



Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases

No. 43 October 2010

Local, National and International News

Dear friends

We have two apologies to make:

First – the last time we sent out a newsletter it was springtime. The reason why there has been a gap is because we published a ‘Special Edition’ newsletter to give to guests and people attending the ‘Independence FROM America’ demonstration on 4 July at the American base at Menwith Hill. We published a four-page newsletter with brief facts about Menwith Hill in particular and US bases in general. If anyone would like to see a copy it can be found on the Newsletter page of the CAAB website. We are acutely aware that not everyone has a computer or indeed would like one! Please let us know if you could like a copy.

Second – the ‘Keep Space for Peace’ demonstration at Menwith Hill on 2 October will be over by the time this edition reaches you. We could not get a newsletter out in time to publicise the event to the newsletter list. Sorry!

The general election has happened since the last newsletter. We ended the last editorial by saying the result could be an exciting new dawn. Apparently there are to be sweeping cuts in the public sector and the replacement of Trident is to be left out of the Strategic Defence Spending Review. It doesn’t bode well.

Meanwhile precious resources are spent more and more on the use of dangerous technology

and weapons in war fighting. Do you know about Unmanned Aerial Vehicles or ‘Drones’? Quoting from the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) website “Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), also known as drones, are small remotely-piloted aircraft controlled from the ground or autonomously following a pre-programmed mission. While there are literally dozens of different types of drones, they fall into two basic categories: those that are used purely for surveillance and intelligence purposes and those that are also armed with missiles and bombs and can be used for attack. Whilst the British and US Reaper and Predator UAVs are physically in Afghanistan and Iraq, they are actually operated via satellite communication from Nellis and Creech USAF base just outside Las Vegas in



Nevada. Ground support troops launch the UAVs from Kandahar airbase and then, once they have reached several thousand feet, control of the drones is handed over to a crew of three operators sitting in front of video screens in specially designed trailers in the Nevada desert. One person ‘flies’ the drone, another controls and monitors the cameras

continues overleaf ...

Picture credit: <http://eol.jsc.nasa.gov/AS17/Roll:148/Frame:22727/MissionID/ontheFilmorimage:AS17ImagecourtesyofNASAviahttp://search.creativecommons.org/#>

continued from front cover

and sensors, whilst a third person is in contact with the “customers”, ground troops and commanders in the war zones”.

War fighting has become a dreadful ‘video game’; operated by ‘pilotless’ planes whose ‘pilots’ lock-on to the enemy from thousands of miles away. Civilians are killed, injured and dreadfully maimed. This apparently is the way war fighting in the future will be. It is no ‘game’ but real involving civilians who are ‘in the way’ of this deadly mission.

A important campaign has been recently launched called Drone Wars UK – see www.for.org.uk/act.campaign initiated and co-ordinated by Chris Cole (FOR). It seems human beings have an endless need to develop more and more hideous weaponry instead of using fine brains, skills and talents in pursuit of the common good for all people. We need to work even harder by speaking out.

Around the US Bases

NSA MENWITH HILL

(near Harrogate, North Yorkshire)

Correction From The Last Newsletter: The US Commander changes every two years. When checking the name of the next US Commander, we were assured by a Ministry of Defence Police Agency (MDPA) officer at Menwith Hill that it was to be Colonel Timothy S. Cashdollar. We put this information in the last newsletter. This was incorrect. The new US Commander is Michelle Clays who arrived in July.

New RAF Liaison Officer: He is David Elliott (Squadron Leader). There are only four RAF staff at Menwith Hill. We have written to both new arrivals to ask to meet them. We have never had any response or acknowledgement to any of our letters from the US Commander over the years. We live in hope however that both will agree to a meeting!

Tuesday Evening Weekly Demonstrations: We had a meeting with senior officers from North Yorkshire Police and the MDPA in July because of ongoing problems. The MDPA police the demonstration on behalf of North Yorkshire Police.

It was a difficult meeting but out of it, on our suggestion it was agreed that North Yorkshire

Police should obtain a legal opinion on the issue of the ‘yellow line’. [It has since been repainted – Ed].

