

NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Published on behalf of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

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CEASEFIRE AT LAST! WHAT NEXT?

Fourteen months after the November 2023 ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, a new 6-week ceasefire began on January 19.

The 2023 ceasefire only lasted a week, during which 105 hostages from Gaza and 210 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails were released, and then Israel resumed hostilities.

Why has Netanyahu agreed to a ceasefire now, when none of his war aims have been realised? His announced aims were to eliminate Hamas and free the hostages. Clearly he has not eliminated Hamas as shown by the number of armed fighters in Hamas uniforms shown supervising the release of hostages in Gaza. The Israeli paper *Haaretz* even suggested that Hamas has recruited nearly as many new members as were killed in the war. The second aim was undermined by the Israeli Defence Force's (IDF) heavy bombing of Gaza which must have killed many more hostages than the eight released by the IDF. A third



People returning to northern Gaza after the 2025 ceasefire

aim, which appeared to be the aim of the IDF's recent actions in northern Gaza, was eviction of Palestinians from north Gaza. That aim has now been negated by the large numbers of Palestinians who have returned to northern Gaza when allowed to do so under the terms of the ceasefire agreement.

The reasons the Israeli government's agreement to the ceasefire seem to be fourfold:

1) The continuing agitation by the families of hostages and their supporters to get a ceasefire and hostage deal that could get the remaining hostages out of harm's way;

2) Public support in Israel for the war has plummeted, with 72% in a recent poll in Israel saying they were in favour of an end to the war with the return of all hostages;

3) The death-toll of IDF soldiers and Israeli police has continued to rise. In February the IDF published names of 842 soldiers and 69 police killed in the conflict since 7/10/23. Much less than the 47,000 (military and civilian) Palestinians killed in Gaza during the same period, but a sizeable number nevertheless;

4) Pressure from Trump, threatening dire consequences to Israel if they didn't agree to a ceasefire before his January 20 inauguration as President. The ceasefire terms were very similar to a ceasefire plan Netanyahu had rejected last May. This it seems so Trump could demonstrate his power and pose as a "peacemaker" at his inauguration. But Trump's no friend of Palestinians and has gratified Israeli right-wingers by supporting the removal of Palestinians from Gaza to Jordan and Egypt, so Gazans could "live in peace for a change". Trump didn't consult Palestinians about this plan, any more than the UK consulted them on the 1916 Balfour Declaration granting Jews a "national homeland" in Palestine. Trump also said the US should take over Gaza and rebuild it as "the Riviera of the Middle East"!

In Trump-land this will all be achieved without force; Jordan and Egypt will willingly accommodate 2 million Gazans, and Israel the US take-over of Gaza. Jordan and Egypt indeed strongly rejected the proposal. Israel is presumably happy for the US to remove Palestinians from Gaza but not to take it over.

However, in Israel, Trump's intervention was largely welcome and taken seriously, with the Israeli defence minister ordering the army to prepare plans to "allow" Palestinians "who wish to leave" to leave Gaza.

Netanyahu has always said the ceasefire is temporary and he intends to continue the war.. The terms of the ceasefire agreement give opportunities for Israel to do so. The deal is in three stages. The first stage involves a six-week ceasefire during which 33 hostages are being released in return for some 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

Stages 2 and 3 are yet to be agreed. Negotiations on stage 2 began on February 4.. What is to be agreed in this stage is a permanent ceasefire, the exchange of the remaining live hostages for more Palestinian prisoners and Israeli forces's complete withdrawal from Gaza. The third stage would

involve the return of the bodies of dead hostages and the reconstruction of Gaza, which would likely take many years.

Netanyahu and his right-wing ministers may well not agree stage 2, involving as it does withdrawing its forces and be seen as a Hamas victory. But leaving many hostage in Gaza would hardly satisfy the hostage lobby. Even if Israel agrees stage 2, there is every likelihood it won't agree stage 3, for then there would be no hostages lives to risk by resuming the war.

Stage I is currently going relatively smoothly with both sides largely carrying out the ceasefire terms. Thus Israel has withdrawn troops from the Netzarim Corridor it had set up between north and south Gaza to prevent Gazans returning to northern Gaza from the south, and have largely stopped impeding aid into Gaza. However Israel has shut down the major aid agency for Palestinian refugees, UNWRA, from operating in Gaza or in the West Bank

The West Bank: There has been no ceasefire in the West Bank where attacks on Palestinians homes and means of livelihood by settlers and the IDF have increased. Also the IDF is now using tactics it employed in Gaza and Lebanon of heavy bombing and land attacks on Palestinian targets claimed to be Hamas strongholds, such as the Jenin and Tulakarm refugee camps. In Jenin it is reported 120 buildings have been destroyed, 15,000 people displaced and over 40 killed. On January 31 it was reported that 845 Palestinians had been killed (by settlers and soldiers) in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since 7/10/23.

