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December Peace Activist Fined as UK Confirms Nuclear Threat

10th

10th December 1998

Peace Activist Fined as UK Confirms Nuclear Threat

A day after Defence Secretary George Robertson confirmed that the UK had been ready to use "tactical" nuclear weapons during the Iraqi crisis in November, Sylvia Boyes, 55, of Moseley, Birmingham was fined £75 at Helensburgh District Court.

She was appearing on charges related to her actions on Sunday 15th November when she cut through the perimeter fence at the Clyde Naval Base at Faslane, near Glasgow.

Sylvia claimed that she had a reasonable excuse to attempt to break into the base. She was convinced that Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system was illegal under international law. It clearly breached the principles of the Geneva Convention, by threatening the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians. Any crime she was charged with was insignificant when compared to war crime on such a scale.

Sylvia said:

"If you use a simple machete against innocent civilians in Africa you can be prosecuted for war crime but the nuclear states, including the UK, can threaten the use of terrible weapons with impunity, according to our government. It's a case of the letter of the law killing the spirit of the law."

In finding Sylvia guilty the magistrate, Mrs McGougan, said that the intricacies of International Law were of no direct interest to Helensburgh District Court, and that unless specifically incorporated into the law of Scotland by Act of Parliament were not relevant. Sylvia is appealing to the High Court because clearly the assertion that The Geneva Convention and other laws which protect civilians in time of war do not apply in Scotland is nonsense.

November Ploughshares activists fined at Helensburgh

19th

19th November 1998

Ploughshares activists fined at Helensburgh

Today, 20th November, at Helensburgh Sheriff Court, Trident Ploughshares activists Rupert Eris and Peter Lanyon, after being remanded in custody for eight days, were both found guilty and fined 100 pounds and ordered to pay 125 pounds in compensation.

The charges arose from their disarmament activity on Thursday last, 12th November, when they were arrested while cutting their way through the perimeter fence at the RNAD Coulport where the UK's Trident nuclear warheads are stored. They also forfeited the equipment they carried, including bolt-cutters, glue and saws, with which they planned to damage the installations within.

Peter, a former officer in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, said:

"JP McPhail was unfortunately unable to see the obvious connection between our actions and the existence of illegal nuclear weapons. As a result he did not allow me to present my case effectively. Since the UK's weapons of mass destruction are still in place and ready to be used I have to continue my disarmament action. If I end up in court again, so be it. That will

give me another chance to improve the magistrates' understanding of the relevance of international law to the local courts. As a teacher I was forced into early retirement because of my commitment to peace education. That commitment continues.

In my officer training in the early fifties, there was mention of the Nuremberg Principles and our duty to refuse an illegal order from a senior officer. The advent of Britain's nuclear system has sullied that commitment. We have gone back rather than forwards."

Rupert, a nature conservation warden, said:

"I have committed no crime but I'd rather be branded as a common criminal than a war criminal. We did not get as far as we hoped at Coulport but we would have been wrong to have done nothing just because we feared we could only do a little."

Two TP2000 activists are still in prison. Sylvia Boyes is in Cornton Vale and appears in court next Wednesday, the 25th November. Brian Quail is in Greenock Prison and will be in court on Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th November.

16th

Trumped-up charges claim as TP2000 activists appear in court

16th November 1998

Trumped-up charges claim as TP2000 activists appear in court

At 2.30 today, 16th November, in Dumbarton Sheriff Court TP2000 activists Angie Zelter and Krista van Velzen pled not guilty to charges relating to the incident on Friday when they drove their car unchallenged through the main security gate at Faslane Naval Base near Glasgow.

Also today at 3 p.m. in Helensburgh District Court disarmers Sylvia Boyes and Brian Quail were remanded in custody after refusing to accept bail conditions. Katri Silvonon & Hanna Jarvinen, arrested last Friday, were released without charges Monday morning.

Angie Zelter, from Norfolk, was charged with reckless driving following MOD police claims that an officer had to jump out of the way as she drove in. She has a pre-trial hearing on 14th January 1999 and her trial will be on the 29th January.

Angie said:

"These are trumped up charges, purely to cover up the embarrassing breach of security when we were waved straight through the main gate. I have a life-long record as a non-violent peace campaigner and avoiding hurting anyone is a basic principle for me. There was no reckless driving and I stopped as soon as I was asked."

Krista van Velzen, from the Netherlands, was charged with possession of a weapon. This charge referred to Krista's camping knife, which happened to be in the car at the time. Her pre-trial hearing is on 20th January 1999 followed by a trial on 1st February 1999.

