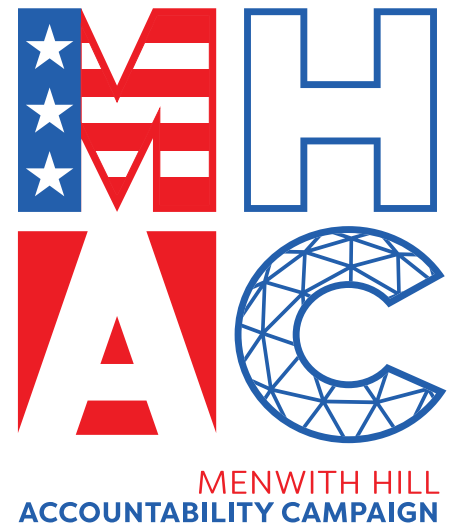


MHAC NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 10 SPRING 2023



Any hope for NSA/NRO Menwith Hill now?

Photo by Sylvia Boyes, Yorkshire CND and Trident Ploughshares

We apologise for the very long gap since our last newsletter (Issue 9, Summer 2022).

Any hope for NSA/NRO Menwith Hill now?

A space arms race is accelerating as nations jostle to protect their space assets and compete for space in space. US arms sales have surged including requests for the US Space Force to export satellites and other capabilities.¹ The US Space Force has asked for its biggest budget ever.² What costs here for budgets for dealing fairly with the effects of climate change? What costs for the environment from the production and use of all this hardware, even from rocket launches? Expensive developments continue at NSA/NRO Menwith Hill.³



Development at Menwith Hill
The development of the main gate area at Menwith Hill which involves the closure for twelve weeks of Menwith Hill Road

Menwith Hill is a so-called RAF base under the control of the United States National Security Agency. The US National Reconnaissance Office operates space-based surveillance and reconnaissance systems at Menwith Hill to collect and deliver intelligence - to advance US interests. In addition, the US Space Force is in control of three radomes at Menwith Hill in the US Space-Based Infrared System, part of US missile defense. Local people across the world - in Okinawa, South Korea, Guam, New Zealand, and Hawaii as well as in the UK and stateside US - are protesting against the threats to their environments and security posed by the expansion of US military and intelligence bases.

Let us **“Unite to survive.”**

Any hope of halting illegal drone strikes?



Reaper MQ-9
Photo by Lt. Col. Leslie Pratt, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Documents leaked by the NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden in 2013 confirmed that Menwith Hill was directly involved in the planning of targeted US drone strikes in Yemen, Syria, Pakistan and Afghanistan. USAF Molesworth near Cambridge also hosts personnel involved in US armed interventions in Africa (AFRICOM).

Chris Coles of Drone Wars UK has analysed US drone strikes in Yemen and Somalia since the start of 2023. He concludes that these attacks clearly undermine international law and encourage other states to ignore human rights rules.

While it is absolutely right that Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine is condemned and opposed, any such censure is surely weakened by turning a blind eye to other armed attacks and violations of international law. This is not 'whataboutery' as some may no doubt claim, but a matter of consistency and international law.

For many at the moment, drone warfare - indeed war - is only being viewed through the situation in Ukraine. But beyond this European conflict, armed drones are continuing to enable states to use lethal force with virtual impunity and must continue to be challenged.⁴

In addition, a recent important report from

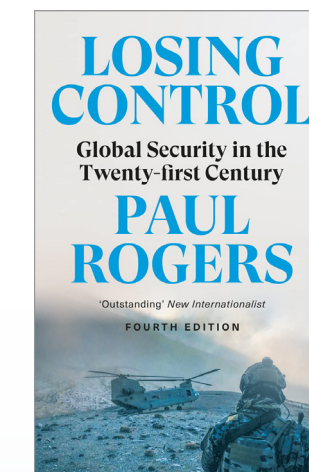
the UN Development Programme describes how “Successive offensives by government and regional forces, backed by US air power and specialists on the ground, have succeeded in inflicting tactical defeats on al-Shabaab [in Somalia] but little enduring damage.” The UNDP administrator states that “Security-driven counter-terrorism responses are often costly and minimally effective, yet investments in preventive approaches to violent extremism are woefully inadequate.”⁵

