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TARGET BRITAIN

Guess how many US bases there are here? Answer, page 6

Target Britain

FOR THE THIRD TIME since World War II, Britain's role as aircraft carrier for US forces is about to escalate, dramatically, with the imminent introduction of cruise missiles. But how much do even campaigners for the removal of nuclear weapons bases and facilities know about the scale of US military involvement in Britain; How much can MPs find out?

There are not merely a dozen or two bases, as is popularly supposed. In a joint enquiry with the Thames Television TV EYE programme*, we unearthed over 100 military facilities. The US Air Force alone has 101 sites in its British property list, including housing estates.

We also discovered a plethora of little-known information about US military activities in Britain, using mostly openly available US — and even Russian — sources.

- US European military commanders will control the course of European warfare from airborne battle stations, based in East Anglia.
- A 'facility' tucked away in Wales is the US's largest underwater surveillance centre.
- Five spy planes are permanently based in Britain. Another base is the headquarters for recovering film capsules from spy satellites.
- The spy satellites are controlled from at least four major British stations — one set up by the CIA. The network of US intelligence bases in Britain — many in the 'front line' because of the information they get — is much greater than hitherto realised.
- Much of the US's 7000-warhead European nuclear stockpile is in a network of British depots. Some Army and Marine units have complete stores stockpiled.

Some of these facilities are secret. But many are not. Yet, even after MPs asked the Ministry of Defence three times, they could only list a nevertheless surprising 56 bases. DUNCAN CAMPBELL documents the might of the US military in Britain.

THE SCALE OF US MILITARY involvement in Britain is immense. Apart from Soviet forces in Eastern Europe, and the US in Germany and Japan, no other country has such a large foreign military presence. Discovering the scale — and significance — of Britain's uses for the US is not, however, straightforward.

In June this year, Bob Cryer MP asked Defence Secretary Francis Pym to provide a 'total' list of US bases. Pym obliged with a list as long as most people would expect, a round dozen — eleven air bases and the Holy Loch base on the Clyde for Poseidon submarines. There were also, a throwaway line implied, a few other sites for 'storage, logistic support, administration and communications'.

Just how 'few' sites were involved was revealed in a second answer during July, when Pym was asked to list the bases in these categories. The list of US bases now swelled from 12 to 53 — and it still wasn't complete. In August, Pym was asked to list any omission from his two earlier lists. He now listed a further three bases — one of them, an underwater surveillance base in Wales, probably the most important of them all.

After three attempts, the Ministry of Defence had managed to find 56 US bases in Britain. We have found 103, whose locations and functions are detailed on the map (opposite).

'First strike' facility

Besides airbases normally in US hands, a host of other airfields, some now used by the RAF, are earmarked and stocked up for US crisis or war use. Not one US base is directly committed in any way to the defence of Britain — indeed, quite the contrary, as Britain is obliged under NATO agreements to provide the 'area' defences for US bases on our soil.

It is customary for this burden to be defended with references to the value of NATO as a deterrent alliance, in whose support the US acts. It is not, however, widely appreciated that the US maintains separate lines of command and control from NATO, and is ready, willing and equipped to operate entirely on its

*The TV Eye documentary 'Target Britain' is being transmitted on Thursday 30th November at 8.30pm.

own, as US interests require. Alert orders sent to US forces may, or may not, be communicated to NATO allies. Although British bases and facilities were alerted and used in the Nixon-ordered 1973 Middle East war alert, and again this year during the abortive hostage rescue operation in Iran, no notification was given to Britain or NATO.

The Pentagon calls this style of operating its 'global options'. It relies on unquestioning non-interference with what the US does with its bases and facilities. It also relies on the technological complexities of modern weaponry, which can make it extremely hard to unravel a complex web of plans and potential operations open to any particular facility.

In Britain, the US forces have at least 21 airbases used or reserved for them, 9 transportation terminals, 17 weapon dumps and stores, 7 nuclear weapons stores, 38 communications facilities, 10 intelligence bases, and 3 radar and sonar surveillance sites. Of these, the majority clearly contribute at least as much to strategic global 'US only' options as to the options for defending Europe.