At Helensburgh District Court this afternoon Sylvia Boyes, a peace campaigner of many years standing and former Greenham Common woman, and Brian Quail, a Glaswegian retired teacher and SNP activist, appeared on charges of malicious mischief and resisting arrest, and were offered bail on standard conditions. They did not accept the bail conditions and have been remanded, Brian until the 23rd November at 10 a.m. and Sylvia until the 25th of November, both trials in the District Court.

Sylvia said:

"I can't promise not to go back and attempt again to damage the nuclear weapons installations. If I accept the conditions I am implying that I have committed an offence, which is not the case."

15th

Six arrested at Trident nuclear weapons base

15th November 1998

Six arrested at Trident nuclear weapons base

At 10.00 a.m. today over 40 people gathered at the north gate of the Clyde Naval Base (Faslane), 30 miles west of Glasgow, to demonstrate against the continued possession by the UK of Trident Nuclear weapons.

Five people were arrested as they attempted to cut through the chain-link perimeter fence. They are part of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign, which seeks to openly, accountably and nonviolently disarm the Trident Nuclear Weapons System [1]. A further disarmer was arrested after climbing through the hole in the fence that had been made by the others.

The six people arrested were: Sylvia Boyes of Mosley, Birmingham aged 55; Richard Lewis, aged 20 of Norwich; Hannah Griffin, aged 20 of Norwich; Mary Kelly of Burtonport, County Donegal, Ireland; Joy Mitchell of Berwick upon Tweed and Keith Herald Morrie, of Manchester. The campaigners come from a wide variety of backgrounds, ranging from a grandmother of four to university students. Most of those arrested carried with them hammers to hammer on some part of the Trident Nuclear Weapons System. A number of the activists hold Christian beliefs and are enacting the prophecy 'They shall beat their swords into ploughshares'.

Sylvia Boyes said,

"It is particularly appropriate at this time to act against these obscene weapons because at this very moment the United Kingdom is threatening to bomb Iraq due to its alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction"

She added, "Weapons of mass destruction are illegal under international law." [2]

This disarmament action was undertaken as an attempt to uphold International law, which outlaws the use or threat to use nuclear weapons. The activists will be using the relevant international laws to defend their actions in court.

Notes

[1]The activists are part of the second wave of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 project (TP2000), and as such have pledged to safely, peacefully and accountably disarm the UK's 'Trident' nuclear weapons system. This led to 112 arrests in the first wave of action in August. Over 50 activists taking part in the second wave of action and are camping near the nuclear weapons bases near Glasgow.

[2] The United Nations declared the decade 1990/2000 as the decade of international law.

[3] At 3.30 p.m. today there will be a religious service at the north gate of the Clyde Naval Base which will be given by Maxwell Craig, General Secretary of ACTS (Action Churches Together in Scotland) and Norman Shanks, Leader of the Iona Community (formerly Convenor of the Church of Scotland's Church and Nation Committee). It will be followed by a

blockade of the gate.

15th

[Scottish church leader says Trident is sinful](#)

15th November 1998

Scottish church leader says Trident is sinful

At 4.m. today, Sunday 15th November, at the North Gate of the Faslane Naval Base, home to Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system, about 50 people, including a number of Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists, gathered for a religious service conducted by leading Scottish churchmen. After the service one disarmer was arrested while attempting to damage the security fence.

Maxwell Craig, General Secretary of ACTS (Action for Churches Together in Scotland) was accompanied by Norman Shanks, Leader of the Iona Community. Maxwell said:

"Everyone talks about the cost of the Millennium Dome. It will cost 700 million but that will be a one-off cost. We spend 900 million on these bases every year and that's just the MOD figure - the CND estimate, a more likely figure, is one and a half billion! Let's be clear, to waste resources on such a scale for such an obscenity is sinful - all the churches recognise that."

He went on to thank the Permanent Peace Camp at Faslane for the welcome they had given. He thanked the Trident Ploughshares 2000 movement for heightening the campaign against the UK's illegal weapons.

Retired teacher and SNP activist Brian Quail, from Glasgow, then began to batter on the security fence with a large hammer. He then lay down in the gateway and was lifted away by 5 officers. His arrest is the 19th in the current phase of the TP2000 campaign.

14th

[TP2000 activists lock up MoD building in Glasgow](#)

TP2000 activists lock up MoD building in Glasgow

Iona Community members blockade nuclear base with prayer and chains

Today, Saturday 14th November, at 10 a.m., six Trident Ploughshares disarmers, members of the "Gareloch Horticulturalists" affinity group, padlocked the main doors of the Ministry of Defence building in Argyle Street, Glasgow.

