



## Global Ban on Nukes is Here!

On 20th September the UN treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons opened for signatories, and more than fifty countries signed up immediately, with Brazil being the first. The treaty will hopefully come into effect in the next few months, and we will be in the historic situation of seeing nuclear weapons outlawed at a global level for the first time.

To mark this huge victory for the anti-nuclear movement, campaigners across the region have been



Street Party in Leeds, with Fabian Hamilton MP (right)

celebrating and raising awareness. In Leeds, Yorkshire CND organised a celebratory street party, with fizzy drinks, global ban fairy cakes (pictured) and handing out flyers to commuters. We were pleased to be joined by Fabian Hamilton MP, shadow Minister for Peace & Disarmament, and also by Alex Sobel, newly elected MP for Leeds North West. Fabian gave speech welcoming the ban, mentioning how timely this is in view of increased nuclear tensions with North Korea. Alex also stated how pleased he was to see the ban come into effect, and happily signed the ICAN parliamentary pledge.

The following day, Grassington Peace Group organised a celebration in

### No Nuclear Day at DSEi protests

Early in September the ExCel Centre in London saw demonstrations and blockades, as peace campaigners tried to



SCRAP's street theatre at DSEi protests

disrupt the set up of the world's largest arms fair – Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI). This year was the first time a specific nuclear-themed day had been scheduled, inspired by the large numbers of nuclear weapons companies exhibiting at the fair.

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### Dangerous Regimes, Dangerous Times

Nuclear weapons have featured a lot in the news recently, but not as we would have hoped, as a result of the Global Ban Treaty (more information elsewhere in AfP). The media have pretty much ignored this historic agreement at the UN to ban nuclear weapons, while screaming loudly about North Korea's nuclear testing and the dangers this poses to the world.

As some commentators have quite rightly put (see Zoe Williams in the Guardian for an excellent exposition of this argument), CND and a widespread anti-nuclear movement is needed now more than ever. We in the peace movement condemn North Korea's attainment of nuclear weapons and their nuclear tests – we do not want *any* states to become nuclear powers. However we are also keen to see existing nuclear powers desist and follow the lead

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Grassington and then later in the day in Skipton, with cake and balloons. Keighley also saw a celebratory event on 23rd, with global ban cakes and signatures of support being collected. Huddersfield Quakers organised a vigil and leafleting in George Square that coincided with that in Keighley (see picture).

The only negative aspect to the global ban is the reaction of the nuclear weapons states and in particular our own government's refusal to engage with the treaty. Thousands of letters urging the government to sign were handed into Downing St by CND and ICAN UK. So far they are ignoring the pressure to join the majority of nations, but we are hopeful that more public pressure alongside pressure from MPs and other political parties will bear fruit. This Autumn we will be encouraging CND members to get in touch with their elected representatives at parliamentary and council level and ask them to sign the pledge. They can no longer fob us off with claims to be in favour of multi-lateral disarmament when that is exactly what is on the table.

**For more information about the global ban see [uk.icanw.org](http://uk.icanw.org)**

**And to lobby Theresa May to sign the Treaty, you can use CND's online tool at <http://act.cnduk.org/lobby/116>**

*Pictured below, Huddersfield Quakers Global Ban event*



YCND and friends blocking the road at DSEI.  
Photo: Neil Terry

The day involved two demonstrations - the first at the West gate, with three waves of blockaders from Trident Ploughshares, London Region CND and Faslane Peace Camp blocking the entrance for virtually the entire day. Meanwhile at East gate, Yorkshire CND, Greater Manchester CND and others from the north blocked traffic into the centre, with a huge 'Trident is Terrorism' banner and four people attached to 'lock-on' devices. Locked on alongside the Yorkshire protesters were two wonderful Belgian activists from Agir pour la Paix.

It was over two hours before police cutting teams were able to finally clear the blockaders, all the while serenaded by our peace singers. As soon as the road was cleared, waiting trucks were greeted by the sound of calypso classic 'Atomic Nightmare' as protesters flooded into the road and began to dance.

This was followed by a performance by 'The Windpower not Firepower Circus' aka Sheffield Creative Action for Peace (SCrAP) in which they transformed a Trident Missile into a Wind turbine. Villains such as the CEO of BAe Systems and

Theresa May were Boo'ed before the day was saved by 'The Green Team' (Hooray!)