These too are scarcely 'options' we should find attractive: Rear Admiral Gene LaRocque, a former Pentagon strategic planner now running the Washington Centre for Defence Information, had this to say:

We fought World War I in Europe, we fought World War II in Europe and if you dummies let us, we'll fight World War III in Europe . . .

THE COST WILL BE HIGH. Although the exact course of any 'World War III' can only be a matter of informed speculation we have obtained the target lists drawn up by two sources — one Russian, the other British. The British target list, published in the *New Statesman* this month, was used during the recent *Crusader* and *Square Leg* exercises (NS 3 October 1980). The Russian target list comes from a limited circulation military staff journal, *Zarybeznoe Voennoe Obozrenie* (5, 1980). In an article on Britain's 'infrastructure', Colonel V Leskov identified in a scarcely disguised fashion the targets of Soviet interest:

The Pentagon maintains a ramified network of



Last Sunday's nuclear disarmament demo

bases, stores of nuclear and conventional weapons, headquarters, communications centres, intelligence centres and other installations.

Clearly drawing on intelligence data, Leskov listed nuclear weapons stores and provided an astonishing map of Britain with dozens of key locations and airbases marked or mentioned.

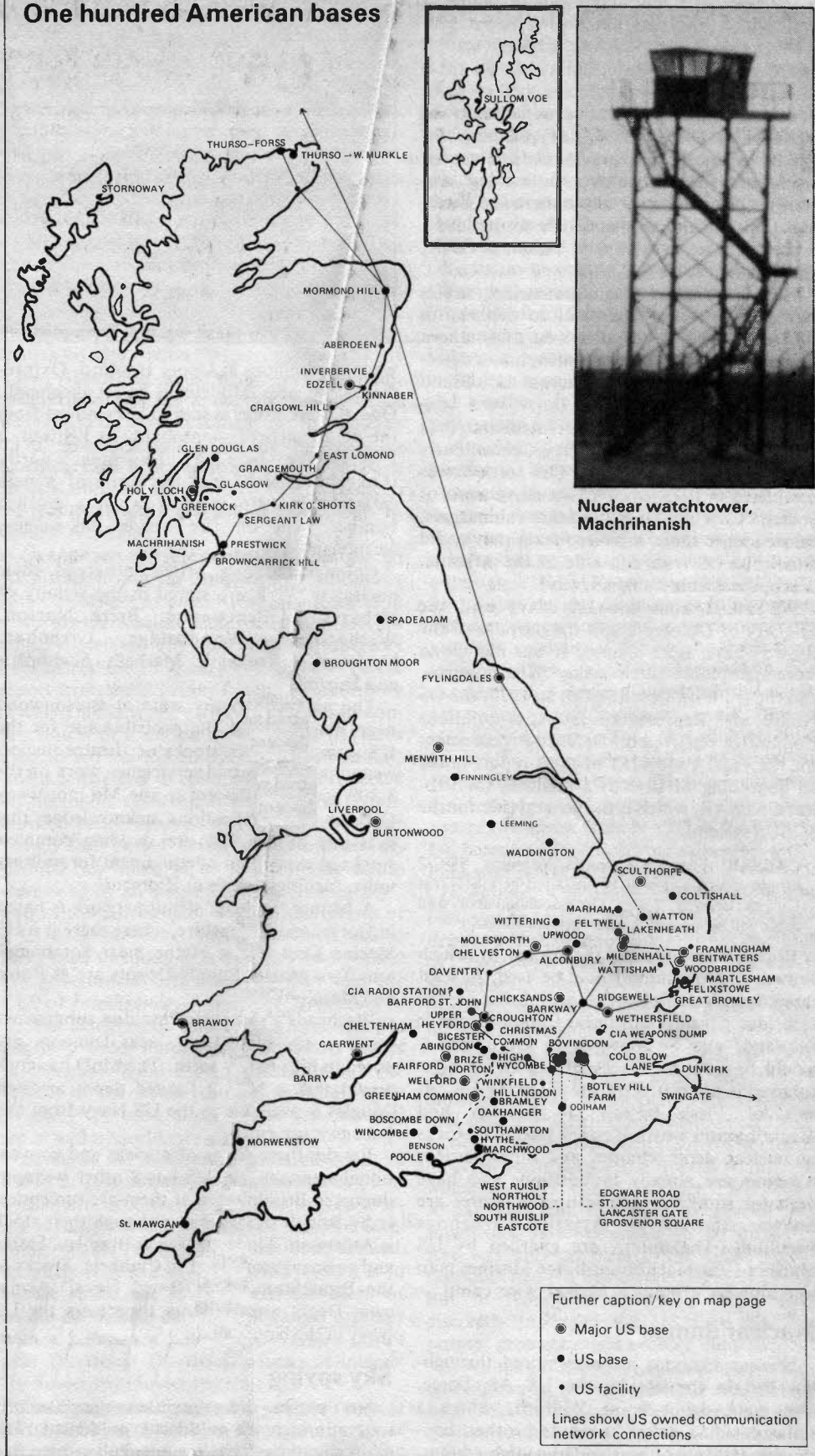
Leskov's map identified four communications centres, all American; three alleged nuclear weapons dumps, all American; the joint early warning radar station at Fylingdales; and identified 21 airfields used solely or jointly by the US, as well as 6 further US communications or other bases.