They displayed a banner reading "Closed Down! Department of War Crimes.", and " Crime Watch". There was a modest police presence and no arrests.

Iona Community members blockade nuclear base with prayer and chains

Today, Saturday 14th November, at 12 noon, members of the ecumenical organisation, the Iona Community, held a short service of worship at the North Gate of Faslane Naval Base. While the service was ongoing one half of the gate was closed. Following the service five of the activists, who are also members of the TP2000 Adomnan affinity group, chained themselves together, blockaded the open section of the gate and continued to sing. The five were Morag Balfour (in her wheelchair), Jean Oliver, Maire-Colette Wilkie, Alan Wilkie and Dirk Grutzmacher. At 1.21 p.m., when a lorry arrived at the gate seeking entry, the MOD police arrested the disarmers, took them inside the base and charged them with Breach of the Peace.

Dirk Grutzmacher said:

"More than a millennium ago the Celtic monk Adomnan formulated a law to protect innocent civilians in time of war. When will our leaders realise that plans to murder millions with weapons of mass destruction like Trident are utterly abhorrent?"

13th

Scottish church leaders take part in a weekend of prayer and direct action against Trident
13th November 1998

Scottish church leaders take part in a weekend of prayer and direct action against Trident

On Saturday and Sunday (14th and 15th November) Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists will combine prayer with direct action in pursuit of their disarmament campaign against the Trident nuclear weapons system, culminating in a Sunday afternoon service conducted by prominent Scottish churchmen, Maxwell Craig and Norman Shanks.

On Saturday at 12 noon at the North Gate of the Faslane Naval Base, a dozen members of the ecumenical organisation, the Iona Community, will conduct a short service including prayers and readings backed by a banner reading : "Christians Against Trident". The service will be followed by direct action involving at least five of the group, including theology graduate and German national Dirk Grutzmacher, , Maire-Colette Wilkie, a Roman Catholic and a former member of the Dominican Order, and Alan Wilkie, a Church of Scotland elder and former company director.

On Sunday at 4pm, a service of worship will be conducted by two Scottish church leaders, Rev. Maxwell Craig and Rev. Norman Shanks. Maxwell Craig is the leader of the ecumenical organisation, Action for Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) and a Church of Scotland minister who lives in Dunblane. Norman Shanks, also a Church of Scotland Minister and former Convener of its Church and Nation Committee, is leader of the Iona Community.

The service will include songs from the Wild Goose singing group, together with readings and prayers.

Maxwell Craig said:

"Trident is a deadly machine which can never be used, which is contrary to international law and which makes most of us deeply ashamed. It's time to scrap it."

13th

Five women arrested at Faslane
13th November 1998

Five women arrested at Faslane

Two men remanded at Helensburgh

Today, 13th November, at 10.30. a.m., five women, all Trident Ploughshares activists, were arrested at the main gate at the Clyde Naval Base, Faslane, home to the Trident nuclear weapons system.

The five women were: Katri Silvonen, Lotta Muurinen, Hanna Jarvinen, all from Finland, Krista van Velzen who is Dutch and Angie Zelter from Norfolk. In August Katri and Krista twice swam to within metres of a Trident submarine before being arrested, intending to

hammer on some part of the submarine to disable it.

The five women have been charged with the breach of bye-laws and vandalism. They probably will be held in custody over the weekend and will appear in court on Monday.

Two men remanded at Helensburgh

This afternoon, 13th November, TP2000 activists Peter Lanyon and Rupert Eris were remanded on bail at District a Court Hearing after pleading not guilty to charges of vandalism related to their direct action yesterday. They were unable to accept bail conditions since they felt that in accepting them they would be implying that they had committed an offence. They claimed they were upholding international law and so were not guilty of any crime.

They will appear in the District Court in Victoria Hall, Helensburgh on the 20th November at 10 am. Rupert Eris said, "If you release me I will go back to the bases and do it again."

Tony Blair's speech criticised by Labour activist

In his speech to the North Atlantic assembly in Edinburgh today the prime minister condemned the SNP for its anti-nuclear stance.

David Mackenzie, a member of the constituency party in Dennis Canavan's Falkirk West constituency said:

"The Prime Minister is well out of step with Scottish Labour on the issue of nuclear weapons. Just last year the party conference overwhelmingly endorsed an anti-Trident motion. This government has had the vision and initiative to make a significant breakthrough in Northern Ireland and to commit itself to the eradication of world poverty. Sadly, it has not begun to align its thinking on defence to the realities of the modern world, the claims of international law, and the deep repugnance that most Scots feel about the Trident monster in our lochs."

