

Independence From America Day at Menwith Hill NSA Base

Amidst concerns about spreading the coronavirus - and against a backdrop of protests across the US and the UK calling for defunding of the police and the military, the annual Independence From America Day peace demonstration will be held by webinar, on Saturday 4th July 2020, 3.30-5.15pm.

The event is organised by the Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign. Please email mail@themhac.uk if you would like to take part.

A small number of people will be at the Main Gate of the Base at the same time as the webinar. They will hand in a letter to the US Chief of Station, and display banners and flags to show that the protest is on-going.

Speakers will include Chris Cole, founder of Drone Wars UK and author of *Convenient Killing: Armed Drones and the PlayStation Mentality* (2010) and *Drone Wars: Out of Sight, Out of Mind, Out of Control* (2016). Chris will talk about the use of the base for directing deadly drone attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and many other countries.

Professor Dave Webb, chair of CND, convenor of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, and expert on the activities of the base will also speak.

Brigid-Mary Oates of Bradford and Andy Croft of Ripon will read poems. Andy's latest book has been described as 'a user's manual for swimming against the tide' and 'laugh-out-loud funny'.

Music will be contributed by local favourites the Peace Artistes and by the East Lancs Clarion Choir.

Two members of the Choir will read the Declaration of Independence FROM America. This Declaration was written by members of Otley Peace Action Group in the 1980's. It has been read every year at the Main Gate at protests organised until recently by the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases, to emphasise the lack of accountability of the base and its occupants.

Menwith Hill Base gathers intelligence from all over the world for the US National Security Agency. It is closed even to UK Members of Parliament and maintains secrecy about its actions - for example the directing of drone attacks and economic spying. The base continues to expand and a Planning Application for 3 new radomes (which conceal satellite dishes) was approved by Harrogate Council last year.

President Trump recently confirmed the establishment of a 'Space Force' as a new arm of the US military arsenal. Menwith Hill is part of a network of bases all over the world which will be used by the US to facilitate war in space. The UK has signed up to the Outer Space Treaty (1967) on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and should fulfil its obligations under these treaties by asking the US to remove the base at Menwith Hill.