



OXFORD CND

NEWSLETTER

October/November 2023



CHINESE SPYING? WHAT ABOUT the U.S.?

Saturday, October 7th – 12 to 3pm

**Rally at Croughton USAF base
Military Nerve Centre of the US War Machine
in the UK electronic surveillance and satellite
communication spy base**

SPEAKERS

TOM UNTERRAINER – Chair of the
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

JOHN GITTINGS – former Foreign Affairs editor,
The Guardian

PETER BURT – Drone Wars UK

LINDIS PERCY – founder of the Campaign for
the Accountability of American Bases

**We need to make this top-secret base more visible and
answerable to the British people.**

**CONTACT: Nuala 01865 749459 for sharing transport
or Liz 07496315325 for a seat on the minibus.**

**Speeches, open mike, music and limited refreshments
– bring your own if possible.**

Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

01865 248357 oxfordcnd@phonecoop.coop

Nuclear Scorpions

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE not yet seen Christopher Nolan's *Oppenheimer*, I am not going to reveal any spoilers. Except to say, watch the last five seconds carefully and reflect on what they predict. For those who have sat through its three hours (though the story is so compulsive that one does not notice the length) I would advise seeing it a second time, as I intend to do. This is not only because Nolan's intricate weaving of themes, persons, and chronology is hard to follow on a single viewing, but because the narrative raises multiple, and ambiguous, issues of morality versus expediency, and of the interpretation of history, that need reflection.

That ambiguity is the abiding message of the film, it is inherent in the very existence of nuclear weapons, and *Oppenheimer* is its dramatic expression. He carried the Manhattan Project to its fatal conclusion, brushing aside the doubts and fears of a few fellow-scientists, with energy and enthusiasm. Yet just a month later he was in the Oval Office telling President Truman that he felt he had "blood on his hands". (Truman called him a "cry-baby", not as – in the film – he was leaving the room, but soon afterwards).

I happened to see the film while visiting family this summer in Hong Kong, and during a thirteen-hour daytime flight back, I consumed all 600 pages of *American Prometheus*, the excellent 2005 biography by Kai Bird and Martin J Sherwin that is Nolan's main source. Allowing for dramatic license – as in the "cry-baby" episode with Truman -- the book confirms the essential features of the film, and it fleshes out Oppenheimer's conflicted character in detail.

In early 1953, as the US policy of massive retaliation was being firmed up under the new Eisenhower administration, Oppenheimer ended a talk to the Council on Foreign Relations with this dire prediction. In the very near future, he said, "we may anticipate a state of affairs in which the two Great Powers will each be in a position to put an end to civilization and life of the other, though not without risking its own." And, he added, "We may be likened to two scorpions in a bottle, each capable of killing the other, but only at the risk of his own life."

A year later, Oppenheimer's career came to a halt after a long and damaging security review that dug deep into his past and removed his clearance. In semi-retirement, Oppenheimer might have been expected to heighten his criticism of official policy that embraced the risk of nuclear war. Instead,

when the first Offshore Islands crisis in 1955 increased the danger, he refused to sign a protest petition, saying that "a war over Formosa (Taiwan) was not necessarily worse than a peace under any circumstances, and if it came to war, the limited use of tactical A-bombs might not lead inexorably to the wholesale bombings of cities." He also turned down an invitation to attend the inaugural session of the Pugwash Conference, much to Bertrand Russell's puzzlement.

Amid the generally positive reviews of the *Oppenheimer* film, two main criticisms have been made. First, it does not properly acknowledge the impact of the New Mexico site and testing, at the time and later, on the Native and Latin populations of what – contrary to the visual impression the film conveys – was not an empty land. Second, it does not directly portray the suffering of the Japanese victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: when *Oppenheimer* visualises the death and destruction the bomb has caused and will cause, he sees a predominantly white audience.

