



Morning Star

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Peace protesters descend on US spy base

Kick out the warmongers

PEACE campaigners began a long weekend of protest outside the US spy base at Menwith Hill yesterday with renewed calls to kick out the warmongers.

by **BOB GLANVILLE**

Women activists, led by veteran peace campaigner Helen John, set up camp in the north Yorkshire hills last night.

They plan to blockade the supply entrance to the base on Monday to raise awareness of the part that it plays in the US war machine.

People from all over Britain are expected to join the "WoMenwith Hill" camp in a bid to get spineless Prime Minister Tony Blair to stand up to the US, which continues to use Britain as a missile dump and early-warning outpost for its national defence systems.

Campaigners are particularly angry that the government has given the go-ahead for Menwith Hill to take a key role in the US missile defence scheme, which will allow President George Bush to launch pre-emptive strikes without fear of reprisals.

Ms John will be heading efforts to bring the "secret" base to the attention of the wider public, who she hopes will eventually join the campaign to have Menwith Hill decommissioned and the US military booted off Britain's countryside.

The activist is commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Greenham Common women's peace camp in 1981, which she helped found to protest against Prime Minister Margaret

Thatcher's acceptance of US Cruise missiles in Britain.

Opposing the US militarisation of Britain is more important now than ever, she insisted.

"We have utter contempt for the way the US government treats the British people to protect US interests," said Ms John, adding that the weekend camp is about "encouraging all women to join us to remove all US bases from Britain."

Ms John also revealed plans to stand against Mr Blair in the next general election.

The peace campaigner will stand as an independent parliamentary candidate in the Prime Minister's Sedgefield constituency in County Durham.

"I stood in the last election too, but I couldn't do much as I was in prison at the time," she recalled.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament gave its full backing to Ms John's efforts, condemning the British government's "utmost hypocrisy" over the issue of weapons of mass destruction.

CND chairwoman Kate Hudson said that new Labour had taken Britain to war in Iraq by claiming that Saddam Hussein possessed WMDs, when Britain itself wields US-franchised Trident nuclear submarines and "has agreed to the use of Menwith Hill for the US national missile defence project."

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UNDER ATTACK: The US early-warning base at Menwith Hill, which peace protesters are targeting this weekend in an attempt to kick the warmongers out of Britain.



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