



# Golf balls or puff balls?

What are the  
radomes at  
NSA/NRO  
Menwith Hill like?

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*We apologise for the late arrival of this newsletter but hope it will give a flavour of what we have been doing since the last one.*



## GOLF BALLS OR PUFF BALLS? WHAT ARE THE RADOMES AT NSA/NRO MENWITH HILL LIKE?

Radomes such as those at Menwith Hill (a US intelligence/military communications site) and USAF Croughton (a US military communications site in Oxfordshire) are often described as golf balls.

Paul Mobbs, of Croughtonwatch, prefers to compare the radomes to puff balls – fungi shaped like balls – because of their incredibly important underground fibre-optic cable links. The visible puff ball – or radome – is just a very small part of the whole system:



... though the 'ball' is the most visible part of the system, much of the activity within the organism happens below ground via the mycelial fibres that fan out great distances from the puff ball.

While satellite communications are the most visible feature at military communications sites, the reality today is that most military and intelligence data is shifted via optical cable. . . . Satellite links between fixed sites are usually used only when the cable network is not available.<sup>1</sup>

The radomes are, then, the most visible signs of a massive US communications network, symbols of US attempts to dominate land, sea, air, space and now cyber. Read on for some extracts from Paul Mobbs' handout *USAF Croughton, Networked Warfare and the Intelligence-Fusion Complex*, in which he explains how digital networks, data and artificial intelligence are blurring the boundaries between military, political and civil conflict and how dangerous this is for our society.



However radomes are not just old news. A protester from Jeju in South Korea visited Menwith Hill in June. She reported that the beautiful island of Jeju now hosts, as well as its massive US naval base, a huge radome erected by the South Korean military.

Juneseo Hwang, also from South Korea, came to the 4 July Independence from America demonstration at Menwith Hill this year. He was impressed to be told that there will shortly be a 34th radome at Menwith Hill and reported that the US are now also building a new base in South Korea with a radome. Why are the US building and expanding bases in South Korea at this time?

Although we may hope that our demonstrations at Menwith Hill are (in contrast to the radomes) visible signs of a more extensive network of protest against the work of the US bases, there is so much more opposition and protest in South Korea than in the UK. He thought this could be because, with about 100 US bases in 38,623 square miles, inhabitants of South Korea are continually affected by the roar of aircraft and the sense of threat.

When Professor Gavan McCormack came to speak to supporters of MHAC in Otley in June, he brought home to us afresh how the people of Okinawa, too, are continually oppressed by the noise and implications of US bases taking over their beautiful island.

We in the UK have far fewer bases, and bases such as Menwith Hill and Croughton are largely silent – but they are no less sinister in their implications.

Menwith Hill is, for example, the location of a ground station in the US so-called 'missile defense' system, which speeds up the nuclear arms race, making nuclear war more likely. Like Croughton, it is also involved in illegal US data collection and in supporting illegal US drone operations across the world

<sup>1</sup> Paul Mobbs, *USAF Croughton, Networked Warfare and the Intelligence-Fusion Complex*, June 2018 [http://www.fraw.org.uk/mei/archive/handouts/20180624-new\\_croughton\\_handout.pdf](http://www.fraw.org.uk/mei/archive/handouts/20180624-new_croughton_handout.pdf) Please contact us (details on the back page) if you would like a paper copy of this handout.

## WHY ARE DIGITAL NETWORKS, DATA AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SO DANGEROUS FOR OUR SOCIETY AND CULTURE?



Croughton radomes,

image by Paul Mobbs





Croughton radomes, image by Paul Mobbs

Croughton is to become a massive intelligence hub, a new Joint Intelligence Analysis Centre (JIAC) as big as, or even bigger than, Menwith Hill. This raises problems of US accountability to our UK government, which also apply to Menwith Hill.