Independence FROM America – 4 July 2010:

Sadly Peter Tatchell could not come because of a severe migraine on the day. Lots of people did come including Mark Thomas, Roy Bailey, East Lancs Choir and Seize the Day. Someone said: “It was brill and the best yet”. A report is on the website. Thank you to James Walsh of Liberty who helped CAAB to re-establish an important civil liberty to walk round the base as a visible protest of what Menwith Hill does. We once again called for Independence FROM America.

KEEP SPACE FOR PEACE Demonstration 2

October 2010: This was part of the yearly international call for a week of protest against the US Missile Defense system by the Global Network Against Weapons and Power in Space. CAAB has responded every year since 2000. We got the idea (‘The Invisibles’) from an action by our friends in the Czech Republic several years ago when they were opposing the siting of Missile Defense radar facilities by the US government. ‘The Invisibles’ are people who make decisions about US Missile Defense, anyone who opposes are made to be invisible and ignored. Space is invisible. This is where war fighting in the future will be executed. We

walked round Menwith Hill dressed in white disposable suits and wearing faceless masks. We will do a report of the demonstration for inclusion in the next newsletter. In the meantime it will be on the CAAB website. Who are the Invisibles? Faceless people ... so make the Invisibles visible.

PRESS RELEASE FROM LIBERTY

PROTEST WALK GOES AHEAD WITH LIBERTY'S SUPPORT, 13 JULY 2010

A long-standing annual protest against the American military base at Menwith Hill went ahead on 4 July, despite an initial stance by police that they would no longer facilitate the event. Had this decision stood, organisers may have been forced to abandon the walk because of the prohibitive logistical and financial burden of securing road closure orders and the like.

Liberty's legal team wrote to North Yorkshire Police to remind them of their responsibility to ensure that lawful peaceful protests can take place. As a result, police revisited their position and on Sunday 4 July the walk took place as planned.

Liberty's Legal Director, James Welch, said:

"North Yorkshire Police are to be congratulated for seeing sense. Democracy only works when people are free to express dissent, and our police forces have a duty to uphold and support this right. Liberty is pleased to have helped secure this very positive outcome."

Lindis Percy, co-ordinator of the Campaign for Accountability of American Bases (CAAB), which organises the annual protest walk, said: "It was important that we re-established the walk round the base as it is the duty of the police to enable peaceful protest. With Liberty's help we re-established the protest walk and retrieved an important civil liberty."

US Authorities Celebrate: A book which will be available to the public, is to be published by the US authorities at Menwith Hill to celebrate 50 years ... of the US Visiting Forces and their Agencies in occupation and control of the base! According to a column written by Angela Marquis (Public Affairs at Menwith Hill) in the

Harrogate Advertiser – 11 June 2010: "A pub quiz gets base's 50th anniversary celebrations under way" – celebrations will go on throughout the year.

RAF FYLINGDALES

(near Pickering, North Yorkshire)

Lunch With The Newly Appointed RAF Commander: On 21 July several of us visited Fylingdales to meet Martin Johnson and one of his staff. Martin told us something about what goes on at Fylingdales and kindly provided lunch. We were unable to go round the Phased Radar structure but have been invited back to be shown round another time.

New Military Land Byelaws: It is thought that the process will start to bring in new byelaws early next year. So what is wrong with the 1987 byelaws at Fylingdales? They are invalid. Many people have been arrested, de-arrested, charged and convicted under unsafe law. There have been no prosecutions since about 1990 – a deliberate policy instruction from the CPS. Yet notices are displayed round the base as if the byelaws are safe.

Mark Spark (Black Rock Productions) has produced and directed Part 1 of a series of short videos which is now on YouTube and the CAAB website. In Part 1 Dr Martin Schweiger explains why he has come regularly to the Tuesday evening demonstrations at Menwith Hill. We intend to cover several issues in these series including what Menwith Hill does, the work of CAAB, US Missile Defense, US bases and the Ministry of Defence Police Agency – for starters!

<http://www.youtube.com/menwithhillcaab>

USAF CROUGHTON

(Brackley, Northamptonshire)

Righting The Wrong: The US authorities are in the habit of putting up signs at various US bases which say:

WARNING

US Air Force Installation

It is unlawful to enter this area without permission of the Installation Commander (sec.21 Internal Security Act 1950 SP I.S c797) while on this installation all personnel and the property under their control are subject to search.