We were joined on the East Gate by the 'Arms to Renewables' group, who organised Wind Turbine prop making workshops, a performance by The Pop-up Poet and an appearance by Green Party Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley. Jonathan reaffirmed his party's opposition to Trident and spoke of the need to move skills and investments away from arms and into renewable energy technologies.

Later in the afternoon, two more YCND campaigners were able to sneak past police and lock themselves in the road blocking it for a further 2.5 hours. As the two blockaders were being driven off in the police van they noticed that another campaigner had locked himself underneath one of the waiting arms trucks, continuing the blockade.

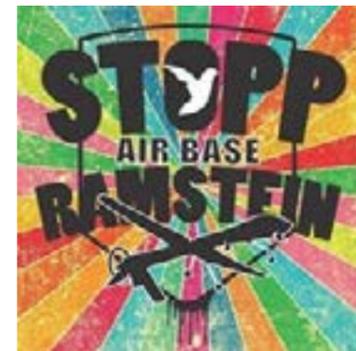
We congratulate Campaign Against Arms Trade and the Stop the Arms Fair Coalition for their work and thank Green and Black Cross for excellent legal support. During the week there were over 100 arrests, and many people have already appeared in court. Those pleading not guilty face a trial sometime later in the year. Those who pleaded guilty were gratified when local magistrates said that what they had done was "for a good reason", and let them off with a 6 month conditional discharge, and just the statutory £20 fee that goes to Victim Support charity.

## Stopp Ramstein!

On Saturday 9th September over 5,000 people gathered at the US Air Base at Ramstein in Germany for the climax of a week-long protest. A peace camp had been building in numbers over the previous few days and the weekend also included an International Congress on Military Bases held in the nearby town of Kaiserslautern. The base has some 22,000 US military and defence personnel and, with family members, the number increases to 54,000, making it the largest concentration of US citizens outside of the US. Many of the protesters also marched against the Vietnam War in the 60s and 70s and the Pershing-2 nuclear missiles in the 80s but there was also a large, growing number of people too young to have experienced those times.

Why Ramstein in particular? As well as having a role in the extrajudicial killing of several thousand suspects on foreign soil and being the HQ for the US and NATO missile defence system in Europe, which is causing much concern to Russia, it is also a major communications base through which the CIA controls its remotely piloted drone bombardment in Africa and the Middle East. In doing so, the US is violating international law and German constitutional law.

The German government claims that no drones are being flown from Ramstein – however, although the drones are not flown from there, it is a major hub for relaying the signals and commands from the pilots in the US. The former drone pilot turned whistleblower Brandon Bryant (who flew more than 1,000 operations from the US), has stated that the US global drone operations depend upon Ramstein. He has described how signals sent from Creech Air Force Base in Nevada travel via transatlantic fibre



optic cables to Ramstein, where they are then transmitted to satellites positioned above the Indian Ocean and from there to drones that strike targets in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. In addition, live pictures taken from the drone operations are analysed in Germany.

The International Congress on Military Bases held on September 8th and 9th in Kaiserslautern had over 300 participants. As well as many knowledgeable speakers from Germany, there was a video from Ann Wright, the former US Army Colonel and diplomat who resigned over the Gulf War and became a wonderful peace activist, and reports from campaigns focussed on US bases around the world - Ikuko Ueno from the Okinawa Nago City Peace Committee; Okinawa; Hohyun Choi from South Korea People's United Party; John Lannon from Shannon Watch in Ireland; Kirill Kopp from Estonia; Agneta Norberg from Sweden and I spoke about US bases in the UK. There were also workshops and plenty of time for discussion and meeting others.

On the 9th during the amazing



music festival that was organised as a grand finale (with three stages and a wide range of music) a preliminary meeting was held as a first step to establishing a global campaign against military bases. This will be more firmly developed in the next few months.

### Links with the UK

Ramstein is part of a global US military intelligence network that includes, among many others, the bases at Menwith Hill, near Harrogate, and Croughton, near Oxford. The Menwith Hill NSA spy base stands accused of supplying information, gathered through the interception of electronic signals, used for the targeting of US and UK drone strikes. A new "Joint Intelligence Analysis Complex", now being constructed at Croughton, will put the USAF base at the heart of a web of military and intelligence networks stretching from the USA to Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. In November 2013, The Independent identified Croughton as a "relay centre for CIA clandestine and agent communications" – which was used to ferry the intercepted data from Chancellor Merkel's mobile phone back to the US. It also appears to be used to communicate, via a specially laid fibre optic cable, with the US forward operating base in Djibouti which co-ordinates drone strikes over Yemen.