Similarly, in the Ministry of Defence's plans for the anticipated nuclear attack on Britain used during *Square Leg*, 13 attacks were against US bases. These included the first two bases to be attacked, Greenham Common near Newbury and Boscombe Down (a 'colocated' base). Greenham Common and Molesworth (near Northampton) are of course to be sites for the 160 GLCM (ground launched cruise missiles) that are presently due to be installed by 1983. Both bases were on both target lists — already. Besides the well-known airbases, Britain's role in providing US 'infrastructure' is immense. Some of the most important locations are among the least known. In southern England, the US Air Force has installed a network of communications bases making it completely independent, if need be, of Post Office or MoD links. The US Navy has a similar chain in Scotland, running from Thurso to Ayr, and across to Northern Ireland. The US Navy base at Thurso is the primary communications link to Polaris nuclear submarines in the Norwegian sea area, for which purpose the station was built in 1963. Until 1977 it shared this job with a similar US Navy station near Derry in Northern Ireland.

The US's largest underwater surveillance station is also located in Britain, at Brawdy on St Davids Bay, in remote southwest Wales. This station is the largest of the 22 in the SOSUS (Sonar Surveillance System) network. The Brawdy 'naval facility', where more than 300 sonar specialists work round the clock, is of key importance to the strategic 'balance', and to the US's first strike ability. Quite simp-