These are valid criticisms, but to my mind they are more than balanced by the achievement of this film in raising the existential issue of nuclear war for a much larger audience than the peace movement will ever reach. And not only for the general film-going public: the latest issue of *The Economist* carries a feature and an editorial explicitly pegged to *Oppenheimer*. "Now the world is entering a new nuclear arms-race – one that may be harder to stop," says the editorial. Negotiations are the only way to avoid Oppenheimer's fear of "a chain reaction that would destroy the entire world". ■

John Gittings

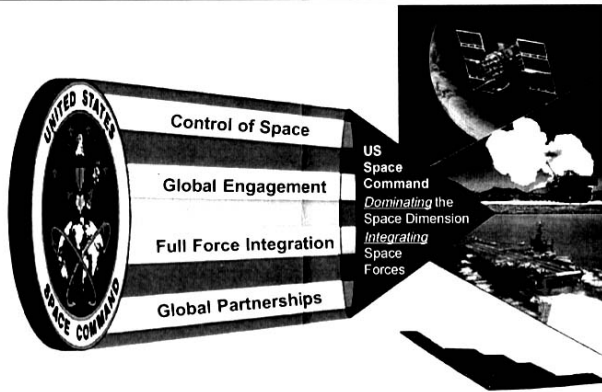


October 7th Rally at USAF Croughton

THERE WILL BE A MINIBUS collecting people from Oxford at 10.45 from the Railway Station and 11am near the Ashmolean on St. Giles. There aren't that many seats so it's essential to book through the driver so text or phone Liz Taylor on 07946315325.

If you have spare seats in your car, do let us know so that we can take everyone who would like to come and come along to St.Giles as near to the Ashmolean as possible. All cars need to go to the west side of Croughton, NN13 5QL and people will then be picked up by the shuttle and taken to the Rally at the main gate.

USSPACECOM Vision



US Space Command - Dominating the space dimension of military operations to protect US national interests and investment. Integrating Space Forces into warfighting capabilities across the full spectrum of conflict.

The Croughton Rally is part of the "Keep Space for Peace Week"

In 2016 the US Space Command issued a report named "Vision for 2020".

In this they stated that the US needed to dominate space to be able to fight wars in and from Space to defend US global interests.

They likened their mission into Space to the old US pioneers with their wagons travelling west to claim new territories!

Precious minerals have been detected on Mars and the Space Command mission is to ensure that the US had a monopoly on these interests.

Space domination

For many years, with annual demonstrations we have raised awareness of USAF Croughton as along being one of the communication bases for these ambitions along with Menwith Hill and Fylingdales.

Political and economic eavesdropping Spy Base We have also raised awareness that Croughton is part of the US surveillance and listening strategy where as well as political eavesdropping, the interception of all communications can give US businesses the edge in their financial dealings.

Satellite direction of drones and war fighting.

Croughton is known to be the base from where war fighting drones, for instance in Djibouti in East Africa, are directed.

So do spread the word and if you can, come and swell the numbers.

Militarising space and the nuclear threat – CND webinar

THE RACE TO DOMINATE space is heating up with colossal sums of money being spent by billionaires and multiple governments - including Britain - in their bid to control and monetise the skies. Much of this effort involves militarising space - with military satellites, ground-based stations and new technologies such as armed drones, becoming increasingly common.

What does this militarisation mean for future security? And does it make the threat of nuclear war more likely? Our upcoming webinar brings together experts on the issue of militarising space to discuss how the skies above could become a battlefield in a future nuclear confrontation.

Thursday, 12 October 7-8:00pm

Online, register now though the National CND website.

REGISTER NOW

With guest speakers: Dave Webb, Convenor of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and co-author of the report 'Heavens Above: Examining the UK's Militarisation of Space'; Mélusine Lebreton, academic at LSE European Institute specialising in outer space security; and Bruce Gagnon, co-founder and coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space. Chaired by Kate Hudson, CND General Secretary. ■

US drones coming to Fairford?

THE US AIR FORCE (USAF) has applied to the UK's air regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), to change airspace rules to allow RQ-4 Global Hawk and MQ-9 Reaper drones to fly from RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire.

The application for Global Hawk flights envisages them beginning in 2024. A recent update of the Reaper application states that while "the USAF requirement for MALE RPAS at RAF Fairford remains" it is temporarily pausing the process while it reassesses how to comply with the current regulatory framework. While nominally described as an 'RAF' base, Fairford is wholly operated by the US Air Force.

Currently, drones that fly beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) are not allowed to fly in the UK unless in segregated airspace. The USAF, through the Ministry of Defence (MoD), is seeking to put in place segregated

corridors to allow these drones to transit through UK airspace. The RAF is currently going through the same process to enable it to fly the UK's new 'Protector' armed drones from RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire. The USAF may be awaiting the CAA's decision in this case (due very soon) before proceeding with its application to fly Reaper drones.