12th

Over 112 arrests in campaign of direct action against Trident nuclear weapons

12th November 1998

Over 112 arrests in campaign of direct action against Trident nuclear weapons

Today, 12th November, at about 5.30pm, two campaigners from the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign were arrested cutting through the perimeter fence near the explosives handling jetty at Coulport naval base, 30 miles west of Glasgow.

They carried hammers with which to disarm the Trident nuclear system. The two arrests mark the start of the second phase of the campaign which saw 112 arrests in five days of direct action in August 1998.

The two campaigners, Peter Lanyon, aged 65, a former soldier in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and retired teacher, from Leiston, East Suffolk, and Rupert Eris, aged 35 years, a seasonal warden (nature conservation) with the National Trust, from Norfolk, were arrested by Ministry of Defence Police. They cut through the 10ft high razor wire-topped fence using bolt croppers, before being spotted. They were stopped between the perimeter fence and the second fence of 4ft high razor wire. The two men were removed from the area by boat. The campaigners are likely to be held overnight after being charged and brought before the Helensburgh District Court on Friday morning. The campaigners carried personal statements and had signed pledges of non-violence prior to their action.

Peter Lanyon said,

"It's the disgust I feel that these criminal weapons are deployed in my name, for my so called defence - that's my motivation"

Rupert Eris said,

"The British government has ignored its obligations under international law and treaty ... while it continues to do so the claims of an 'ethical' foreign policy are a farce."

10th

International Law Applies in Scotland, Claims Law Lecturer

10th November 1998

International Law Applies in Scotland, Claims Law Lecturer

In the first of a series of trials held today in Argyll and Bute District Court in Helensburgh, Hanna Jarvinen from Finland and Hans Lammerant from Belgium were found guilty and fined, in spite of cogent arguments from expert witnesses. The charges related to their direct disarmament actions in August as Trident Ploughshares activists.

They mounted a brilliant defence based on the illegality of Britains nuclear weapons and the duty of all citizens to prevent the war crime involved. They had three expert witnesses to back up their case. Fred Starkey of Pax Legalis, an organisation committed to exposing the illegality of nuclear weapons, explained that after years and years of effort it had proved impossible to take the British Government to court on the issue. Direct action was therefore the reasonable option. John Ainslie of Scottish CND gave evidence of the imminent danger that nuclear weapons presented. Catriona Drew, a lecturer in the School of Law at Glasgow University, testified that the Nuremberg principles have universal application and that international humanitarian law was relevant to the matter in hand and applicable in Scotland.

Procurator Fiscal Donnelly had the gall to ask Hans whether the only reason he had come to the UK was "to wreck our defences". Helensburgh mother of two Jane Tallents said : "The PF only speaks for himself. We need all the help we can get from our international colleagues to rid this country of its shame. Nuclear weapons, wherever they are, are a dire problem for the whole world to deal with."

Although Justice of the Peace McGuigan said that she "believed" Hans, she did not have the courage to grasp the challenge of argument and found them both guilty. Hanna, who has no income, is to pay a fine of 20 pounds. Hans was fined 40 pounds and given a compensation order of 250 pounds for damage to the fence.

All the other cases scheduled for today have been adjourned until January.

9th

Jonathan Schell, author of 'The Fate of The Earth'

9th November 1998

Jonathan Schell, author of 'The Fate of The Earth'

American writer Jonathan Schell, author of The Fate of The Earth, is in Scotland this week for the launch of his new book The Gift of Time: The Case for Abolishing Nuclear Weapons Now.

On Tuesday 11th November he will be at Helensburgh District Court (At Victoria Halls) where six Trident Ploughshares activists will be on trial. Among them are Katri Silvonen from Finland and Krista van Velzen from the Netherlands, who are appearing on charges relating to their famous swim in the dark across the Gairloch in August to within metres of a Trident submarine.

Said MP Tony Benn:

Jonathan has written a book of immense importance, coming at a time when India and Pakistan have both tested nuclear weapons and when the Labour Government has - most regrettably - confirmed our commitment to them.

Jonathan covered the Vietnam war for the New Yorker and is a leading American political thinker and journalist. He will sign his new book at the Edinburgh Waterstones (West End) on Monday 9th at 7p.m. and at the Glasgow Waterstones (Sauchiehall Street) also at 7.p.m on Tuesday 10th.

6th

We're Back!

6th November 1998

We're Back!

Trident Ploughshares 2000 Disarmers Return to Faslane

About fifty TP2000 disarmers will return to the camp at Coulport next week to give the Clyde nuclear bases their full attention. Over the next 12 days there will a rich pattern of direct disarmament actions, public protests and significant court appearances.