**Two extracts from USAF Croughton, Networked Warfare and the Intelligence-Fusion Complex.**

### AN OVERVIEW OF 'INTELLIGENCE-FUSION' AND ITS DANGERS

The recent election lobbying scandal involving CambridgeAnalytica, and the manipulation of people's actions through the use of targeted advertising and media stories, is one illustration of the power of data analytics. This debate, however, has failed to shine a light on the wider analytics industry, and in particular its use by military and security agencies.

The military are today using data on a scale just as great as the largest corporations – in fact, potentially to a greater extent. That is because the military/intelligence agency's legal exemptions, secrecy, and larger budgets, allow a far greater use of information than ordinary corporations might legitimately carry out.

A second driver are the companies at the core of the analytics industry. Most are in the business of large scale data processing for the military. These contracts can be a lucrative outlet for new information systems, or to fund research on new data analytics systems. . .

Many of the uses of mass surveillance disclosed by Edward Snowden – a number of which has since been ruled unlawful by US courts – emerged from this effort to collect all the data, and then 'fuse' it to give insights into the activities of groups or individuals. Intelligence-fusion requires large quantities of data to work. The problem is that privacy and civil rights can be easily violated when the state engages in mass data collection.

In the US, from the early 2000s, intelligence-fusion was run primarily by the Department for Homeland Security (DHS). The DHS pulled together many different databases from law enforcement, civil services, and commercial data brokers and finance companies. What they sought to do was create a picture of potential security risks within the USA.

The problem is that what comes out of this 'fusion' process is only as good as the data which goes in. If the input contains bias, the output will be biased too. This has created the major flaws in the output from data fusion exercises – exacerbating the pre-

existing social and political biases within the security establishment.

### MORE EVIDENCE OF THE DANGERS OF INTELLIGENCE FUSION

We already have the experience gathered from over a decade of Department for Homeland Security (DHS) intelligence-fusion operations in the USA. For example, the 'big data' element within intelligence-fusion has allowed local law enforcement to target high crime areas by mapping the data on the occurrence of crime more accurately. The problem is that the biases in data collection and processing also skew the views made of it – and perpetuate those biases.

Work by the ACLU has found that the DHS fusion centres have a bias when reporting activities by Muslim groups. They also tend to disproportionately target both environmental and civil rights groups, and have specifically targeted anti-war activists. Their 2008 study noted particular problems with: ambiguous lines of accountability; the role of private corporations in delivering data and analysis; the participation of the military; the widespread use of data mining techniques; and the excessive secrecy surrounding the centres.

A 2012 US Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations study concluded that the DHS's fusion centres: had not produced useful intelligence to support counter-terrorism efforts; the intelligence was of uneven quality, often-times shoddy, and which endangering citizens' civil liberties and Privacy Act protections, and more often than not was unrelated to terrorism; and that DHS officials' public claims about fusion centres were not always accurate.

All these factors, clearly, have significant implications for the operation of the new JIAC development – albeit with far greater relevance to international matters of humanitarian law, and the potential to intensify conflict through the inappropriate use of military force.

. . . [T]he JIAC seeks to monitor, and then intercede – both in the real-world and in cyberspace – to project the power of the US and its allies. The problem is that in the process, civil society groups or ordinary members of the public can very easily be labelled as "the enemy" of their own, or the US government. While in the West that designation merely affects your privacy or liberty; in the Middle East and Africa, for some that could realistically mean torture or death.

### NOTE... MENWITH HILL AND DATA COLLECTION

Reprieve has recently said US forces at Menwith Hill in North Yorkshire are failing to comply with the provisions of the UK Data Protection Act by collecting and processing personal data without registering with the information watchdog.

Ben Quinn, *US eavesdropping base in Yorkshire flouting UK law, claims group*, *The Guardian*, 29 May 2018

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/29/us-eavesdropping-base-in-yorkshire-flouting-uk-law-menwith-hill>

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED THIS SUMMER AT MENWITH HILL?

### ARRESTS AT PROTESTS

Here at Menwith Hill an activist was arrested on 12 July as she continued a weekly spontaneous protest that she has done since the attempt to bring in Dispersal Powers by the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) on 8 March 2016. She challenged this and Harrogate Magistrates found in her favour.

