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 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 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.

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

Inside

Demo at Menwith Hill for Keep Space for Peace Week, photographs from Hiroshima & Nagasaki Demos around the region, report from Ramstein, nuclear convoys in Pontefract and more...
Global Ban event

sign the Treaty, you can use
And to lobby Theresa May to
what is on the table.

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parliamentary and council level and
CND members to get in touch with
Autumn we will be encouraging
political parties will bear fruit. This
nations, but we are hopeful that
more public pressure alongside
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

For more information about the

global ban see 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

The day involved two demonstra-
tions - 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 Ter-
rorism’ banner and four people at-
tached to ‘lock-on’ devices. Locked
on alongside the Yorkshire protest-
esters 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 floated
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’d 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 ap-
pearance by Green Party Co-Lead-
er 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 en-
ergy technologies.

Later in the afternoon, two more
YCNED campaigners were able to
sneak past police and lock them-
seves in the road blocking it for a
further 2.5 hours. As the two block-
aders 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 Campaigns 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 ap-
peared in court. Those pleading not
guilty face a trial sometime later in
the year. Those who pleaded guilty
were gratified when local magis-
trates 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 Germa-
y for the climax of a four day
protest. A peace camp had been
building in numbers over the
previous few days and the week-
end 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 pro-
testers also marched against the
Vietnam War in the 60s and 70s
and the Peshing-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 extra-
judicial killing of several thousand
suspects on foreign soil and be-
having the HQ for the US and NATO
missile defence system in Europe,
which is causing much concern to
Russia, it is also a major communi-
cations 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 sig-
nals 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 opera-
tions 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 satel-
ite systems over the Indian
Ocean and from there to drones
that strike targets in Africa, the
Middle East and Central Asia.
Adding to this, live pictures taken
from the drone operations are analys-
ed 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 activ-
ist, and reports from campaigns
focussed on US bases around the
world - ikuko Ueno from the Okina-
wa Nago City Peace Committee;
Okayama; Hohyun Cho from South
Korea People’s United Party; John
Lannon from Shannon Watch in
Ireland; Kirill Kopp from Estonia;
Agnete 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 stag-
es 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 In-
telligence Analysis Complex”, now
being constructed at Croughton,
will put the USASF base at the heart
of a web of military and intelli-
gence 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 com-
munications” – 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
Dubai 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 annu-
al global campaign
“Keep Space for
Peace Week” – see
www.space4peace.
.org. Join us – help
build the protest to
military bases in
the UK and around
the world.

Dave Webb
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

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.

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 AIP went to press (25th September) yet another convoy was spotted by those intrepid nukey watchers, 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 leafletting 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.

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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 harassment, 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 Jong Un feels that he has no choice in the face of US aggression if he does 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 leedscnd@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

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