Lebanon: The ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon was signed on 27/11/24, whereby within 60 days Israel would remove its troops from the buffer zone in Lebanon and Hezbollah would move its forces to north of the Litani river. This seems to have been achieved though it took longer than 60 days.

Syria: Following the overthrow of the Assad regime in Syria, Israel invaded the demilitarised zone between the Israeli-occupied Golan heights and Syria, Netanyahu claiming that the overthrow of Assad had voided the 1974 agreement that set up the zone. Israel also launched aerial and naval attacks on Syrian military targets, and its navy and chemical weapons stockpiles. Also in February Israel was building a new military base in the zone.

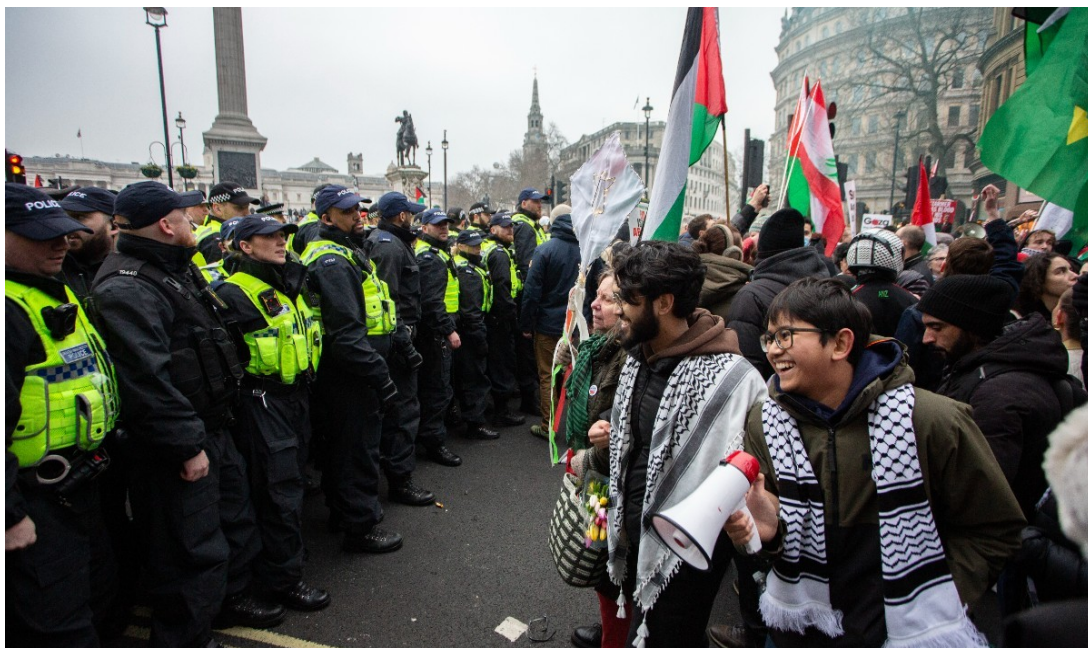
Iran: at least Iran and Israel have drawn back from the possibility of direct war between them after several increasing exchanges of missiles.

POLICE OBSTRUCT JANUARY 18 PALESTINE MARCH

On November 30 2024 PSC announced a march on January 18 from the BBC to Whitehall for a rally which had been agreed with the police. However a week before the 18th, the Met. Police reneged on the agreement and announced the march from the BBC would not be allowed. (The police were given the right to put conditions on marches under the Policing Act 2022) The police gave as a reason for this ban that assembling at the BBC might cause disruption to a nearby synagogue though this was not even on the protest route. Yet, as the PSC report, police acknowledged that there has not been a single incident of any threat to a synagogue attached to any of the 22 PSC marches organised in London since October 2023. PSC also points out that these marches have not been hostile to Jews; indeed the many Jews taking part are very much welcomed. It would seem that the police had been leaned on.

PSC reported that the police had offered an alternative starting point for the march, Russell Square, but PSC refused the offer and agreed to hold a static rally in Whitehall instead.