From North to south: **Sullom Voe**, US coastguard station, maintains accuracy of Loran radio navigation system for nuclear submarines; Another US Navy base in Shetland is UK terminal of sonar underwater detection chain across Greenland-Iceland-UK gap; **Thurso, Aberdeen, Inverberrie, Kinnaber, Craigowl Hill, East Lomond, Kirk O'Shotts, Sergeantlaw, Brown Carrick Hill**: all US Navy microwave communications link stations; **Mormond Hill**, near Peterhead, major US Navy and Air Force long range communications station; **Stornoway**, on Isle of Lewis, wartime or crisis base for US P3 Orion antisubmarine aircraft; **Holy Loch**, US Navy Poseidon nuclear missile submarine squadron HQ; **Glen Douglas**, NATO nuclear and other weapons store for Holy Loch; **Machrihanish**, war or crisis base for US antisubmarine aircraft, and permanent nuclear weapons store; **Grangemouth**, **Greenock**, **Glasgow**, normally unmanned US Army and Navy transportation terminals installed; **Prestwick**, base for USAF Military Airlift Command and US Navy transport operations; **Broughton Moor**, Cumbria, US Navy depot run by Royal Navy; **Spadeadam**, bombing range equipped by USAF simulates Warsaw Pact radars remote valley; **Fylingdales**, Ballistic Missile Early Warning Station; **Liverpool**, major terminal at docks; **Burtonwood**, gigantic US Army store and helicopter base; **Menwith Hill**, super-secret intelligence base run by National Security Agency tapping international phone lines and controls satellites; **Leeming**, **Finningley**, **Coltishall**, **Waddington** **Wittering**, Co-located Operating Bases (COBs) with RAF; **Brawdy**, US Navy sonar surveillance centre; **Upper Heyford**, **Alconbury**, **Mildenhall**, **Lakenheath**, **Bentwaters**, **Woodbridge**, **Sculthorpe**, **Wethersfield**, **Fairford**, **Greenham Common**, current major USAF airfields; **Marham**, B52 forward base; **Upwood**, **Molesworth**, **Feltwell**, **Ridgwell**, **Watton**, **Framlingham**, USAF storage sites, may include nuclear weapons; **Hillingdon**, **Croughton** (Northants), **Barford St John**, major communications centres; **Daventry**, **Chelveston**, **Barkway**, **Great Bromley**, **Bovingdon**, microwave communications link stations; **Chicksands**, monitoring base run by USAF Electronic Security Command for the NSA; **Welford**, **Bramley**, **Bicester**, munitions and stores depots — Welford Holds US Air Force tactical nuclear weapons stocks; **High Wycombe**, **West Ruislip**, **South Ruislip**, **Lancaster Gate**, **Eastcote**, US Forces offices and storage sites; **Grosvenor Square**, US Navy Headquarters and Sixth Fleet Fleet control centre; also houses 'SUSLO' intelligence offices and communications centre; **Northolt**, RAF base used jointly for communications aircraft; **St Johns Wood**, US Marine Barracks; **Edgware Road**, fuel supply; **Northwood**, US Navy based with NATO East Atlantic HQ; CIA Weapons dump is alleged to be in Britain, also a CIA radio station near Banbury; **Christmas Common**, **Botley Hill Farm**, **Coldblow Lane**, **Dunkirk**, **Swingate** (Dover), USAF microwave communications link stations; **Winkfield**, satellite tracking station run by British civilians is used for US satellite control; **Oakhanger**, US Satellite Control Facility and US Navy satellite communications centre; **Cheltenham**, very large US contingent from NSA; **Caerwent**, a major US Army munitions dump; **Abingdon**, **Benson**, **Odiham**, **Brize Norton**, Colocated Operating Bases **Boscombe Down**, USAF 'classified' unit is based here, and B52 bombers would use it in war; **Southampton**, transportation terminal; **Hythe**, US Marine Fleet HQ; **Marchwood**, **Poole**, US Marine Depots; **Wincombe**, GCHQ monitoring station near, Shaftesbury listed by MoD as a US 'communication' station; **Morwenstow**, GCHQ run station was paid for by the CIA and operates and controls CIA spy listening satellites; **St Mawgan**, USAF communications centre and US Navy nuclear weapons store. **Cushendall**, **Sievenorra**, **Dungiven**, US Navy communications link stations in Northern Ireland (not shown).

One hundred American bases

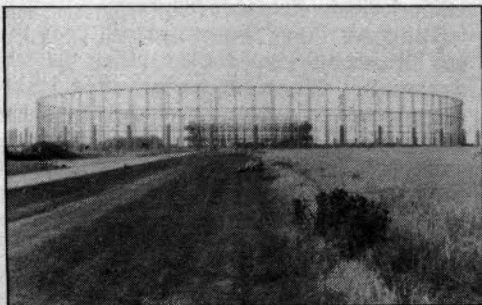


Nuclear watchtower, Machrihanish

Further caption/key on map page

- Major US base
- US base
- US facility

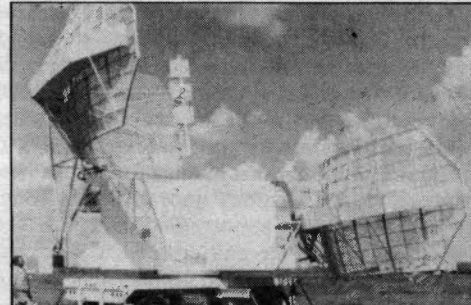
Lines show US owned communication network connections