### Keeping Space for Peace

There will be protests held at Croughton (7th October) and Menwith Hill (10th October 6-8pm) as part of the annual global campaign "Keep Space for Peace Week" – see: [www.space4peace.org](http://www.space4peace.org). Join us – help build the protest to military bases in the UK and around the world.

Dave Webb .

## Hiroshima & Nagasaki Commemorations in Yorkshire

Across the region, people gathered as usual on 6th and 9th August to commemorate the dropping of the atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This year our minds were focused by the increasing nuclear tensions around North Korea, but also by the prospect of a United Nations ban on nuclear weapons. Here are some photos from around Yorkshire



Calder Valley



Keighley



Sheffield's Peace Picnic



Bradford, with the Lord Mayor

## Fundraiser's Column

We have had a summer of festival fundraising this year, making one phone charge shy of £6000 from Glastonbury doing our phone charging, in addition to the fee paid to us by the festival for running the lock-up. We also made around £1500 from Shambala festival, and we consider that to be a successful first year.

Yorkshire CND no longer has a dedicated fundraiser, with this responsibility being taken on by the other staff. But don't fear, all your favourite fundraising

events will continue apace. First up is the Peace & Crafts Fair, in Saltaire's wonderful Victoria Hall as usual, on Saturday 25th November. It is always a great opportunity to buy those really special Christmas gifts, and this year we will have a Santa's Grotto to entertain the youngsters. There will of course be the wonderful musical entertainments, which are worth coming to hear in themselves. If you know of any artists who might like to perform, then please email keith@beckvale.co.uk

We will be organising the Day of Dance on 28th April so please put that in your diaries now. There has been a lower rate of return on the Days of Dance in recent years, so if we don't want to lose this wonderful event, it needs more support.

Our fundraising events are crucial to generating the income to support our fundraising work and as always, we are very grateful to everyone who supports our events through promoting, volunteering and participating.

Cath

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of the 122 nations at the UN who voted for a ban. We also recognise that when a nation that dares to oppose the western nuclear powers is labelled tyrannical, crazy and evil, there is more than one side to the story.

North Korea's nuclear testing has been described as a "bold and provocative act" that showed the North's defiance of UN resolutions and "contempt for its neighbors." (sic). Donald Trump's bellicose statements threatening military action are dangerous, viewed by North Korea as tantamount to a declaration of war.

What the media fail to mention when considering North Korean tests was that for several weeks prior, Japan, South Korea and the US carried out large-scale joint-military drills on Hokkaido Island and in South Korea. These needlessly provocative war games were designed to simulate an invasion of North Korea and a "decapitation" operation to remove the regime. North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un has asked the US repeatedly to end these military exercises, but the US has refused. The US reserves the right to threaten anyone, anytime and anywhere even right on their doorstep!

The testing of ballistic missiles immediately after these military drills gave a clear message that North Korea will not be publicly humiliated and was prepared to defend itself against foreign aggression. In other words, the test was NOT a "bold and provocative act" but a response by a country that has experienced 64 years of relentless hectoring, sanctions, demonisation and sabre rattling by the US. However much we as anti-nuclear campaigners deplore the acquisition of nuclear capability by North Korea, we can at least understand that Kim Jon Un feels that he has no choice in the face of US aggression if he does

## Nuclear Convoys

In September, Yorkshire CND organised a public meeting in Pontefract about nuclear convoys, Pontefract being extremely close to the A1/M motorway, one of the most common routes taken by the convoys. In fact, as AFP went to press (25th September) yet another convoy was spotted by those intrepid nukewatchers, travelling up through our patch on the A1/M.

The meeting was addressed by Rebecca Johnson (Vice President CND and one of the founders of ICAN UK) about the reasons to oppose nuclear weapons, nuclear convoys, and some background on the UN Global Ban Treaty. There was then a presentation by Andrew Gray of Nukewatch who gave more detail about the nature of the actual convoys, and how to oppose them locally.

The meeting was extremely well attended, in part because of the great work of Rachel Melly, YCND's new worker, who wore out her shoes leafleting for the meeting around Pontefract. We also have to thank Father Simon Lodge, who initiated and hosted the meeting, and who engaged the local Pax Christi group and others.

If you could help out by being a convoy spotter, please contact Yorkshire CND and we can add you to the phone tree and offer help with the how and the where.



Rebecca Johnson, speaking at Pontefract meeting

not want to end up like Saddam Hussein or Gaddafi.