At the end of the rally it was announced that many of the leading speakers at the rally, including Jeremy Corbyn, Ben Jamal, Director of PSC and Chris Nineham, Vice Chair of Stop the War Coalition and chief steward for the demonstration, and an 87-year old Jewish Holocaust survivor, would walk together towards the BBC until stopped by the police when they would stop and lay down flowers and children's shoes they were carrying in remembrance of all the people and children killed in Israel's war on Gaza. BBC news reported that demonstrators "broke through" the police cordon across the top of Whitehall but many observers and the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers report a quite different picture – that police allowed people including the delegation of notables to filter through into Trafalgar Square where they were kettled by police so they couldn't leave the Square.



Massed lines of police containing demonstrators at the top of Whitehall

In the end, police announced the police had made 77 arrests during the demonstration, 65 for breach of police conditions, at least one of those making their own way to the BBC for refusing to move from the vicinity when told to do so. The other 12 were charged with public order offence (5), assault (3), supporting a proscribed organisation (1) and inciting racial hatred (1) Hardly a riot!

Chris Nineham was among those arrested during the demonstration and was later charged along with Ben Jamal with public order offences. There is a video showing that Nineham was forcibly dragged out of the crowd from behind the police line, so he certainly didn't break through it voluntarily. He was then

held overnight before being bailed under the condition he didn't take part in any further PSC demonstration! MPs Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell who were in the delegation were later interviewed under caution by the police but have not been charged.

On January 21 more than 40 legal scholars signed a letter calling for an independent inquiry into the policing of the January 18 protest in London, describing it as, "a disproportionate, unwarranted and dangerous assault on the right to assembly and protest".

PALESTINE ACTION (PA) IN ACTION

Since the report of PA action is the Dec/Jan newsletter, PA have carried out the following actions:

Christmas Day: in the afternoon PA began breaking through the walls of Israeli arms company Elbit's UAV Engines's factory in Shenstone, Staffs which manufactures engines for military drones being used in Gaza. The activists using two buckets attached to two cherry pickers to damage the wall. The drivers locked-on inside to delay their removal. Five activists who took part in the action were arrested and held in custody overnight. The following morning four were released (on bail?), but one, Bryn, who was on bail after being charged after a previous PA action was remanded in custody before being released after a month.

January 13: PA Scotland targeted the offices of manufacturer Parker Hannifin at its Glasgow production facility. They smashed many of its windows and sprayed its walls and signages as

January 28: In the early morning, PA crashed a van into the front of Teledyne Defence and Space in Shipley. Activists then attached themselves to the vehicle in order to shut down the factory and disrupt shipments of weapons parts to be used against the people of Palestine and Lebanon.

The same day PA struck 15 premises of the Allianz company, investors in and insurers of Elbit Systems, Elbit had nine of it's premises struck overnight with red paint and smashed windows across England and Scotland. Across Europe, actions took place against Allianz sites in Germany, Netherlands and Portugal.

As far as PA activists sent to prison and support actions are concerned, the following have taking place in the same period:

December 15: Over 100 people took part in a demonstration outside HMP Bronzefield in Ashford, Kent, where 11 Palestine Action activists are currently being detained. The 11 were among 18 detained by police in connection with disruption of Israeli weapons production at a new Elbit research hub in Filton, Bristol which opened last June. They are being held under "Counter Terrorism" powers.

well as inside the building with red paint, "symbolic of the Palestinian blood on the hands of the company". The firm makes parts supplied to Leonardo and other companies that make military products used by Israel in Gaza.

January 22: PA activists occupied the Aviva Centre in Bristol. One climbed onto the overhang over the front while a second spray-painted the front with messages including "Elbit Out". Aviva provides the mandatory employers liability insurance for UAV Engines in Shenstone.

January 23: Activists targeted Kelvinside Electronics in Glasgow, spraying the interior with red paint, and leaving signs that read: "Drop Leonardo Contract" and "Don't Profit from Genocide". Kelvinside offers services to both Leonardo and Thales, which firms supply arms to Israel.



Police at back of van PA activists crashed into gates of Teledyne

December 20: PA activist Francesca Nadin was refused bail for a third time. She was arrested twice in May 2023 for taking part in PA actions in Bradford against Teledyne and in Leeds against a Barclay's bank and charged with six others for criminal damage at Barclay's. She was then remanded in custody pending trial, though the other 6 were bailed. The trial of the Barclays 7 is scheduled in March 2025, by which time Francesca will have been in prison for 10 months.