Listening aerial, Chicksands



EC135 airborne 'war room', Mildenhall



'Red Flag' simulated Soviet radar — Spadeadam

ly, by keeping a continuous plot of the exact position of the (remarkably few) Soviet submarines in the Atlantic, the Brawdy station means that the Soviets cannot rely on these forces for a deterrent second strike. Until President Carter's recent promulgation of Presidential Directive 59, for planning for limited nuclear war, previous doctrines of deterrence relied critically on both sides' submarines being substantially immune to detection. This advantage is available to the US; it is not available to the Soviet Union, as Soviet planners well know.

From Brawdy, long submarine cables traverse the continental shelf to a platform two to three hundred miles west of southern Ireland, where an array of hydrophones detect tiny surges and faint noises across a thousand mile tract of ocean.

Brawdy's computers are not intended to protect Britain, although they enormously enhance our vulnerability. The station was completed in 1973, to cover the movements of Soviet 'Charlie' class nuclear submarines, whose longer range missiles meant they could attack the US from our side of the Atlantic. (Europe was vulnerable anyway).

We asked both the US Navy and the Ministry of Defence about the purpose of the Brawdy base. Both claimed it was merely an 'oceanographic research facility'. This is untrue, and the truth isn't even secret. In 1977, the US House of Representatives Appropriations Committee reported on Defence Procurement for the year. Page 1255 of their report noted an upgrading of Brawdy's facilities for Project CAESAR, which is the general title for the SOSUS system:

CAESAR: Shore Electronics/Assembly SDC-2 (Shore electronics will be installed at US Naval Facility, Brawdy, Wales. The associated array and cable will be located in international waters.)

Britain also supports the means by which Brawdy's information would be used. At least three British airfields, — Stornoway in the Hebrides, Machrihanish near Campbeltown in Scotland, and St Mawgan in Cornwall — would be used by forces of US Orion anti-submarine aircraft deployed from the US. At two of these bases, St Mawgan and Machrihanish, we have established that stocks of nuclear depth charges and other nuclear weapons are already in position, and have been for some years. The nuclear stores are known as 'Naval Aviation Weapons Facilities'. The dumps are guarded by US Marines — at Machrihanish, the Marines man watchtowers around a barbed wire camp.

Nuclear dumps

Nuclear weapons are also stored throughout Britain for use by the US Air Force. The main depot is at Welford, where a railway siding takes these and other consignments into the underground dump. Welford's facilities are so sensitive that Ordnance Survey maps have been erased of anything other than ground contours in the area. This ironically, makes its position rather more noticeable by the absence of usual map features. Welford is the base of the 7234th Ammunition Support Squadron and has been storing USAF weapons since 1954. Although the base provides almost 700,000 square feet of weapons storage and cost the US government over \$5 million to build, it is usually omitted from lists of US bases in Britain.

Besides Welford, there are also nuclear



U2R Electronic spy aircraft fortuitously filmed by Thames TV at Mildenhall

weapons facilities at Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire, and near Mildenhall and Lakenheath. One of these stores is said to be removed from the actual airfield — probably at Feltwell, a US storage base a few miles north. (Lakenheath itself was the scene of a near catastrophic 1956 incident when a crashed bomber went on fire beside the nuclear weapons store.)

Colonel Leskor's article observed that: nuclear weapons are stored in the vicinity of airbases at Bentwaters, Brize Norton, Wethersfield, Woodbridge, Greenham Common, Lakenheath, Marham, Sculthorpe and Fairford.