According to one document submitted to the CAA, the "working assumption" by the USAF is that the corridors would be activated 2-3 times per week but they are "exploring activation periods that exceed these assumption, both in frequency and time periods of utilisation." The proposal is that the drones would take off and land overnight: "all activations will be between 1 hour after sunset and 1 hour before sunrise unless in extremis."

Lack of oversight

If this change is agreed there will be very little chance of the public knowing when or where these US drones will be used operationally. While the government has said previously that combat operations from US bases in the UK are subject to "joint decision" in reality the government has little

say or control over operations from US bases as the framework under which they operate – the 1951 Status of Forces Agreement – gives jurisdiction to the US, not the UK.

This is a very significant move. While the war in Ukraine will no doubt be at the forefront of people's thinking in regard to this development, the US uses drones – surveillance and armed – to enable it undertake air strikes right across the globe, both in areas of armed conflict, but also beyond for so-called 'targeted killings'. The UN, many individual states and international law experts have condemned the use of drones for these unlawful operations describing them as extrajudicial killings which undermine global peace and security.

Allowing US drones to operate from Fairford directly involves the UK in the US' worldwide drone operations which have killed hundreds, possibly

thousands of innocent civilians. Any legal action arising for these strikes could well involve the UK.

Safety issues

Outside of these geopolitical concerns, there also significant safety issues.

While the military use of large drones has have grown significantly over

the past decade, with their use almost becoming normalised, the technology itself is still far from mature and, simply put, they crash a lot.

In recent years there has been four mid-flight crashes of the larger Global Hawk drone and more than 80 crashes of Reaper drones over the past decade. These accidents happened for a wide variety of reasons – mechanical failure, electrical problems, weather issues, pilot error, lost link – and so cannot be solved by a technical 'fix'. Many of these crashes have occurred during the take-off or landing phase, said to be the most complicated part of flying remotely. In a densely populated country like the UK, which also has very crowded skies, the regulator should look very closely at the safety record of these systems despite the undoubtedly political pressure they will come under. ■



US 'Useable' Nuclear weapons to Lakenheath?

RUSSIA RESPONDED this week to the news that Britain is being primed for the return of US nuclear weapons by threatening its own "countermeasures" if the B61-12 is deployed to Lakenheath airbase in Suffolk. This tit-for-tat escalation is just what CND has been warning about since infrastructure works at the base were revealed last year. Recent polling found that majority of the British public agrees with our position - with 59 percent saying they oppose having US nukes in the country.

Speaking last week to the BBC, CND Chair Tom Unterrainer said the deployment of B61s to Lakenheath wasn't just a matter of concern for the people of Suffolk – it puts all of Britain at risk. What is even more worrying is that these new jets can take smaller nuclear warheads, sometimes referred to as "useable" nuclear weapons. European pilots based in different bases including Lakenheath, will be trained by NATO to drop these weapons. ■



Meet Sue!
 @ Friends Meeting House,
 St Giles, Oxford
 Sat 28 Oct, 3.15pm
 Tea and cake
 oxfordwib@gmail.com
 RSVP

FRED
 VREDE
 HOA BINH
 FRIEDEN
 VREDE
 PAQE
 AMANI
 ПОКОЉ
 ناشتي
 PACE
 PAIX
 PEACE
 Ειρήνη
 سلام
 शान्ति
 КАРАУАРААН
 PAZ
 МИР

Women in Black
AGAINST VIOLENCE,
FOR PEACE WITH JUSTICE

CYNTHIA COCKBURN
 and SUE FINCH

Every Saturday afternoon from 2pm to 3pm. women meet up at the Martyrs Memorial, dressed in Black, as much as possible, with placards and a banner against Militarism and War. As a mainly silent vigil it is very dignified and effective. Passers by will often stop and sometimes join in the vigil. **All women are welcome to join us on dates they are available!**

There is a WhatsApp group for getting the latest information about upcoming vigils – Contact Kate to be added: katemck@me.com or Carol: carolstavris@gmail.com to register interest.

On October 28th, Sue Finch, author of "Women in Black" (co-authored with Cynthia Cockburn) will join us for a meeting after that day's vigil at 3.15pm with tea and cakes. **Once again, all women welcome!**



Western Exploitation, War and Pollution in the Congo

MARIE CLAIRE FARAY from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) came to the August Aldermaston Women's Camp to speak about the exploitation of minerals, the pollution of the environment and the effect of the terrible wars that this greed for resources has caused to human security, and particularly to women's rights in the DRC.