On 31 March Lindis Percy (while doing some research at USAF Croughton) drew the attention of Mark Harland (PC MDPA) to the fact that a sign (as above) should not be displayed on the fence as US law did not apply here. She asked him to take it down. He refused. Lindis said she would come back later and remove the notice if he wouldn't. This exchange was observed by the US 'security police' from within the base. She returned and was again observed by a US 'security police' man on a quad bike. She showed the sign to him which she had taken off the fence and informed him that she would hand it into Menwith Hill. She and the sign left the area to go back to Yorkshire.

Lindis went straight to Menwith Hill that day (Croughton had already informed the base) and handed the sign to Dominic Williams (Sergeant MDPA) explaining to him what she had done. She had no intention to permanently deprive the owner (US authorities) of their property – one element of the Theft Act 1968. Later she asked for a receipt which a senior MDPA officer refused to give. Lindis made a request for a copy of Dominic William's police pocket book and the MDPA report of the incident under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. She eventually received both documents.

Juliet McBride (Aldermaston Womens Campaign) had written in January to ask about these signs being put on the fence at USAF Welford.

Carrie Rossi (Squadron Leader RAFLO) replied:

Q: Why is US Law being displayed on a RAF fence?

A: The controlled area signs are supposed to be posted on the internal fences only as a warning to US personnel and personnel employed by the USAF. The staff at Welford were confused as to the proper posting of the signs and accidentally

posted them on the perimeter instead of the internal fencing.

Q: To whom is it meant to apply?

A: To US and personnel employed by the USAF.

Q: Who could use this law against whom?

A: The USAF can use this law against US personnel.

Q: Why is the sign displayed at all?

A: We have a requirement to post the signs on controlled area fences, again for US personnel only.

[Legally this all seems highly questionable – Ed].

USAF MILDENHALL

(near Brandon, Suffolk)

Attorney General's Case: A trial date has been fixed for the case against Lindis Percy on 8 November 2010 at Bury St Edmunds Magistrates' Court. The history of this case is as follows:

After walking into USAF Mildenhall in broad daylight and being asked to show her ID by Kyler Sherman Brown (armed US 'security' on duty at the gate), Lindis was waived through and given permission to enter the base. She showed her driving license to Mr Brown who took it and examined it front and back. She was on the base for about three quarters of an hour before being spotted by Richard Fryer (RAFLO) on 30 October 2010. She was arrested under s.128 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 and bailed. As this alleged offence is the decision of the Attorney General whether to prosecute or not, Lindis waited 6 months before a decision was made. The District Judge, hearing the stages of the case has twice had to order the CPS to disclose documents and CCTV evidence. Lindis has recently returned the CCTV evidence once again as it is in American format and unable to be viewed.

USAF WELFORD

(near Newbury, Berkshire)

Unarmed Police Replace MDPA: Armed Police at the ammunition store at RAF Welford will be replaced in two weeks with an unarmed guards service under new security arrangements announced by the MoD. After years of discussing security at the base used by the United States Air Force, a recent letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the MoD, Andrew Robathan confirmed that from September 30 MoD Police will be withdrawn and replaced with unarmed MoD Guard Service personnel.

The idea was first proposed in 2008 but subject to various physical security enhancements and changes in storage policy on the site. They have now been completed, but the move, which leaves one of the largest munitions stores in Europe guarded by unarmed personnel, with back-up coming from local police forces and MoD police based at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire, has still been met with a cautious welcome.

Newbury MP Richard Benyon, previously said in 2008 that the idea that Thames Valley Police would fill a gap was “fanciful”, adding that they were so thin on the ground in West Berkshire that if there was a major incident at the base, they would not have the resources locally to assist. But this week he was impressed by the work and vast sums of money that had been spent to secure the site.