The giant US Army store at Burtonwood near Warrington is the probable site for the US Army's reserve stocks of theatre nuclear weapons. Six hundred servicemen work on the 3,300 acre site adjacent to the M6 motorway. Official US publications acknowledge that it is one of two UK sites holding complete stocks of every item of equipment for military units, facilities known as 'Pomcus'.

A further 'Pomcus' depot network is based in Dorset and Hampshire, where there is a US Marine Fleet HQ at Hythe, near Southampton. Two Marine Supply Depots are at Poole and Marchwood.

Warheads for the ten Poseidon submarines based at the Holy Loch, near Dunoon, are stored in hills to the north. The MoD has confirmed that a NATO funded depot at Glen Douglas is available to the US Navy from the 'host government'.

Besides these stores of nuclear and conventional weapons, the US has 8 other weapons dumps in Britain. Two of them are run entirely by British servicemen, although their stock is American. These two are at Bramley, Hants and at Broughton Moor in Cumbria. Stocks at the Broughton Moor 'Royal Naval' Armament Depot are intended to back up the US Navy in the Norwegian Sea.

Sky spying

Spy planes are based here permanently too, although their presence is denied. The main spy plane base is Mildenhall, where five secret reconnaissance aircraft are now permanently located. During recent filming by Thames TV, US officials at Mildenhall were visibly embarrassed when a U2 suddenly wafted elegantly down from the clouds. The base had denied that U2 aircraft were stationed there. Within two minutes of its arrival the U2 had been hidden away in a special hangar.

The US Air Force's claim not to have other than occasional 'visitors' among these controversial aircraft is paper thin. The official *Air Force* magazine lists amongst Mildenhall's complement the 66-person 6954th Electronic

Security Squadron, which provides the personnel to operate electronic intelligence gathering equipment whilst the planes fly high over or alongside Warsaw Pact borders.

The five aircraft — two U2s, one SR71, which flies at three times the speed of sound, and two RC135, converted Boeing 707s packed out with surveillance equipment — are well established Mildenhall aircraft. Aircraft spotters, who maintain a methodical vigil around all airfields, can provide details of their permanent presence as complete as the fin numbers and the locations of their hangars at the airfield. (The U2s in question being nos 10332 and 10339).

A recent interview in *Air Force* magazine by the Chief of the US Strategic Air Command, General R H Ellis, explained the highly active nature of this intelligence-gathering operation:

it is possible to operate these systems in a way that induces the 'other fellow' to react in a way that tells us things we want to know . . .

Flying War Rooms

The power of the 170 F-111 nuclear and tactical strike aircraft based at Lakenheath and Upper Heyford is reasonably well-known, as is the presence of six Thunderbolt attack squadrons with their controversial depleted-uranium ammunition. But what is not known at all is an operation of over-riding strategic importance: in time of war, or crisis, the US European Command, using facilities code-named 'Silk Purse', will be lifted into the air above the chaos of Europe's nuclear battlefields.

'Silk Purse' is based at Mildenhall, and has four special Boeing 707 EC 135s on continuous alert. These are flying war-rooms, with equipment for in-flight refuelling of escort planes. An official map, details of which have been obtained through the International Institute for Strategic Studies, shows that during the most recent — and transient — of the nuclear-attack false-alarms, sent out on 6 June, five critical overseas bases were alerted before the alert could be cancelled. Mildenhall was one, suggesting that the need to get the 'Silk Purse' aircraft off the ground is given vast priority by Pentagon planners.

Third Air Force spokesmen still deny that any British base was alerted during the false alarms. But this should be measured against the evidence of villagers near the US tanker-base at Fairford, near Swindon, who on 3 June, also a false-alarm day, saw aircraft taking off in rapid succession on emergency power. Calls to the base were abruptly terminated with the words: 'It's an emergency'. Fairford will soon have 15 tankers, complementing 15 at Mildenhall: their task being to re-fuel strike aircraft en route to Warsaw

Pact targets from America. Britain's position astride this route is valuable to Strategic Air Command, which in time of crisis would deploy to 'forward operating bases' including Marham, Boscombe Down and Brize Norton. The latter two are amongst a group of ten peacetime RAF bases which are earmarked to be given to the USAF in crises; these were agreed under an unannounced 1974 Memorandum of Understanding, and are designated 'Colocated Operating Bases'. A list of COBs was provided to us this week by the Ministry of Defence after some delay. None of the COBs was listed in the answers given to Bob Cryer MP, although recent US congressional testimony has listed USAF property at several of the sites.