On 12 July she walked into the car park with an upside-down US flag reading "TRUMP HE'S NOT WELCOME". She was charged with obstruction of the highway and was at Harrogate Magistrates Court on 9 August for pleas. She pleaded not guilty.

Usually a Case Management hearing follows if the defendant pleads not guilty. This is conducted by the Legal Advisor (who used to be known as the Clerk to the Magistrates), the purpose being to find out how many officers will be giving evidence, whom, if anyone, the defence will call to give evidence, whether any matters of law are involved, how long the defence expects the case to take etc.

The activist was prepared to say all this and also to request that a District Judge hear the case because of potentially complex matters of law involved and the fact that, in her experience over many years, there is always a third party involved – the US authorities.

However the Crown Prosecutor stood up to say that following a not-guilty plea by the defence there



Peaceful protest at Menwith Hill

should be a Case Management hearing. She had not had time to read the papers properly – the papers had been received from the MDP only that morning – and she was not usually in this circuit. So, unusually, she would be making an application for the case to be delayed until a senior CPS lawyer had reviewed it. She said that the case was "politically, a hot potato". She also thought that, because of its legal complexities, it should be heard by a District Judge.

The case was adjourned until 6 September.

The regular Tuesday evening protest has also continued. A protester on her own at the Tuesday demonstration was arrested on 24 July for obstruction of the highway and obstruction of a police officer in her duty. The protester was standing at the side of the carriageway

with a placard reading 'the weapons industry wants wars'. She is at Harrogate Magistrates Court on 23 August.

**YOUR SUPPORT IS URGENTLY NEEDED AT PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS AT MENWITH HILL. COME ALONG ANY TUESDAY BETWEEN 18:00 AND 19:30 AND PROTEST OR OBSERVE. (See contact details on the back page.)**

## INDEPENDENCE FROM AMERICA DECLARATION DAY 4 JULY 2018



The 4 July protest



The Clarion Choir

The Commoners Choir

On Wednesday 4 July 2018 the CND symbol created to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was placed at the main gate of the NSA/NRO base at Menwith Hill on the occasion of the annual Independence from America Declaration Day. This demonstration, which has taken place for more than 30 years, was organised jointly this year by Yorkshire CND and MHAC.

More than 60 people attended the demonstration, which was held in glorious sunshine, allowing those present to enjoy the views over Nidderdale as they met old friends, made new ones and enjoyed excellent food supplied by the Bondgate Bakery in Otley.

The policing by North Yorkshire Police was low key, calm and friendly – so much better than during many Tuesday evening demonstrations!

The event was opened with a two-minute silence to remember all those killed or affected by military action around the world.

The People's Declaration of Independence from American Militarism was read, reminding us how the people of the United States declared their demand for independence from Great Britain on 4 July 1776. Today we in the UK demand independence from the United States military machine.



Kate Hudson Natalie Bennett Chris Bluemel



Janet Russell

As every year, the Base Commander was invited to attend. In her absence, a letter addressed to her was handed to RAF Squadron Leader Geoff Dickson.

The headline speakers were Kate Hudson, General Secretary of CND, Chris Bluemel of Trident Ploughshares and Natalie Bennett of the Green Party. All three articulate speakers concentrated on the urgent need for Britain to ratify the United Nations Global Ban on Nuclear Weapons Treaty, agreed almost a year ago, and for all countries to work towards a nuclear-free world.



Brigid Mary Cates and the upside down American flag

We were also reminded of the US Nuclear Posture Review, which sets out US Nuclear policy, strategy, capabilities and force posture for the next five to ten years. This now appears to envisage the use of smaller nuclear weapons to attain limited objectives. (The nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki would today be classified as 'small'.)

The Pentagon's mission statement has been changed this year. It now reads "The mission of the Department of Defense is to provide a lethal joint Force to defend the security of our country and sustain American influence abroad." The last five words are new. The global aspirations of the United States are now more clearly stated.