On Tuesday 10th November six disarmers will appear at Helensburgh District Court. Among them will be Krista van Velzen from the Netherlands and Katri Silvonen from Finland who appear on charges relating to their famous swim across the Gareloch to within a few metres of a Trident submarine. Katri and Krista have been headline news on the Continent and they are available for interview from Saturday onwards.

Also appearing then will be Hanna Jarvinen from Finland, Hans Lammerant from Belgium along with UK activists Claire Fearnley and Margaret Bremner. Margaret , who is accused of malicious mischief after decorating her cell with messages of peace said: "One of my messages read: Stand up, make your choice, create a world without nuclear death. That sums it up for me. I work with women who have breast cancer and there is for me a vital link between that work, which is all about preserving and valuing life, and the work of challenging our country's plans for murder."

There will be a photo opportunity outside the Court at Victoria Halls, Helensburgh at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday 10th November when the focus will be on the "Real Criminals". Defendants will also be available for interview at this time.

On the same day a seven day disarmament camp begins, based in Peaton Wood near the Coulport nuclear base on Loch Long. The peak of the week's activity will be at the weekend with the likelihood of a mass disarmament action on Sunday 15th. Watch our regular press briefings for more detail of these actions. Also on the Sunday, at 3.30 pm. at the Faslane North Gate Rev. Maxwelll Craig, the Scottish church leader, and Rev. Norman Shanks, leader of the Iona Community will conduct a service, celebrating the hope of freedom from institutionalised mass murder. Maxwell Craig said: " How long will it be before the dull spirits

of our national leaders grasp the simple fact that we are not allowed to kill innocent people?"

On Saturday 14th November the TP2000 group called the Gareloch Horticulturalists will picket the Ministry of Defence building in Argyle Street, Glasgow, in protest against Britain's continuing war crime. Photo opportunity at 10.a.m. at the main entrance to the Ministry of Defence building in Argyle Street.

Notes For Journalists

Trident Ploughshares 2000 (TP2000) is a part of the international nuclear disarmament movement. TP2000 activists have pledged to disarm the UK Trident nuclear weapons system by the year 2000 in a non-violent, open, peaceful, safe and fully accountable manner. At this time over 100 people have signed the pledge.

We believe that the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons is totally immoral and irresponsible and that the Trident system is illegal under international law. Our disarmament action is necessary since the UK government has to date shown no signs of any intention to dismantle the system. As citizens we have both a right and a duty to uphold international humanitarian law.

The UK's Trident nuclear weapons system is based on 4 submarines (the fourth, HMS Vengeance was rolled out on September 19th) which carry between 12 and 16 missiles, each of which can deliver a number of 100 kiloton warheads to individual targets - mass destruction on an almost unimaginable level. These subs are based at Faslane, west of Glasgow, and armed at Coulport on Loch Long. Faslane and Coulport are just two of at least 39 Trident related sites in Britain which are the legitimate targets of our disarmament action.

In the last two millennia codes of conduct have been developed to deal with rights and wrongs in warfare, culminating in the Geneva Convention. These codes have developed key principles, such as the insistence that non-combatants should not be harmed, that the suffering of combatants should be minimised and that no form of warfare should be employed which presents a permanent threat to the natural environment. In July 1996 the International Court of Justice considered the application of these principles to nuclear weapons and gave its Advisory Opinion that " the use of such weapons is scarcely reconcilable (with the rules of humanitarian law)."

We are taking direct action against installations and equipment involved in the Trident system. By doing so we aim to inflict significant damage and disruption on these installations and when arrested we take full responsibility for our actions. Our defence in the courts is based on the primacy of international law. We do what we can to publicise our actions and the response of the authorities so that public awareness of the UK's indefensible nuclear weapons policy is increased and more and more people either become disarmers themselves or actively support the movement in a whole variety of ways.

The first phase of our campaign was the 15-day camp at Coulport in August when direct actions led to 113 arrests. Among a number of breaches of base security activists were able to swim in on two different occasions to within metres of a sub before being picked up. There were activists present from 12 different countries, underlining international concern over the UK's behaviour. In the trials that followed the challenge of international humanitarian law has been again and again presented. The defendants have argued for the imminence of the threat presented by Trident and for their right and duty to do all their power to prevent the war crime involved.