US senators and representatives continue to raise concerns about the undercounting of civilian casualties by the US Department of Defense.⁶

1. C4ISRNET, 18/04/2023, Courtney Albon, Space Force sees increase in foreign military sales requests,” <https://www.c4isrnet.com/battlefield-tech/space/2023/04/18/space-force-sees-increase-in-foreign-military-sales-requests/>
2. `SpaceNews, 13/03/2023, Sandra Erwin, “U.S. Space Force budget hits \$30 billion in 2024 proposal,” <https://spacenews.com/u-s-space-force-budget-hits-30-billion-in-2024-funding-proposal/>
3. The Stray Ferret, 28/01/2022, Thomas Barrett, “Menwith Hill upgrades part of 2.8bn programme,” <https://thestrayerferret.co.uk/menwith-hill-upgrades-part-of-2-8bn-programme/>
4. Drone Wars UK, 22/02/2023, Chris Cole, “Ukraine drones may grab all the headlines, but armed drones are enabling lethal force around the globe,” <https://dronewars.net/2023/02/22/ukraine-drones-may-grab-all-the-headlines-but-armed-drones-are-enabling-lethal-force-around-the-globe/> See also, Drone Wars UK, 15/05/2023, Chris Cole, “The UK and the Ukraine War: Drones vs Diplomacy,” <https://dronewars.net/2023/05/15/the-uk-and-the-ukraine-war-drones-vs-diplomacy/>
5. Achim Steiner, quoted in The Guardian, 07/02/2023, Jason Burke, “Rights abuses often ‘tipping point’ for extremist recruitment, UN study finds,” <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/07/rights-abuses-often-tipping-point-for-extremist-recruitment-un-study-finds>
6. <https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/warren-jacobs-raise-concerns-that-dod-continues-to-undercount-civilian-casualties-in-annual-report>

Any hope for global security?

Martin Schweiger reviews Losing Control: Global Security in the Twenty-first Century, Paul Rogers
(Pluto Press, 4th Edition, 2021)



The key messages in the book are summed up in a paragraph at the top of Chapter 9, headed “Lost Decade”.

Three interlinked trends in World affairs are leading to a thoroughly unstable and violent world. These are the combination of

a failing economic system that increases socioeconomic divisions and mass marginalisation, an impact on the world environment that is fast exceeding the capacity of the global system to self-regulate and a security paradigm that prioritises the status quo and ensures the well-being of wealthier societies. The three trends interconnect in many ways and the risk of a descent into a dangerously divided and constrained world can more easily be prevented if this is recognised. Solutions therefore need to embrace the problem of these failing paradigms – economy, environment, security. Each of these is certainly being challenged, whether by new economic thinking, vigorous action on environmental issues or the failures of four recent wars, but each should not be seen in isolation.

Paul Rogers, Emeritus Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University, points out that the three biggest threats to human security are climate change, poverty and disease. None of these threats respond to military action although the current active procurement of ever more sophisticated weapons increases these threats.

It is possible to feel overwhelmed by negative messages about how we fail to make progress towards a better and safer

world. However the final section of the book points to some developments that say the required changes are possible and a more stable and peaceful world can finally begin to emerge.

Paul Rogers has very kindly given us the following update for this newsletter:

I think the main progress has been on the decarbonisation elements, the combination of decreasing costs, increased awareness and the reality of more frequent violent weather events. If, as I expect, those trends continue, then within a very few years governments will have no option but to act urgently. As they do, then the need for governmental action and intergovernmental cooperation will become unavoidable. In the wake of that, a more cooperative economic model can follow, and this could well provide the opportunity for the innovative evolution of a more just economic system. This is not to deny that there will be formidable opposition from the current system, and much will depend on the commitment of many people, not least campaigners, to promote a more peaceful future.