The Congo is rich in resources, Copper, Gold, Diamond, Cobalt, Timber, Cotton and rubber. However, historically there has been competition for control of these resources and with the Manhattan Project, the West started the mining of Uranium in the Congo Shinkolobwe mines, a rich seam of uranium discovered in 1915. The use of Congo uranium culminated with the US creation of the atomic bombs that were dropped on Japan in 1945.

It is estimated that 15000 Congolese enslaved families of Adults and Small children were forced down through the narrow tunnels to mine uranium at Shinkolobwe, day and night without investigation into the environmental and health impacts of radioactivity, with the inevitably resulting cancers and later genetic deformities as well as death. Furthermore, the mining of Cobalt and Copper has seriously polluted the rivers and health of local populations.

Millions of Congolese are still dying from proxy wars orchestrated by the West for the control of natural resources such as Coltan used in electronic devices and cobalt/ copper in electric technologies; hence the DRC has been a proxy conflict zone since 1994, following the Rwandan Genocide when the UN Security Council Operation Turquoise let armed refugees enter the east of the DRC.

Many Congolese women were subjected to sexual violence as a weapon of war and some were even buried alive. Abuses are still on-going regardless of the presence of the largest UN Peace Keeping Mission in the world. In 2000 after the UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security was adopted, UN members states were invited to set national action plans. The Women, Peace and Security agenda set a holistic approach to security comprising four main pillars: Participation, Conflict Prevention, Protection, Relief and Recovery.

Through NGOs such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) many Congolese women received training

and asked to be part of Peace dialogue / political negotiation for power sharing, regardless of the risk to their lives and reputations and general intimidation. Although Congo mandates law on gender parity in national, provincial and local institutions there is still impunity for abuse of women's rights, for domestic violence and femicide.

Women's groups in the DRC are demanding an end to war and justice as well as full participation in the governance of their country. However, with war maintained by a toxic masculinity, and accrued militarism, with weapons supplied by the west, for many women and girls in the country, rape is a constant threat. Sexual violence has been used as a weapon to control, humiliate, and intimidate millions of women and girls since armed conflict broke out in 1994 as consequence of Rwanda Genocide and invasion.

Many African women are still expected to be subservient and dependant and hence are being perceived as lacking agency even within genuine international women's organisations. WILPF and other NGOs with their eurocentric support base, western ideology, policies and neo-colonial practices tend to dominate and undermine local initiative led by African Women. Also, even in the Diaspora (Europe / America) Congolese women activists, are facing sexism, abuses, domestic, sexual harassment, intimidation and defamation by some male activists or politicians.

The UK government has made commitments to strengthen its own record on Women Peace and Security by adopting all the 10 UN SC Resolutions on WPS and is at its fifth National Action Plan to provide strategic direction for the UK's diplomatic, development, security and defence efforts with systems to end violence against women and girls. However, the UK has not provided clear support to end oppressive regime in the D R Congo or the militarisation of the Great Lake Region of Africa, particularly of Rwanda.

The UK is therefore perceived as having double standards and weapons we trade around the world, such as those provided to Ukraine or sold to Saudi Arabia often end up found used for oppression in various African Countries.

The Congo is a fertile country where food plants

can grow in 3-4 weeks so food should not be a problem but now people's plantations have been taken over by war zones and are not accessible because of the war. People are starving but not able to go to those nearby places to grow or access the food they need. Many people are internally displaced, fleeing the countryside to live in cities. And, because of the war and political instability, education has deteriorated. Also, people have lost ancestral knowledge/skills.

We heard of that other legacy of the wars - that tradition and herbal knowledge of generations of a sustainable way of life, have been disrupted and set aside for values of consumerism. Marie-Claire's 100-year-old grandmother, for instance, would know how to speed up labour whilst lessen the pain of childbirth with geranium, or to use papaya

seeds against intestinal parasites.

Marie Claire told us how increasingly dangerous it is for women to take public transport, due to insecurity and recent kidnapping and murder, particularly in the capital Kinshasa. She often depends on a Catholic church compound for security. There, she is running courses to offset the dehumanisation that has been happening to women, whose bodies have been victims of war violence, teaching them to know and be proud and not defensive or ashamed of their bodies.

We were left with a real humility in the knowledge that our government and many others of the West have been party to the destruction of paradise in our resource wars and that the help we send is often still patriarchal with even the UN soldiers sometimes party to the local arms trade. ■

OUR PRIDE or SHAME? The UK Arms Trade

EVERY 2 YEARS THE GLOBAL arms trade comes to Newhams ExCel Centre.