October Court Gridlock Looms as TP2000 Activists are Fined

28th

28th October 1998

Court Gridlock Looms as TP2000 Activists are Fined

Trials of TP2000 activists are already scheduled in Helensburgh between now and the end of March. A fresh crop of arrests will begin to flow from the 10th November when the next week-long disarmament camp at Coulport begins. The Scottish courts are facing a log-jam of peace activists, and courts across the UK will be put on their mettle as the disarmers give their attention to the 37 other Trident-related sites nation-wide.

The Pinochet affair has shown that we are beginning to accept the need to have an overarching global system of law, based on humanitarian principles, to which all individual citizens are accountable. This is the issue which was put to the test in Helensburgh District Court yesterday as Helen Harris, Marilyn Croser and Ellen Moxley appeared on charges arising from the Trident Ploughshares direct disarmament camp in August. Marilyn and Helen cut a hole in the perimeter fence at Coulport and were aiming to damage the installations inside. Ellen had taken part in a blockade of the Faslane base and had been chained to the gate.

All three defended themselves on the basis that the Trident nuclear system was illegal under international law and that they were acting to prevent crime. Ellen pointed out that the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, by which Trident is unlawful, was not mere advice but was an authoritative interpretation of how established codes of humanitarian law on the conduct of warfare applied to nuclear weapons.

During his summing up the Procurator Fiscal used a bizarre argument saying that just because his pen could theoretically be used to write poison pen letters, his possession of it did not imply he would threaten to use it in that manner. This was apparently an attempted analogy for Trident missiles. People in court were left racking their brains to work out what other purpose Trident missiles could serve, other than to threaten annihilation or actually to carry it out.

Although JP Stirling admitted that his grasp of international law was fallible, he still felt sure enough of his ground to find all three guilty and to fine them. For Marilyn and Helen the fines amounted to 225 pounds each while Ellen was fined 150 pounds. All three have made it clear that they have no intention of paying.

22nd

Continuing Concern at Cornton Vale Abuse

22nd October 1998

Continuing Concern at Cornton Vale Abuse

Doubt Over Adequacy Of Police Investigation

Elected representatives, activists and concerned supporters continue to seek explanation and redress for the pain and humiliation suffered by the TP2000 women prisoners at Cornton Vale Womens Prison on the 19th September, following their modest protest against the rolling out of

Britain's latest Trident nuclear weapons submarine, HMS Vengeance.

In replies to enquirers the Scottish Prison Service is maintaining its stance that staff action in response to the protest of the prisoners was to prevent the involvement of the other prisoners in a disturbance. This line is still peddled in spite of the fact that staff were aware on the previous evening that a quiet protest was planned and that there was no intention to involve other prisoners. This was in fact acknowledged by Assistant Governor McKerchar who said to Helen John: "It's a good thing for you that you did not try to involve others, because that could have led to a riot."

TP2000 has written to William Wilson, Chief Constable of Central Scotland Police, raising the question of the quality of the police investigation of the prisoners' complaints about the treatment they received. Since the staff version of events has clearly contradicted that of the women, it is surprising that the women were not interviewed again. Helen John said: "Although I gave them (the police officers) a pretty full account of what happened it was obvious that they were being very selective about what they noted down."

The second phase of the TP2000 campaign, the week-long disarmament action camp at Coulport from the 10th to 17th November, is likely to lead to the imprisonment of other activists. For their sake, as for other prisoners, the issue of prison ethos needs to be addressed. Meanwhile Welsh MEP David Morris is tabling a resolution to the European Parliament, challenging the treatment of the women on humanitarian grounds.

Copies of full statements by Angie Zelter and Hanna Jarvinen available.

9th

Disarmer Admonished as Sheriff Ducks Global Law Issue

9th October 1998

Disarmer Admonished as Sheriff Ducks Global Law Issue

Yesterday at Dumbarton Sheriff Court Ian Thomson, a 57 year-old joiner and campaigner, was found guilty and admonished by Sheriff Fitzsimmon. He had been charged after cutting part of the perimeter fence at Coulport Naval Armaments Depot, where the UK's Trident nuclear weapons are stored and maintained, as part of the Trident Ploughshares direct disarmament campaign.

From the witness box Ian explained that his aim had been to begin the demolition of the entire base. He had been acting to uphold international law by which Britain's weapons of mass destruction are held to be unlawful on account of their horrific nature and their ever-present threat to the safety of people and the environment. The Sheriff acknowledged the sincerity of Ian's belief but did not see that he had a "reasonable excuse" for acting as he did. In line with similar recent myopic judgments Fitzsimmon could not see his responsibility as extending beyond Scots Law, as if that entity existed in a self-contained bubble.