Anni Rainbow

The last newsletter reported with great sadness Anni's death on 24 June 2022. The following obituary appeared in the Guardian on 22 August 2022. The obituary was written by Melanie Ndzinga with contributions from a number of people.

My friend Anni Rainbow, who has died aged 73, was a Quaker, peace campaigner and passionate activist.

Anni was born in Kensington, London, and grew up in Tolworth, Surrey, where her adoptive father nurtured her love of books, poetry and Shakespeare. She was a gifted artist, potter and sculptor with an eclectic taste in music.

A strong swimmer, Anni belonged to Kingston Ladies swimming club, representing Surrey in her teens. Then, on a Guide camp as a teenager, a van accident caused back and hip injuries, the initial cause of lifelong disability. She was further devastated when her father died suddenly in 1982.

Becoming increasingly concerned about militarism during the Vietnam war, in 1968 Anni was on the anti-war march during which mounted police charged protesters in Grosvenor Square, central London.

A stalwart of the Crawley night watch group, set up to enable the women at Greenham Common women's peace camp to get some sleep, others appreciated her calm, dependable nature and ironic wit.

Anni had two sons, Matthew and Simon, with Robin Cornish, whom she married in 1977. The marriage ended in divorce in 1985.

She later moved to Otley, West Yorkshire, supported the Quaker body Northern Friends Peace Board and joined Otley Peace Action Group.

In 1992 she co-founded, with the peace campaigner Lindis Percy, the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases, organising protests at Menwith Hill in North Yorkshire and other places, and holding Quaker meetings and raising parliamentary questions about the secrecy of all American military activities in Britain.

Despite significant health issues she campaigned in all weathers – horizontal blizzards never dulled her sense of humour nor infectious chuckle. Quakers are urged to “live adventurously”. Anni certainly did.

Her son Matthew, a corporal in the 1st Light Infantry, was killed in Basra in 2006. Shortly after, Anni suffered a stroke, which

aggravated her disabilities, and she moved to Alne Hall residential home near York where she continued to speak truth to power in her inimitable fashion, with irreverent humour and wicked laugh.

Anni is survived by Simon, her grandchildren, Ethan and Libby, and a brother, Chris.

Still calling for peace in times of war – still calling for the accountability of NSA/NRO Menwith Hill

24 September 2022

HUFUD (Humanity United for Universal Demilitarisation) held a Peace Conference at the Friends Meeting House in Harrogate. Martin Schweiger of MHAC spoke on “Why call for the accountability of Menwith Hill?” Amongst other speakers, musician Alberto Portugeis (HUFUD co-founder) explained why HUFUD (<https://hufud.org/>) aims for a new economic system for the world that will not depend on the arms trade.⁷

Claire Nash

16 October KEEP SPACE FOR PEACE DEMONSTRATION

Yorkshire CND and MHAC hosted a day of action for the second day of national CND's conference. The first half of the day was at Otley Courthouse and included Peter Burt (from Drone Wars) on US military bases in the UK, and Tom Unterrainer and Sophie Bolt talking about the plans of National CND such as the upcoming demo at Lakenheath (see below).



UK US bases

Peter's presentation looked at 'network warfare' and military bases in the UK, and showed how Menwith Hill is a key part not just of the network of US bases in the UK and around the world but also of a global network for intelligence gathering and interpretation.

'Network warfare' is a phrase commonly used by the military to describe how information is gathered and used to select targets for destruction.

A surveillance network of sensors gathers information (video and photographic, signals, electronic emissions and radar etc) from a wide range of platforms (drones, satellites, aircraft, observation towers etc). This information is then passed between various military units through a communications network of relay stations, and uplink sites which are distributed around the world, passing through fibre-optic cable and satellite links. Information from various sources is then combined and processed and turned into usable intelligence for targeting and other purposes. This 'data fusion' process often requires high powered computers and advanced processing techniques to spot trends and patterns in large quantities of data.