Responsibility for the nuclear crisis can be placed largely at the doors of the current nuclear states who have failed to meet their obligations under the NonProliferation Treaty and disarm. The UK cannot lecture North Korea while having just agreed an upgrade of our own nuclear weapons. As Simon Jenkins pointed out in the Guardian recently,

*"Korea is no threat to Britain, or to Nato, or to any known British interest. Yet Theresa May went to Tokyo last month to discuss with its prime minister "what can be*

*done" about Korea. She brought, according to an aide, "a message for China's President Xi Jinping, telling him in no uncertain terms that it is his responsibility to rein in Kim Jong-un". This was opium war talk. Britain even refused to rule out a military or cyberwarfare response. London, said May, stood "shoulder to shoulder" with America. Why?"*

Britain must take a step back from the escalating situation with North Korea, must sign the Global Ban treaty, and take a lead in encouraging other nuclear states to do the same.

# Demo at Menwith Hill for Keep Space for Peace Week



Jointly organised by Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign (formerly CAAB) and Yorkshire CND, this demonstration on Tuesday 10th October marks the Keep Space for Peace Week. Speakers will include Jenny Clegg, on the situation in South East Asia and tension with North Korea, Dave Webb on the links between our bases in Yorkshire and Ramstein and others around the world, Professor Nick Ritchie on the Global Ban on nuclear weapons, and Juneseo Hwang from South Korea.

Hot Food, Drinks, Music - a great way to show your solidarity with the weekly vigil at Menwith hill.

**To book a place on the free minibus, contact Yorkshire CND 01274 730795**

## Diary

**October 3rd** - Talk by Marie Dennis and Maria Stephan, titled 'Nonviolence Works! An opportunity for the Christian community to engage in creative peacemaking.' 6pm at Rose Bowl, lecture theatre A, Leeds Beckett Uni

**5th October** - A divided Britain: what can we learn from the Nordics?: Huddersfield Quakers annual Peace Lecture with George Lakey (USA) 7.30pm Friends Meeting House Church Street Paddock, HD1 4TR, free event, all welcome!

**October 6th** - if you missed George Lakey in Huddersfield, there's a chance to hear him give the first Howard Clark Memorial Lecture on Nonviolence 5.30pm at Rose Bowl, Lecture theatre A, Leeds Beckett University.

**10th October** - Demo at Menwith Hill (see above)

**12th November** - Remembrance Sunday, Songs for Peace in Bradford, 1pm at the Cenotaph.

**25th November** - Peace & Craft Fair, Saltaire (see enclosed leaflet and details inside)

## Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign

In 2016, Lindis Percy resigned as co-ordinator of the CAAB. She has done a great deal to raise awareness of the unaccountable nature of US military activity in the UK and around the world. Interested people have continued some of the work which was being done by CAAB. For a number of reasons, it has become necessary to re-launch the campaign and go forward with a successor organisation. The new organisation will be called the 'Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign'. The group intends to concentrate on Menwith Hill not only because of its proximity to where many of the group live but also because of its unique role in facilitating the militarisation of space and massive covert harvesting of data.

Contact: caab@corner.org.uk

## Local CND & Peace Groups/

**Rotherham CND** - jon\_smith@blueyonder.co.uk or phone 07952 044824

**Shipley CND** - Chris Butler christopherbutler1@mac.com or 07913 636036

**Calder Valley** - contact kathypitt725@hotmail.com or 07980 291478

**Huddersfield Peace Group** c/o Charlie Fairbank, fairbankcharles@gmail.com, Tel: 01484-846183

**Leeds CND** - contact Anna on 07503 749944 facebook.com/LeedsCND or leedsrnd@gmail.com

**Middlesbrough / Teesside CND** - hussainsam03@gmail.com

**Hull CND** - Angela Needham, 07737 249461, angela\_needham@homeopathy-soh.org

**Keighley Peace Justice & Environment Network** - contact Eithne on eithne@egbg.co.uk : 07947 793876

**Grassington & District Peace Group** - Richard Hargreaves, strand@hawkswick.net

**Sheffield CND** - jonathanpaul.wallis@virginmedia.com http://www.sheffieldcnd.org.uk

**Sheffield Creative Action for Peace (SCRAP)** - Hilary 07818040982 - scraptridentnow@gmail.com

**A**re you subscribed to our email announcements list? A fortnightly email keeping you up to date between newsletters - cath@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

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