Increasing surveillance to 'fix' and 'track' targets is of little use if you can't react in time. **One of the main reasons for developing facilities in Europe is to shave perhaps a quarter to half an hour off the time it takes to receive, analyse and act upon the information collected by surveillance systems.** Ultimately that is what the new Joint Intelligence Analysis Centre at Croughton is for. Instead of sending the data to the USA and then sending the responses back again, more military operations in the Middle East and North Africa will be run from Europe.

The big question: "is it legal?" USAF Croughton is not sovereign US territory. Therefore the UK government are responsible for any acts carried out there which breach international law. Recently the US government gave an assurance to the German government that drone operations data routed through Ramstein did not violate international law – because the command to drop the bomb was sent via a different route – i.e., probably via Croughton, the alternate relay to Ramstein. Quite probably using Croughton's resources, the US are also aiding the Saudi's in their action in Yemen – which has breached international law.

The continued used of drones for military action outside of declared war zones, and the "targeted" killing of people in those areas, also challenges international law and the justification for action under the 'Rules of War'. The new JIAC facility is arguably unlawful as it perpetuates activities which give rise to the abuse of human rights

across the Middle East and North Africa. **The UK Government should be investigating Croughton's operations; to date they have failed to do so. That raises the question as to whether we, as citizens, have the right to take action against the existing US activities at USAF Croughton, and the construction of the new JIAC facility.'**

For more detail on the communications links and on the proposals for the new base, go to the Croughtonwatch website or contact us for paper copies of the posters. <http://www.fraw.org.uk/croughtonwatch/>

FROM THE WEBSITE OF THE DRONE CAMPAIGN NETWORK

SO, WHAT IS WRONG WITH ARMED DRONES?



'The use of unmanned drones to launch so-called 'risk free' attacks in remote areas of the world has rocketed over the past decade. While manufacturers and operators insist that drones are precise and pinpoint accurate, researchers have documented hundreds of civilians deaths in drone strikes – and there are likely to be many more.

'Drones are portrayed as giving us the ability to easily and cleanly take out the bad guys without any risks. Technology, we are told, can control the chaos of war. The reality is that armed drones make it much easier for governments to opt to use lethal military force rather than engage in diplomatic or political solutions to crisis. Drones, in short, are simply making war more likely.'

For the detailed proof, read the Campaign Briefing on the Drone Campaign Network

website or write to us for a paper copy.

<http://bit.ly/2k5g1Gc>

REINFORCING THESE CONCERNS ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF NSA/NRO MENWITH HILL AND USAF CROUGHTON . . .

USAF MOLESWORTH – TARGETING KILLER DRONES IN BREACH OF INTERNATIONAL LAW?

‘US military personnel serving at the UK’s RAF bases are helping to identify targets for drone strikes, according to their job specifications. Human rights groups have seized on the descriptions of the roles as proof of the UK’s part in the covert US drone programme, which some critics claim is in breach of international law.

‘One job advertised at RAF Molesworth in Cambridgeshire was for an “all source analyst”, in support of US operations in Africa. The suitable candidate will “perform a variety of advanced targeting operations ... in support of employment of GPS guided weapons, weaponeering and collateral estimation, as well as utilizing the tools required for advanced targeting”.

‘The CV of a US military analyst, uploaded to a recruitment site, states that he was an MQ-9 Reaper ISR Mission Intelligence Coordinator at Molesworth. The MQ-9 is the US’s chief strike drone, capable of firing Hellfire missiles and dropping laser-guided GBU 12 Paveway II bombs.’

‘US personnel ‘targeting killer drones from Britain’, Jamie Doward, *The Guardian*, 30 October 2016

<http://bit.ly/2k0wVU5>

PROTESTS ACROSS THE WORLD AGAINST THIS USE OF DRONES:

CREECH US AIR FORCE BASE NEAR LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

A 5 day anti-drone protest at Creech (26-30 October 2016) culminated in a massive blockade of the base’s 2 gates. Over 150 activists from at least 18 states participated. 34 were arrested and charged with trespassing or blocking the roadway into Creech AFB, the most critical U.S.

armed drone base in the country.

‘34 Arrested while Protesting Drone Killing at Creech AFB’

<http://warisacrime.org/content/34-arrested-while-protesting-drone-killing-creech-afb>

PINE GAP, AUSTRALIA

Where experts have also voiced concerns about the role of the joint Australia-US communications base in supporting drone attacks on suspected terrorists overseas.

On 30 September 2016, dozens of people blockaded the access road into the base for more than two hours. Five protesters who broke into the boundary of the military base were freed after a judge dropped charges because of “flawed” and “premature” police prosecution.

‘Pine Gap protesters freed after breaking into US-Australian defence facility’, Tom Maddocks, *ABC News*, 29 September 2016

<http://ab.co/2k0QeMP>

AND, AT WAIHOPAI, NEW ZEALAND. The Anti Bases Campaign (ABC) organised a day of activity on 28 January, concerned about NZ’s illegal surveillance on behalf of allies: the US, UK, Canada and Australia.

Tuesday night?

Joining the demonstration at

Menwith Hill Main Gates (6-7:30pm)

could be your delight!

RETURN SPACE TO PEACE! OUR JAPANESE VISITORS AT NSA/NRO MENWITH HILL

We held a peaceful demonstration with protest songs by Catherine Warr and Joan West outside the main gates of NSA/NRO Menwith Hill base on Tuesday 4 October 2016 from 6 – 8pm. This was part of a world- wide week of demonstrations initiated by Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space (www.space4peace.org) marking Keep Space for Peace week.

We were honoured to receive a visit from an hibakusha, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki in 1945. Tanaka Terumi, Secretary General of the Japan confederation of A and H

Bomb sufferers organisations, told, through an interpreter, of the long struggle by the hibakusha and their supporters to highlight the dangers of all kinds of nuclear weapons throughout the world and to raise awareness of the extent of the US military presence in Japan (over 120 bases). Those present signed a world-wide petition against nuclear proliferation.

Dave Webb of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, spoke about the demonstrations taking place in England to mark 'Keep Space for Peace' week, in particular those held by Yorkshire CND at Fylingdales in North Yorkshire and by the Oxford Peace Group at USAF Croughton. Like Menwith Hill, these bases are key elements in the NSA (National Security Agency) sprawling

global surveillance network, which is used not only for its eavesdropping technology on communications, but also to support the use of weapons in space.

Konni Schmidt from the Stop Ramstein campaign in Germany spoke of the importance of making links with people from other countries who oppose weapons of every kind and invited those present to attend a demonstration at Ramstein in the autumn of 2017. Ramstein - a huge US military base in Germany - is the European HQ of NATO/US missile defence and also a key base for US armed drone activities.

We'd like to thank everyone for their contribution to the event - **and let's work for peace in 2017!**

Dave Webb with our Japanese visitors

MONEY MATTERS: There are several ways of supporting CAAB financially (see the CAAB website). **Postage has gone up again. It would be really helpful if more people would consider getting the e-version of this newsletter.**

Accounts can be seen by application to the Treasurer or the Facilitator (Martin Schweiger)
CAAB Account No: 50095311
Sort Code: 089229
The Cooperative Bank, 1 Balloon Street,

Manchester M60 4EP

Donate by Post: Please send a cheque, payable to "CAAB", to
CAAB Honorary Treasurer, Judith Rushby, 31 Blossomgate, Ripon, HG4 2AJ

Donate Using BACS: BACS payments are also welcome to our account with the Co-operative Bank:
Sort Code: 089229.
Account Number: 5009531100

WHO'S WHO AT CAAB?

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