Sites in the UK which play a role in these parallel networks include:

- Croughton in Northamptonshire: a US military communications hub acting as a relay between US, Europe, and further afield
- Molesworth and Alconbury in Cambridgeshire, which undertake intelligence analysis for US Europe Command, including Middle East and parts of Africa.
- Wyton, also in Cambridgeshire, which is the headquarters for most UK military intelligence work.
- Digby in Lincolnshire which undertakes UK military signals interception from the Middle East and North Africa and hosts both UK and US personnel.
- Feltwell in Norfolk, which undertakes space reconnaissance and surveillance, including surveillance of satellites and objects in space, for the US Space Force.

Nowadays military bases are as important for their communication role as for their war-fighting role, and all bases in strategic

locations host major satellite uplink communication stations.

In the afternoon, we visited Menwith Hill for a walk around the base, holding our banners in protest against the presence of this base in Yorkshire. Following that, Cath Bann (Yorkshire CND) led a discussion on 'Ideas for the Future'. We agreed that showing how climate justice and racial justice can be achieved via disarmament is a good way forward.



MH Day of Action 16.10.22

Photo by Neil Terry

19 November

Supporters of MHAC joined CND at USAF Lakenheath to protest against the arrival of US nuclear weapons in the UK (see the last newsletter for more details).

Kate Hudson, General Secretary of CND writes: "the US persists in stationing nuclear weapons across a number of its bases in Europe [including in non-nuclear weapon states] under the auspices of NATO. Its new nuclear bomb, the B61-12, is reportedly scheduled for deployment this spring. Airbases recently upgraded to store the B61-12 include [USAF] Lakenheath in Suffolk.



Lakenheath protest
Photo courtesy of CND

"Our next national protest at Lakenheath is on Saturday 20th May. Please join us to get our message out urgently – both locally and nationally: no US nukes to Lakenheath!"⁹

20 January – 2 July 2023 On Clogger Lane

Andrew Black's experimental film (at The Tetley, Leeds) explores the Washburn Valley between Otley and Harrogate, overlooked by Menwith Hill. It incorporates newly-recorded conversations with peace campaigners Sylvia Boyes, Anne Lee and Lindis Percy and is presented alongside archival material relating to peace groups at Menwith Hill.

<https://thetetley.org/exhibition/andrew-black-on-clogger-lane/#&gid=1&pid=2>

PROTEST AT MENWITH HILL

The weekly Tuesday evening protest 6 – 7:30 pm

Because of the major development of the base's main gate area, the main gate is shut. The weekly protest, started by CAAB in 2000, has continued at Nessfield Gate, usually the contractors' entrance.



Yorkshire CND at the Tuesday evening protest on 15 November 2022

Global Days of Action Against Military Spending

The Global Day of Action on Military Spending has been taking place across the world since 2011, to coincide with the release of the SIPRI figures on world-wide military spending. Since 2017 the event has expanded to Days of Action. This year GDAMS ran from 13 April to 9 May and was marked at Menwith Hill on the Tuesdays during this time.

"World military expenditure reaches new record high as European spending surges."¹⁰

"The United States remains by far the world's biggest military spender. US military spending reached \$877 billion in 2022,



GDAMS at the weekly demonstration

which was 39 per cent of total global military spending and three times more than the amount spent by China, the world's second largest spender. . .

"US financial military aid to Ukraine totalled \$19.9 billion in 2022. Although this was the largest amount of military aid given by any country to a single beneficiary in any year since the cold war, it represented only 2.3 per cent of total US military spending."