Meanwhile the Scottish Prison Service continues its campaign of misinformation about the abuse of disarmers on remand at Cornton Vale Prison on the 18th/19th September. In his letter to Alex Falconer, MEP, SPS Chief Executive Eddie Frizzel claims to be assured "that at no time was any prisoner left in a naked state" and that staff were "using approved control and restraint methods." Angie Zelter has given consistent testimony that she was subjected to excruciating physical pain, that she was left naked in a cell and that a prison officer threatened to break her leg.

September International Trident Submarine Disarmers Admonished

29th September 1998

29th

International Trident Submarine Disarmers Admonished

Local Court Still In Muddle Over International Law

Today in Helensburgh District Court Katri Silvonen, Hanna Jarvinen and Krista van Velzen were found guilty and admonished on charges relating to their direct disarmament actions during the August phase of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign at Faslane and Coulport.

All the defendants said they were on their way to disarm a weapon of mass destruction and were acting to uphold international law. "Under the Nuremberg Principles," said Hanna, "I have a right if not a duty to prevent the crime that is happening at Faslane".

Katri said: "Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system is a crime against humanity and it is my duty as a global citizen to take action. I belong to Finland, a nuclear-free country, but that does not protect me - radiation does not recognise borders." When asked by the Procurator Fiscal if he had been given authority to enter the nuclear base she said: "I was not given permission by the authorities in Faslane but I have been given that right by the previous War Crimes Tribunals."

Supporters were full of admiration for the clarity, dignity and courage with which the women gave their testimony in a court that was foreign to them and whose business was not conducted in their mother tongue. Justice of The Peace Tony Stirling obviously agreed and congratulated them on a well -presented and very interesting case.

Expert witness Glen Rangwala, a specialist in International Law from Cambridge University pointed out that the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion of 1996, by which the UK government's position on nuclear weapons is illegal, " . . .is the highest statement of customary law that we have." In spite of being given "cause for thought" JP Stirling said he had no alternative but to disregard the arguments from international law for to do otherwise would mean that he would have to accept that the UK Government were committing War Crimes! He put himself in a thoroughly contradictory position by saying that the case might be argued in the High Court. Clearly, if Helensburgh District Court finds itself unable to deal with arguments so central to the defence of the TP2000 activists, it has no business hearing their cases and wasting everybody's time. JP Stirling's verdict also flew in the face of the prosecution's failure to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that their intention was to commit crime.

Earlier fellow TP2000 activist Helen John was fined £180 for her disarmament action. Having been given 6 months to pay she is free like the other three women and able to put the traumatic events at Cornton Vale Prison behind her.

Meanwhile the case of Angie Zelter, Tracy Hart and Sylvia Boyes, charged with stealing the Ministry of Defence boat which they borrowed for a citizens' inspection has been adjourned to the 16th October because an MOD witness did not turn up. The MOD's reluctance to describe that incident in open court is quite understandable.

28th

Scottish Courts Again On The Spot Over Global Justice

28th September 1998

Scottish Courts Again On The Spot Over Global Justice

Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists Hanna Jarvinen (21), Katri Silvonen (20), both from Finland, Krista van Velzen (23), of the Netherlands and Helen John (59), from Yorkshire are to appear at 10 a.m. on Tuesday (29 September) in the District Court in Victoria Halls, Helensburgh on charges relating to their disarmament activities during the first phase of the TP 2000 campaign Faslane and Coulport in August.

On two separate occasions Katri and Krista were able to swim unimpeded across the Gareloch in the dark to within metres of a Trident nuclear submarine, before being arrested. This was not a playful midnight dip. They went prepared to inflict disabling damage on the sub in order to prevent the ongoing crime being committed by the British government in possessing and being ready to use nuclear missiles which would cause death and suffering for millions, including innocent civilians and children. Following their arrest on that occasion they were given a "Fiscal's release" and tomorrow's court appearance concerns a later intrusion of security at the nuclear bases.

In court their defence will be that they acted to uphold international humanitarian law. This will present two basic challenges to the presiding Justice of The Peace. Will the JP allow police witnesses to be properly cross-examined on their understanding of the Nuremberg Principles? Will the JP recognise that Scots law, like the law in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, is subject to international humanitarian law?

Supporters will gather outside the court to cheer on the activists.

The treatment of these prisoners and of Angie Zelter in Cornton Vale continues to be under the spotlight. MEP Alex Falconer has written to governor Kate Donnegan asking for a detailed report on the action of prison staff on Friday and Saturday last which has led to the filing of formal complaints and the intervention of Central Scotland Police.