Spy bases

US bases in Britain control and track spy satellites, and fly missions to catch the film capsules sent back from photographic satellites. The bases also include centres for aircraft which have been proven to have been overflying Warsaw Pact territory.

One such reconnaissance unit is based at Alconbury, near Huntingdown. The *New York Times* reported in 1977 that its RF4 Phantom aircraft 'gather intelligence over East Germany'. Routine USAF denials of this are not very convincing. In March 1964 an RB66 reconnaissance plane from the same base, was shot down inside East Germany long after the famous disaster to Gary Powers' U2. Four years ago, a U2 from Britain crashed in West Germany close to the eastern border.

Further connections with the spying business can be traced through the 47th Aerospace Rescue & Recovery Squadron, based at Woodbridge in Suffolk: their job, in addition to retrieving downed aircrew, is to hook-up capsules of photographic film which are ejected periodically by spy-satellites and parachuted into the atmosphere. Although Colonel Alan Schreihofner admitted that release of the satellite capsules is controlled from Woodbridge, he claimed that the catching was done by aircraft based more conveniently in Pensacola, Florida. But during filming two weeks ago at nearby Mildenhall, two dark-painted C-130 aircraft were photographed with satellite-capsule catching and tracking equipment in place. And examination of USAF base lists shows that Pensacola is merely an operating location from Woodbridge.

But spy-planes and satellite-catchers are only a small part of the American intelligence 'infrastructure' in Britain. The major part is the system of ground-based listening-posts run by the National Security Agency (NSA), and aimed at communications in Warsaw Pact countries and Western Europe.

A large US contingent works at Britain's GCHQ intelligence centre in Cheltenham. Known as SUSLO (Special Intelligence US Liaison Office), they also have a large London office taking up an entire floor of the US Navy building in Grosvenor Square. Benson L. Bufham, former deputy-director of the NSA is in charge of SUSLO, and is listed as an 'attache' at the US Embassy.

The major listening-posts are Chicksands, Bedfordshire and Edzell, Tayside — and of course Menwith Hill, Yorkshire, whose international phone-tapping function was revealed in the *NS* on 18 July. But Menwith Hill appears to have a further role, which places it squarely in the strategic front-line.

Eight tracking dishes dominate the Menwith Hill site, pointed most of the time towards US satellites operating in the unique 'Molniya orbit': originally devised by the Russians themselves, this permits long periods of 'hovering' in northerly latitudes. (Ordinary satellites can only hover over the equator: a problem to US intelligence, because most of Russia is northerly.) Observation suggests that Menwith Hill is the receiving terminal for the only US satellites functioning in this orbit — the super-secret Satellite Data System (SDS) about which nothing is published.

But there are certainly three other terminals in Britain for intelligence satellites.

Morwenstow, near Bude in Cornwall, is a British GCHQ station still part paid-for by the CIA. According to a senior ex-CIA man, ground facilities for a satellite system called RHYOLITE were installed in England in 1970. His description exactly matches the Cornish site. *Morwenstow* appears to be a sister-station in the RHYOLITE system to the controversial CIA site at Pine Gap in Central Australia.

Oakhanger in Hampshire is ostensibly an RAF station. But US Congressional testimony lists *Oakhanger* as one of ten or so stations in a worldwide Satellite Control Facility for US military satellites. The local telephone directory does indeed list a US navy unit there. A recent report from the US Navy Research Laboratory reveals *Oakhanger's* exotic capacities: in conjunction with a station in Virginia it has been used to spy on the USSR by 'moonbounce', which is listening to communications reflected off the moon. *Croughton*, a major USAF communications centre near Banbury was filmed for 'Target Britain', and officers explained that three of its four satellite dishes were used by an unspecified 'civilian agency'. *Croughton* corresponds well to descriptions of a CIA station 'near Banbury' which was to have been included in a book by two former US government officials, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* — until the CIA censored it. The satellites to which these terminals link use very wide, unfurling antennae to collect faint signals from the ground: although the USSR is the main target, material from 'friendly' or 'neutral' countries gets scooped up as well by accident and by design.