January 18: At the Old Bailey nine of the "Filton 18" pleaded not guilty to charges of aggravated burglary and criminal damage, charges with which all 18 have been charged as well as some additionally with violent disorder. The charges arose from a PA action at Elbit's Bristol factory last August. All have been held in custody since then and continue to be so and all have a trial date set down for November 2025. A solidarity demonstration was held outside the court. The other nine are expected to appear in court to plead later in the year.

JUST STOP OIL (JSO)

JSO have mostly been recently involved in fighting court cases arising from previous actions.

Direct Action: The JSO only reports two direct actions in this period. The first was on January 13 when two activists painted "1.5 is dead" on Darwin's grave in Westminster. This was in response to the news that world temperatures had for the first time risen more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial levels, a maximum increase agreed by a meeting of world leaders in 2015. Both were arrested, for criminal damage presumably. Then on January 27, two activists disrupted a performance of *The Tempest* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane by firing a confetti cannon and climbed onto the stage holding up a sign reading, "Over 1.5 is a Global Shipwreck".

Court Actions:

December 13: three activists appeared before Salisbury Magistrates, charged with "destroying or damaging an ancient monument" and "causing a public nuisance". The third activist was charged with "aiding and abetting" these offences. The first two had sprayed orange cornstarch powder on stones at Stonehenge to draw attention to the need to end burning of fossil fuels. The case was adjourned to a later date.

December 20: Gaie Delap (77) was sentenced in August to 20 months in prison in August 2024 for causing a public nuisance for climbing with others on to a gantry over the M25 in 2022, causing A25 traffic to be held up. Gaie together with three of her co-defendants were released early, on condition of being tagged and suffering a home curfew. No tag small enough was found for Gaie's wrist so police escorted her back to prison on December 20. She was eventually released to home curfew on January 30 being

tagged with a strap previously considered unsuitable. Her sentence is to end on April 7.

January 7: GP Dr. Patrick Hart was given a one year sentence at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court after being found guilty of criminal damage for disabling Esso petrol pumps at Thurrock Services on the M25. He is also to face a disciplinary hearing before a General Medical Council tribunal which could suspend him from practising.

January 9: An activist who had climbed onto a gantry over the M25 with four others in July 22 was found guilty of public nuisance by a jury at Chichester Crown Court and but given an 8-month suspended sentence, with £1500 costs. She had previously been remanded to prison in November 2022 for three-and-a-half months following the action.

January 16: Phoebe Plummer and Jane Touil appeared at Isleworth Crown Court accused of causing £8,000 worth of criminal damage, for which the maximum sentence is 10 years in prison. The two had used fire extinguishers to spray Heathrow departure boards with water-based orange paint last July, after which Phoebe was remanded for 58 days and Jane for 14 days. Phoebe is currently in prison (see next entry) The trial ended after nine days with the jury unable to reach a majority decision. A retrial was scheduled for May 2026.

January 29-30: 16 JSO activists at Appeal Court to appeal against jail sentences imposed on them last summer. The appeal concerned four and five year prison sentences handed down in July 2024 to JSO co-founder Roger Hallam and four co-defendants for taking part in a Zoom call to discuss a planned protest on the M25 and also the 20-month sentence imposed on grandmother Gaie Delap and four co-defendants who carried out the M25 gantry protest in November 2022, as well as the 18

month to 3 year sentences imposed on four supporters who dug and occupied tunnels under a road leading to the Navigator Oil Terminal in Essex in August 2022, disrupting traffic, as well as the two sentences of 2 years and 20 months

imposed respectively on Phoebe Plummer and Anna Holland, who threw soup over Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, which was not damaged as it is under glass, for damaging the frame.



JSO sit-down blocking the Strand.

summing-up the judge instructed the jury to ignore as irrelevant the justification the three had given for their action - drawing attention to what the government was doing to approve new oil and gas fields, and that it was making people poorer because they should instead have been incentivising renewable energy. The trio are due to be sentenced on April 4th.