Sadly illness prevented presentations from Veterans for Peace and Conscience, The Peace Tax Campaign. Music was provided by the East Lancs Clarion Choir, soloist Janet Russell, and by The Commoners Choir. They finished the evening with powerful protest songs as the CND Symbol created a very visible installation in beautiful countryside that could all be lost in the event of a nuclear war or accident.

Martin Schweiger

## WHAT ELSE HAVE WE BEEN DOING THIS SUMMER?

### HEARING ABOUT ANOTHER US MILITARY BASE

On Tuesday 29 May MHAC supporters and friends were given the opportunity to learn about US military activity on the other side of the world. The meeting was held in Otley Courthouse Arts and Resource

Centre and a packed room was addressed by Professor Gavan McCormack.

Professor McCormack worked and lived in Leeds between 1971 and 1977 and was heavily interested at the time in campaigns against American bases, nuclear weapons and militarism in general. He is now renowned as one of the foremost scholars of anti-nuclear anti-militarist campaigns in Japan and Korea and of American bases around Japan.

He came to Leeds to launch the new edition of his excellent book *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (Rowan & Littlefields, ISBN 978-1-4422-1563-4).

In the past century Okinawa and its citizens have suffered greatly at the hands of both Japan and the United States.

Okinawa is the largest of the Ryukyu Islands, which have been inhabited for at least 4,000 years. The Chinese had some peaceful influence in Okinawa from the middle of the 16th century and this stimulated the Japanese to take an increasing interest.

By the time of WWII the islands were fully under Japanese control and in October 1944 there was a substantial American air raid. During the following year an invasion by US forces involved intense fighting. In 1972 the administration of the islands was formally passed by the US to Japan but in reality the US has remained tightly in control. US bases occupy 20% of Okinawa Island and that takes up at least a third of the habitable space. This is a source of great resentment among Okinawans.

US-Japan relations are tense and difficult. They have brought down one Japanese prime minister, Yoshihiko Noda, who tried to stop construction of yet another base on the island, and threaten the incumbent, Shinzo Abe, if he is unable to deliver Okinawan approval of the new base. The new base would see the relocation of US Marines' Futenma airbase to the city of Nago in northern Okinawa.

The US militarisation of Okinawa provides part of the justification for China to build up its military facilities in the Pacific.

Martin Schweiger

See also Gavan McCormack, *The Abe State and Okinawan Protest - High Noon 2018*, *The Asia-Pacific Journal - Japan Focus*, August 7, 2018 <https://apjff.org/2018/16/McCormack.html/>



## HEARING ABOUT GLOBAL NETWORK AGAINST WEAPONS AND NUCLEAR POWER IN SPACE (GN)

On 20 June 2018 MHAC were very pleased to welcome

Bruce Gagnon, Mary Beth Sullivan and Will Griffin at Otley Courthouse, to discuss the work of GN.

Bruce Gagnon spoke about President Trump's proposal for a Space Force, an additional arm to the US military. (Menwith Hill would very likely be used to support it.) This proposal must still be approved by Congress and the Air Force is not happy about the idea, since it is they who are currently predominately in charge of Pentagon military space operations.

President Trump is anxious not to let China and Russia take a lead in space 'exploration' and that the US should be in control "of the sky" (including space).

Will Griffin, veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and founder of The Peace Report (<http://thepeacereport.com/>), emphasised the need for good communications making maximum use of new technology. [Watch his video about 'Space Force' and GN's forthcoming Keep Space for Peace Week at: <https://bit.ly/2POqSOB>

Will regularly produces highly recommended videos on Keep Space for Peace themes. Any volunteers to make short videos for MHAC?]

Mary Beth Sullivan, a social worker, read a poem inspired by her work with the homeless in the US, making links between their plight and excessive spending on the military. Bruce said that the military industrial complex is the biggest employer in the US, subsidised by individual States in addition to receiving funding from Federal taxes.