Some of the intelligence gathered is put to use in Britain, notably at Spadeadam in Cumbria where, according to the Washington journal *Aviation Week*, a 'Warsaw Pact surface-to-air missile radar replica' has been created. Its purpose (there is another in Nevada) is to enable strike aircraft to practice evasion of Soviet defences: naturally, the range, together with a comparable electronic-warfare centre near Dumfries, constitute a focus of interest for Soviet spy trawlers and the like.

The Spadeadam electronic warfare range is partnered by a special squadron of aircraft at Alconbury, which are disguised to look like Russian MiG fighters. Other NATO air forces stage simulated dog fights with these so-called Aggressor aircraft (in fact they usually take the role of airspace defenders).

Special roles

Britain's location is unique. The US bases here are consequently critical to the deployment of many far flung parts of the US military. The communications systems which run through Britain are intrinsic to the 'global options' of US strategy. AUTOVON is the

worldwide automatic phone network for the US military, and it has major centres at Martlesham Heath, Suffolk and Hillingdown, near London. *Croughton*, mentioned earlier, is a switching-centre for the AUTODIN network which links-up computers — including those of the now rather-discredited Worldwide Command and Control System ('Wimex'), which caused the last two false alerts. One of the Wimex computers so tied in is at US Naval Headquarters in Grosvenor Square.

Croughton is also of major importance to US missile targetting. Its Automated Digital Weather Centre co-ordinates meteorological information from Europe, Africa and the USSR — feeding it back to SAC computers in Nebraska, which reallocate suitable warheads to targets according to the prevailing winds and weather. It even intercepts the Russians own data to get up-to-the-minute information.

American defence planners can scarcely be blamed for pursuing their own convenience — especially if they get used to having it uncritically accepted. But not all members of the Western alliance have chosen quite such an open-ended commitment to the US. Norway, although a NATO member, has declined to have either nuclear weapons or foreign troops based on its territory, and in recent years there has been substantial debate about the degree to which Norwegian navigation and communications systems might effectively support US employment of nuclear weapons. Denmark also has declined to have nuclear weapons on its soil in peacetime, and in Belgium and Holland there has been effective resistance to the deployment of cruise missiles. France, of course, withdrew from NATO in 1967, and all US bases and facilities were dispensed with — links with NATO are maintained.

A military relationship as massive, as complex and as artfully-shrouded as that between Britain and the United States is not one likely to be modified in simple, dramatic movements. But the first requirement, long overdue, is to understand its structure, so that the alternative models can be tested against it.

Altogether, this adds up to some 27,000 operatives and 31,000 dependants, and a massive amount of property; the USAF say that each of their chief bases would cost about \$1 billion to replace. Such figures demonstrate no small performance in a 'special relationship' which actually began in July 1948 with a 30-day stay on the part of several B-29 squadrons, later extended to 60 days. The stay was only temporary; the USAF, it was supposed had left Britain entirely early in 1946. But in November 1948 the Air Ministry discreetly informed the US that this 'temporary' presence might become 'long term'.

Throughout the long, subsequent period of entrenchment, the US public has consistently been told more about the process than any British administration has chosen to vouchsafe to its citizens. Not only has the massive size of the commitment passed so far largely unknown and undebated: so has its essential character as a set of options for American military activity which may or may not contribute to the defence of this country, and may well actively contribute to the dangers we face.

Apology

An article in the *NS* of 15 August wrongly stated that Terry Duffy, general secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, spoke at a Campaign for the Defence of the Motor Vehicle rally in Luton. Our apologies to Mr Duffy.