This year it was from the 12th-15th September.

Over 40,000 people from 100 countries came to one of the world's largest arms fairs - the Defence and Security Equipment International, DSEI

Over 1,500 defence (offence?) and security (repression?) firms exhibited their offensive and repressive equipment to many representatives from countries with dire human rights records.

In his keynote speech General Sir Peter Sanders, Chief of General Staff boasted,

"Defence, through key events like DSEI, is a driver of national prosperity. The UK is the second largest defence exporter in the world, selling equipment worth £14bn last year and supporting more than 260,000 British jobs."

Rather worryingly, he also stated that:

"At DSEI in 2021, my predecessor suggested that, rather than thinking of ourselves as the post-war generation, we should contemplate what it might feel like to be the 21st. Century pre-war generation. As events show we are now the pre-war generation. And it comes with a responsibility we cannot shirk"

This foolish UK General is still in the same mindset as the generals of the early 20th Century thinking that we only need brilliant pilots, slightly upgraded weapons, tanks and technicians to win a war that could be the end of the world as we

know it. It really is time for the peace movement to give everything it has, to grow and oppose this irresponsible and foolish idiocy.

The general's proposition needs countering by the peace movement.

For inspiration read highly relevant –

Kate Hudson's book 'Now More than Ever'.

Remembering the dead

Bonn Square

11am – 12th November

Gathering to remember all the
dead in both World Wars.

Please come along and bring a
short poem or thought for all
those whose lives are wasted
in those terrible wars,
and for a minute's silence
to hold a vision of working
for peace.

Diary

**Every Saturday 2 to 3pm
Women in Black at the Martyrs'
Memorial**

October

Saturday 7th Rally at USAF CRoughton 12 to 3pm

Thursday 12th CND Space webinar

13th to 15th Aldermaston Women's Camp cont.
07806600862

**24th Oxford CND monthly meeting 6 to 8pm
St. Aldates Room the Town Hall.**

Please come if just to keep up morale.

27th Oxford Quaker Meeting House an evening exploring the work of hopefulness with cake! 7pm for 7.30pm. Finish by 9.30pm. This event is free and open to all. Contact: marianne@subgiant.co.uk.

28th Women in Black Meeting, with book launch and refreshments 3.15 Friends Meeting House, St. Giles.

November

10th 7pm at RISC 35-39 London St. Reading The Legacy of Nuclear Colonialism part of Reading International Festival cont. Trish Whittam
07935009078

11th 11am Remembrance Poems at Aldermaston Women's Camp

12th 11am Remembrance vigil for all the Dead in both World Wars Bonn Square

25th OCND stall at the Green Fair

25th Demonstration against Campsfield Immigration Centre

Contact: Liz Peretz eaperetz@gmail.com

December

Alternative Carols Contact

Nuala nualayoung@hotmail.com nearer the time.

Best list of news items, webinars etc:

https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/news_items

<https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk/events>

<https://www.cndsalisbury.org.uk>

Latest News

At a very effective and fairly brief meeting on September 21st in the Town Hall there was a great sense of getting OCND back on its feet again with volunteers for leafletting and a team of people, Kate McKenzie, Anne Whitehouse and Rachel Western who volunteered to design and set up a web page for OCND. Anyone willing to help with that or on the Newsletter would be very welcome. Contact: Nuala nualayoung@hotmail.com or text **07806600860**

Membership subscriptions 2023

**For details of Bankers Orders e-mail:
liztaylor@virgin.net**

If you pay your subscription by cheque please can you pay us as soon as possible. Oxford CND needs that money to campaign and send you information and newsletters. We are also very grateful for extra donations.

Subs are very reasonable – £10 or £5 low wage, but are essential for us to continue to campaign. Standing orders can continue as before.

Make cheques for 2023 payable to Oxford CND and send to: Membership, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP

Oxford CND Newsletter by email

Some members already receive the Oxford CND newsletter only by email. If you would like to receive the newsletter online please let Liz Taylor, the membership secretary know on:

liz.taylor5@virgin.net

Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Please contact: Nuala Young
nualayoung@hotmail.com



Contributions to the next issue...

Please send letters and items to:
Newsletter, 22 Downside Road, Oxford, OX3 8HP
No later than: **November 30th**