- Explore other peace initiatives mentioned at <https://www.wilpf.org.uk/peace-no-nukes-art/>; <https://www.mayorsforpeace.org/en/>; <https://www.nuclearpolicy.info/>; <https://yorkshirecnd.org.uk/the-leeds-annual-olof-palme-memorial-peace-lecture/>
- For more, shocking news about the US military and intelligence presence in the UK see Declassified UK, 09/02/2023, Matt Kennard, "The 183 American Troops Deployed at Secret Locations across Britain," <https://declassifieduk.org/the-183-american-troops-deployed-at-secret-locations-across-britain/>
- <https://cnduk.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/May2023.pdf>
- <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2023/world-military-expenditure-reaches-new-record-high-european-spending-surges>

Save 4th July 2023 for the Independence FROM America demonstration at NSA/NRO Menwith Hill, 5 – 8pm

Please note the different time – to enable people to come after work – and the different location.

Confirmed excellent speakers include Peter Burt of Drone Wars UK; Fiona Macaulay, Professor, Gender, Peace and Development, Bradford University; and Dave Webb of CND. Plus performance poetry from Spike, Beau and Slick Satirical Cowboys, Foxwood

Panyard (steel band), and the East Lancs Clarion Choir.

The demonstration will take place at the Kettlesing Layby – on the left of the A59 as you come up to Kettlesing Head and the signpost to the base on the A59 from Harrogate (Grid ref. 22 05 56 10).

Please publicise the demonstration widely. We look forward to seeing you there.

It's time the US bases went home.

Re-dedication of the alder tree planted in memory of Bob Cryer MP

We are still planning the re-dedication of the alder tree. This has been delayed by the poor health of the relocated tree. The replacement alder planted at the same time is doing well.

The alder tree planted in 1994 near the main gate of Menwith Hill in memory of Bob Cryer and now relocated to enable a major development of the main gate area, was originally planted by his wife, Ann Cryer (later Labour MP for Keighley). Bob Cryer, who died in 1994, was dedicated to working for peace, bringing the activities of Menwith Hill to the attention of a wider public.

Any Tuesday 6 – 7:30 pm

We look forward to seeing you any Tuesday for the regular demonstration 6-7:30pm at the base's Nessfield Gate.

Please contact us for further details of any of these events and/or a map of how to get to Menwith Hill: mail@themhac.uk



Thank you for all you do for justice and peace.

Merchandise now available on the MHAC website <https://themhac.uk/> Tea-towels and bags £7 (plus £2 p & p), badges 50p (plus £1 p & p, free for orders over £25)

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 St,
Manchester, M60 4EP

Donate by post:

Please send a cheque, payable to 'MHAC',
to

MHAC Honorary Treasurer, Judith Rushby, 11,
The Crescent, York, YO10 5EF

Please also enclose your address so that we
can write to thank you.

Donate using BACS:

BACS payments are also welcome to our
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WHO'S WHO AT MHAC?

Hon. Treasurer: Judith Rushby,
11, The Crescent, York, YO10 5EF
(Bank signatories

Judith Rushby and Sarah Swift)

Website coordinators: Ray Middleton
and Martin Schweiger

Coordinator of meetings: Hazel Costello

Facebook administrator:

Brigid-Mary Oates

Twitter administrator: Claire Nash

Designers of merchandise: Sarah McEvoy
and Katie Edwards

Monitoring planning applications: Laila
and Rob Packer

Contact email: mail@themhac.uk

**Coordinator of weekly demo and of
newsletter:** Sarah Swift

Tel: 01765 600928

MHAC is on **Facebook:** search for 'Menwith
Hill Accountability Campaign'



and on

Twitter: @MenwithCampaign

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preferences.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTINUES TO SUPPORT US

Please contact us if you would like more information about items in this newsletter or if you
would like to help in any way.

**We'd like to thank Christine Dean and Paul Wood very much indeed for all their friendship,
help and support over so many years, especially for their distribution of the newsletter and
for Paul's original and eye-catching graphic designs.**

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