January 30: However, also on this date, JSO had one bit of good news to report, that Scotland's Court of Sessions had ruled that the UK government's approval for drilling for oil and gas in the large Rosebank and Jackdaw oil and gas fields under the sea was unlawful so quashing the consent. The grounds for the quashing was that the approval was granted with no assessment of the impact of the greenhouse gas emissions that would arise when the oil and gas to be extracted was eventually burned. The UK Supreme Court had ruled in June 2024 that these emissions must be taken into account. The government however responded by saying it would issue new licences for drilling in these fields which would take into account these impacts, but presumably this would require the government carrying out such assessments.

Airport expansion to go ahead

Flying in the face of the general scientific opinion that air travel is the most polluting form of transport, on January 29 the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, outlined plans for an imminent decision on a plan for a third runway at Heathrow, and also expansion at London Gatwick and Luton airports and support for the reopening of Doncaster Sheffield Airport. She claimed a third runway at Heathrow would "unlock further growth, boost investment, increase exports, and make the UK more open and more connected". She also said there's be a £63m investment into development of less polluting aviation fuel to counter the argument that these developments would sabotage government policy of combatting climate change.

Two days earlier, the "Heathrow 10" had appeared at Isleworth Crown Court for a case management hearing, all having entered a plea of not guilty at an earlier hearing. Eight of the 10 have been held in custody since July last, the other two had been bailed previously. At the hearing three more were bailed to await trial and five of them had their remand to prison continued. The trial of the 10 had originally been set for January 20 but the judge adjourned the trial, set to last six weeks, till possibly February 2027.

The 10 are all facing charges of the new charge of "conspiracy to cause a public nuisance" (maximum sentence 10 years) after being arrested in the vicinity of Heathrow on July 24, on the basis of intelligence they were planning to carry out an action at the airport.

JSO reported that on the 30th that over a thousand people demonstrated for the 16 by blocking the road outside the Hugh Court. There were only two arrests as the police allowed the sit down to last an agreed length of time. JSO also reported that solidarity demonstrations took place in countries including Canada, Sweden, Switzerland and New Zealand. The outcomes of the appeals have not yet been reported.

January 30: Meanwhile, at Southwark Crown Court three activists were found guilty by a jury after a 10-day trial of more than £5000 worth of criminal damage (for which the maximum sentence is 10 years). The three had sprayed red paint over the Treasury in 2022. In his

Growth before defence of the climate: On January 23 Keir Starmer was reported as planning to blocking “excessive” legal challenges to planning decisions for “major infrastructural projects” such as airports, railways and nuclear power stations, as part of the government’s drive for economic growth. This would involve giving High Court judges the power to rule that cases brought before them for judicial review regarding nationally significant projects are “totally without merit” and cannot go to appeal. So such a ruling cannot be challenged.

As Starmer argued: “For too long, blockers have had the upper hand in legal challenges – using our court processes to frustrate growth. We’re putting an end to this challenge culture by taking on the nimbys and a broken system that has slowed down our progress as a nation.”

CRIMINALISING MIGRANTS

USA: On January 29, Trump signed an executive order to prepare a detention facility at Guantanamo Bay US naval base in Cuba to hold up to 30,000 migrants deported from the US. As Trump put it, justifying the order, “We have 30,000 beds in Guantanamo to detain the worst criminal illegal aliens threatening the American people.” He claimed the move would help eradicate “the scourge of migrant crime in our communities, once and for all.” He added that “Some of them are so bad we don’t even trust the countries [of origin] to hold them because we don’t want them coming back...so we’re going to send them out to Guantanamo.” So are they to be sent there for life?



Round-up in US of migrants who've crossed the Mexican border

The naval base has a high-security prison for “enemy combatants” opened in the wake of the 11 September 2001 terror attacks on the twin towers in New York and the Pentagon. This prison is notorious for alleged violations of the legal rights of detainees under the Geneva Conventions and accusations of torture or abusive treatment of detainees by US authorities. Only 15 of the some 780 people detained there still remain. More recently some migrants picked up on boats on the way to the US have also been held there.

It is not clear what level of criminality would lead to incarceration at Guantanamo. Would simply failing to have the right documents count? In any case the scheme seems to involve treating all those incarcerated at Guantanamo just like the suspected homicidal terrorists detained there in the past, adding to the demonisation of all migrants, which is perhaps partly the aim.

UK: The Labour government continues the difficult feat of treating asylum seekers even more harshly than previous Tory governments.

On January 30 it introduced a new bill to parliament under which people who refuse to be rescued by French authorities could be jailed for five years. Refugee charities claimed that this risked criminalising hundreds of asylum seekers whose only “crime” was trying to reach the UK to make a claim for asylum which they have a right to do and which the UK prevents them making in any other way.