Hazel Costello

## ATTENDING THE GLOBAL CONFERENCE TO RESIST NUCLEARIZATION AND WEAPONIZATION OF SPACE

I feel very fortunate to have attended this conference organised by GN in Oxford over the weekend of 22-24 June.

It included inspiring reports from individuals and groups around the world - from India, Nepal, Mauritius, Germany, Sweden, South Korea, USA, France and UK. In the evening's Keynote Speeches, Paul Mobbs spoke about The Global Military Infrastructure and Bruce Gagnon about Space Colonisation. This newsletter has already included some excerpts from Paul's handout and a report of our preview at Otley of Bruce's speech. However I should like to give a few more of Paul's examples of the problems of 'data fusion' - getting a machine to associate meaning. First, people can be aware of their mistakes. Machines have no such advantage. Secondly, projections produced in this way cannot be tested and validated before they are acted upon. Finally, data fusion always represents the military and the commercial operating together. And both like privacy. Hiring practices weed out anyone opposed to nuclear weapons immediately.

A public meeting followed on the theme of Planning for Peace and Disarmament. Rebecca Johnson from the International Steering Group of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) explained how ICAN focused on what was achievable and convinced by posing the question, 'Who is benefiting?' ICAN got non-nuclear countries to understand the humanitarian impacts of any nuclear war and nuclear winter: famine would hit the most vulnerable first.

ICAN also asked itself, 'Where are the young people?' The solution to greater engagement was, they found, to make the problem real and to make the solution possible and fun. (Sound easy? Any ideas for us at Menwith Hill?)

On Sunday we visited Croughton, with an illuminating commentary provided by Nigel Day of Oxford CND. We hung banners on the perimeter fence and listened to speeches.

Very many thanks to Oxford CND for their warm welcome and for the wonderful food and venue.

Sarah Swift



People against the puff balls: protest at Croughton

Here are a few extracts from the proceedings as filmed by Paul Mobbs: <https://bit.ly/2PaYwBa>

**LET'S WORK TO EXTEND OUR NETWORK OF PEACEFUL PROTEST IN WHATEVER WAYS WE CAN. PUFF BALLS ARE EDIBLE (WITH CARE!). LET'S RECYCLE THE RADOMES AND RETURN NSA/NRO MENWITH HILL TO THE ADJOINING AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY.**



Part of a week of protests on this theme called for by the Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space. Do publicise this event and/or come along!



## £ MONEY MATTERS

There are several ways of supporting MHAC financially (see the MHAC website). Accounts can be seen by application to the Treasurer.

**MHAC Account No:** 50095311 **Sort Code:** 089229  
The Cooperative Bank,  
1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M60 4EP

### DONATE BY POST:

Please send a cheque, payable to MHAC, to MHAC Honorary Treasurer, Judith Rushby, 31 Blossomgate, Ripon, HG4 2AJ  
Please also enclose your address so that we can write to thank you!

### DONATE USING BACS:

BACS payments are also welcome to our account with the Cooperative Bank:  
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**Account number:** 5009531100

## WHO'S WHO AT MHAC?

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**MHAC IS ON FACEBOOK:** search for 'Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign'

**AND ON TWITTER:** @MenwithCampaign

## DATA PROTECTION

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter by post or by email, please email [info@themhac.co.uk](mailto:info@themhac.co.uk) to update your preferences or contact **MHAC** at **64 Magdalens Road, Ripon, HG4.**

**Thank you to everyone who continues to support us.**

**Please contact us** if you would like more references for statements made in this newsletter or more information on the issues raised, or go to the MHAC **website: [www.themhac.uk](http://www.themhac.uk)**

**Please also contact us** if you have well-sourced information on any of the issues or if you would like to join the campaign. We need your energy and ideas, whether you are an activist or have clerical, academic, professional or artistic expertise!

**MHAC has regular meetings** advertised on the website. Let us know if you would like to be contacted by telephone or email about them.

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