Meanwhile an exercise is being coordinated between the MoD, the US Visiting Forces and the three Police Forces covering Thames Valley, Wiltshire and Hampshire next month to consider a multi-agency response to a fictitious scenario. [Excerpts by Robert Warlow Newbury Today 16 September 2010 – see also PQ section - we are following up this article with PQs. The MDPA expects cuts of at least 25% in the Strategic Defence and Security Review in October].

USAF FELTWELL (Deep Space Surveillance Mission)

(near Brandon, Suffolk)

Housing Under Construction: There is a new housing development under construction which was started in March at USAF Feltwell. It is scheduled to be finished in September 2011. There are 66 homes. US servicemen at USAF Feltwell, Mildenhall and Lakenheath can apply. Thirty eight homes will be allotted for junior non-commissioned officers; 38 for senior non-commissioned officers. [Excerpts from Stars and Stripes 21 February 2010].

DISMANTLING THE EMPIRE BOOK REVIEW

Dismantling the Empire – America’s Last Best Hope. Chalmers Johnson. Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, NY. 2010

This review from The Palestine Chronicle

That the empire has caused much trouble and is in trouble itself has been well documented and well explained by many current authors. Chalmers Johnson, who wrote *Blowback* – at the time an unheralded piece of research – and two more volumes, *Sorrows of Empire* and *Nemesis* that became the *Blowback* trilogy, has since written a series of essays that are concise, clear, hard-hitting, and undeniably for *Dismantling the Empire*.

The essential theme of the book is that the U.S. must dismantle its empire or face a future of poverty and strife within a divided nation. As these essays were written over a period of five years, there is some reiteration of information – particularly on the military bases and their costs and effects on the economy (not to mention all the other costs to the ‘host’ countries). Yet that only reinforces the significance of Johnson’s thesis, as the numbers are somewhat astounding for their significance with both foreign and domestic policy. As the title indicates, to save the U.S. as a democratic republic, the empire must be dismantled. Read the rest on the CAAB website

Did You Know?: The Southern European District Veterinary Command (SEDVC) unit at RAF Feltwell is the only US military clinic for all of the UK. Satellite clinics are held at RAF Alconbury, Croughton, Fairford, Menwith Hill and St Mawgan as mission permits.

USAF FAIRFORD

(near Letchlade, Gloucestershire)

Story From Fairford: The Red Arrows were zooming around the skies around RAF Fairford in tight formation, the aerial twitchers were gathering in numbers with their long lenses and outside Gate G a small band of peace protesters were forcefully making their point on the Friday before the big weekend at the Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford. The peace protesters from Oxfordshire Peace Campaign were making the point that they believed that the Royal International Air Tattoo was really an arms trade fair, under the umbrella of a friendly weekend for lovers of all things aeronautic. Nigel Day, speaking on behalf of the group said “We are here representing the peace-loving people of this country and think that if as much effort was put into peace, rather than war, the world would be a much better place.” Another protester present was Lanford resident Tony Weekes, who lives just a few hundred yards from RAF Fairford, who said “I think it’s disgusting, this annual show of hardware designed to kill people, dressed up as a family friendly event.” [16 July 2010 *Al Cane Oxfordshire news*].

Changes at USAF Fairford: In September last year it was announced that up to 100 civilian jobs were set to go after United States Air Force confirmed that all 112 American military personnel at RAF Fairford would be withdrawn. The decision was part of the \$3 billion European-wide budget cut programme. This would save the United States \$16 million a year in operating costs.

RAF Fairford will retain its status both as a NATO designated stand-by base and USAF Forward Operating Location. The base is to remain open but instead of having personnel on hand ready

to prep bombers 24-hours a day, it will now take 24-48 hours for personnel to be brought to the base. [*Stars and Stripes 26 January 2010 – we reprint this news article because of the costs involved*].

BRIEF SELECTION OF PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

We were disappointed that David Drew (Independent Labour MP Stroud), who was asking PQs on behalf of CAAB was not re-elected. However we are very grateful to Fabian Hamilton (Labour MP Leeds NE) who is now asking PQs for CAAB.

RAF MENWITH HILL

Q: Mr Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what cost has there been of patrolling by the Counter-Terrorism Unit at RAF Menwith Hill in each year since 2001.