Germany: On January 29 Frederick Merz, the leader of the conservative alliance in the *Bunderstag* introduced a bill which enshrining a five-point plan to end “irregular” migration. One of the five measures, one to turn asylum seekers and other migrants back at Germany’s borders was narrowly passed with the support of the far-right *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD). Merz was accused by the minority Social Democratic government of breaking” a long-standing political firewall against the far right parties by seeking support from AfD. The Social Democrats and their Green party allies in government pointed out the bill contravenes both German and EU law on refugees.

COMING EVENTS

February

12, 7-8.30pm: “No US Nukes in Britain: don’t make us a Target.” CND webinar, with Jeremy Corbyn MP, Tom Unterrainer, CND Chair and others. Chaired by Sophie Bolt, CND General Secretary. Info re registering: CND, 020-7700 2393.

15: International support march and rally for Palestine. Assemble noon, Whitehall. Organised by PSC. Supported by CND Info: info@palestinecampaign.org

18, 6-8pm: “Trump’s 2nd Term: NATO, War and the Economy.” CND international webinar with international speakers and chaired by Kate Hudson, ex-CND General Secretary. Org. by CND & other peace org organisation. Info re registering: CND, 020-7700 2393.

18, West Midlands, 7.30-8.30pm: West Midlands CND online planning meeting. For a link to join, or any other queries, email wmcndall@gmail.com

18, Abingdon, 8-9pm: “Lakenheath – Another Greenham. Making ourselves a Target?” Abingdon Peace Group meeting online. Speaker: Sophie Bolt, CND General Secretary. For link to join, or other queries, please contact 01235 526265 or 07786 055195 or email abingdonpeace@gmail.com

18, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, 5.30-7pm: Perspectives for Understanding & Ending the Russia-Ukraine War. With Chris Nineham & others. At Newcastle Uni, Herschel Bldg, opposite Haymarket Metro stn. No need to book. Org. Newcastle STW & Uni. WORG

22: “Invest in peace not weapons.” CND Day of Action at Barrow Trident factory. Noon: Leafletting in Barrow town centre; 1-3pm: Rally on the High Level Bridge over Devonshire Dock. Info: CND, 020-7700 2393.

23, Edinburgh: Global Day of Action to Close Military Bases. In Edinburgh WILPF is organising walk up Royal Mail from St. Giles Cathedral (assemble 3pm) to Edinburgh Castle.

24, 7-9pm: “Reflections on Ukraine, three years on.” Scottish CND webinar, with guest experts. To register or info: phone 0141 357 1529 or email scnd@banthebomb.org

25, Birmingham, 7pm: “Fight for the Right to Protest.” Speakers Chris Nineham & tba. At Moseley Community Hub, 496 Moseley Rd. Balsall Heath. Org. West Midlands PSC, admin@westmidspsc.org

March

1, Liverpool, 1.30pm: “Free Palestine. Defend the Right to Protest.” Speakers: Chris Nineham, Andrew Feinstein & others. At the Racquet Club, 5 Chapel St. Liverpool L3. Org. by Liverpool STW.

13: The paperback of *Deep Deception* becomes available, now renamed *The Undercover Police Scandal: Love & Lies Exposed* to match the title of the ITV documentary on the scandal.

15: Yorkshire CND annual Strategy Day. For queries please contact info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

29, London, 11am – 5pm: “Summit of Resistance.” Speakers; Jeremy Corbyn, Lindsay German, Owen Jones, Andrew Feinstein & others. Venue tba. Org, by Stop the War, CND & others.

Last Saturday of each month, Lakenheath, noon-2pm: *Lakenheath Alliance for Peace* vigil at the main gate to highlight that we don’t want US nuclear weapons returning to Britain. Contact: vigils@lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk (check before going)

1st Monday of every other month, Edinburgh, from 7pm: Edinburgh CAAT meeting to organise around the arms trade in Scotland, Held by Free Palestine! Defend the Right to Protest! Info: scotland@caat.org.uk

3rd Tuesday of the month, ZOOM, 6.30pm: London Campaign Against the Arms Trade meeting. To join group and for details of joining meeting, e-mail:

londoncaat@riseup.net

Every Wednesday, London, 6-7pm: Women in Black silent vigil against militarism and war by the Edith Cavell statue in St. Martin’s Place, London WC2. Wear black. www.london.womeninblack.org