A: Nick Harvey: External policing at RAF Menwith Hill is provided by North Yorkshire Police and the Ministry of Defence Police. It is common practice that police forces do not release the costs and numbers of officers as this might compromise future operations.
6 September 2010: Column 173 W

Q: Mr Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his most recent estimate is of the cost of Operation Phoenix at RAF Menwith Hill; and who bears the cost of that operation.

A: Nick Harvey: The works associated with Project Phoenix at RAF Menwith Hill are funded by the US authorities. The most recent estimate of the cost is some £52 million, which includes £39.5 million of enabling works. **27 July 2010 : Column 1069W**

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE GUARD SERVICE: FINANCE

Q: Sandra Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the Ministry of Defence Guard Service. [1901]

A: Mr Robathan: The forecast cost of the Ministry of Defence Guard Service for the current financial year is £112 million. **15 June 2010: Column 351 W**

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Q: Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many (a) US personnel visited the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and (b) AWE staff visited US establishments under the terms of the US-UK Mutual Defence Agreement in each of the last three years. [2045]

A: Mr Gerald Howarth: The total number of personnel visiting the Atomic Weapons Establishment and US installations under the terms of the UK-US Mutual Defence Agreement in each of the last three years is as follows:

UK visitors to the US		US visitors to the UK
2007	591	548
2008	522	806
2009	527	518

17 June 2010: Column 503W

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE AGENCY

Q: Mr Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on the withdrawal of the Ministry of Defence Police Agency from RAF Welford. [11867]

A: Mr Robathan: On current plans, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) police will be withdrawn from RAF Welford by the end of September. The Ministry of Defence police officers will be replaced by staff from the MOD Guard Service who have been recruited and are in place. In addition several security enhancements have been made to the base.

Q: Mr Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the future number of officers in the Ministry of Defence Police Agency at each base. [11869]

A: Mr Robathan: The future number of Ministry of Defence police officers will be determined by the outcome of the Strategic Defence and Security Review, and by other ongoing work that will determine the future Defence requirement for the policing services and capabilities that are provided by the Ministry of Defence police. **6 September 2010: Column 172W**

USA: BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE

Q: Mr Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what costs have been incurred in respect of the US Missile Defence system in each year since 1997. [11875]

A: Dr Fox: The UK provides support to the US Missile Defence system by sharing radar early warning information from RAF Fylingdales and by allowing the US to use RAF Menwith Hill to receive satellite early warning information; the UK does not incur any additional costs in respect of these activities. Any question regarding the overall cost of the US Ballistic Missile Defence system would be for the US Administration to answer. **6 September 2010: Column 176W** [We will follow this up through US Freedom of Information Act request]

"Individuals have international duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience. Therefore [individual citizens] have the duty to violate domestic laws to prevent crimes against peace and humanity from occurring".

Nuremberg War Tribunal 1945

FINALLY ...

Seen on Twitter: What do we want?

Apathy!

When do we want it?

Oh, you know, whenever ...

PLEASE

have a look at the
CAAB website
(www.caab.org.uk)
on the Video page –
there is an interesting
selection of videos
covering many issues
concerning the US
military and related
subjects

Activity and talks by CAAB since the last Newsletter:

- **Speak to students on 'Conflict Resolution Practice'** – Leeds Metropolitan University
- **Oral history interview for Bradford Peace Museum** – Leeds Metropolitan University
- **Interviewed by research student** – s.44 SOCPA Leeds Metropolitan University
- **Interviewed by PhD research student on Protest and Surveillance** – Hull University
- **Discussed work of CAAB with Clare Taylor for her book**
- **Speak at Lancaster & District CND AGM**
- **Interview with Stray FM**
- **Interviewed for article in *Unite***

MONEY MATTERS!

Each time the CAAB Account Bank Statement arrives I give a silent 'Thank you' to the generous supporters who send regular donations. This money enables the campaign to continue and is especially appreciated in these difficult times.

New Standing Orders can be arranged with the Co-operative Bank Plc: PO Box 250, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT or on-line at www.cooperativebank.co.uk/business sort code 089229.

Thank you
Christine Dean, Hon Treasurer.

Meeting for Worship:

Continue outside various US bases: Contact CAAB for details.

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