Meanwhile, also on Tuesday at 10.a.m. in Dumbarton Sheriff Court three women, Tracy Hart, Sylvia Boyes and Angie Zelter, will face charges relating to a dramatic incident that took place before the TP2000 campaign properly started. Intent on a citizens' war crimes inspection they went into the base at Coulport and took away an unguarded police launch to help with the inspection. They sailed it all the way down Loch Long and into the Gareloch, passing and greeting three other MOD boats on the way. They were arrested at the boom which defends the Trident berths at Faslane. It is expected that there will be some red faces in the witness box.

Superquote:

UK Foreign Minister Tony Lloyd, speaking of the new International Criminal Court: "It will be an institution that will forge a new moral dimension... it makes universal the rule of law."

23rd

Trident Ploughshares Activists Admonished

23rd September 1998

Trident Ploughshares Activists Admonished

At Helensburgh District Court today, Anja and Jens Light and Angie Zelter were found guilty and admonished on charges of malicious mischief and the breach of bye-laws connected with their disarmament actions during the Trident Ploughshares 2000 action at Coulport in August.

Justice Of The Peace Stirling said that he was finding them guilty " with regret " He

congratulated them on the quality of their defence and the manner in which they had conducted themselves and said that he would in due course issue a written judgement.

While accepting that the JP had come a fair distance in reaching the verdict that he did Angie Zelter has indicated that she will appeal.

"Beyond any doubt we proved to the Court that our actions, far from being reckless, were planned and executed after long thought and consideration as the only way of preventing the nuclear crime that is being committed by the UK. We have learned nothing from the Nuremberg principles, and nothing from war crimes in Ruanda and former Yugoslavia if Scottish courts can still not grasp the fact that international humanitarian law applies locally and universally."

Earlier in the day JP Stirling had found Cambridge University student Gaynor Barrett guilty of Breach of the Peace and fined her £150. Gaynor's crime had been to pick up litter from the roadway outside the South Gate of the Faslane nuclear weapons base.

Meanwhile Angie Zelter has been giving more information about the abuse suffered by her and fellow prisoners at the hands of prison staff in HMP Cornton Vale. When told about Governor Kate Donnegan's attempt at a whitewash Angie said: "This talk of a roof-top protest and inciting other prisoners to riot is utter nonsense. On Friday night the staff already had a written account of our planned protest, which made it absolutely clear that it was not directed against the prison regime, that it was limited to remaining in our cells, not speaking and not eating for a day. On Saturday they bent my thumb back along with my wrist and applied pressure, causing excruciating pain. I was pinned to the floor of the punishment cell, stripped and left alone in the cell and my clothes were taken away. It was a total abuse of power. It is utterly horrifying to think that this sort of behaviour is described as 'standard procedure'."

There may well be a connection between the staff reaction at Cornton and an event in Barrow-in-Furness on Friday night. Lindis Percy, a peace campaigner from Yorkshire, drove her car right inside the VSEL shipyard and settled down to watch preparations for Saturday's roll out of HMS Vengeance, Britain's latest addition to the nuclear weapons fleet. She fell asleep in the car and was discovered by the shipyard security. They called Cumbria Police, who arrived in full riot gear and threatened to smash in her windscreen and attack her with CS gas. She offered to get out of the car but was ordered to remain inside. The police arranged instead for a fork-lift truck to lift her car, with her still in it, and deposit it outside the yard. She was then charged with vagrancy and summoned to appear in Barrow Magistrates Court on the 5th October.

Said CND worker Nigel Chamberlain: "This was an act of intimidation against a single woman who offered no threat or argument and it demonstrates how desperate the authorities have become since the launch of Trident Ploughshares 2000."

Perhaps the Cornton incident arises from similar desperation.

23rd

Scottish Courts Accused of "Parish Pump" Attitude

23rd September 1998

Scottish Courts Accused of "Parish Pump" Attitude

Trial Of TP2000 Activists Branded Unfair

Today in Dumbarton Sheriff Court Ian Thomson had his case adjourned after his lawyer had many of his questions to the prosecution witnesses stopped Under the Official Secrets Act.

This follows the guilty verdicts against Anja and Jens Light and Angie Zelter yesterday in Helensburgh District Court. The Scottish judiciary have shown an inability to adopt other than a parochial approach to the rule of law.

The activists defence was based on the fact that they had undertaken their disarmament action as the only way to prevent the war crime that is being committed by the UK in its threatening possession and readiness to use nuclear weapons. They presented to the courts exhaustive and compelling arguments on the illegality of the UK's nuclear arsenal. But the courts have been unable to rise to the challenge.

Yesterday, Mathew Berlow, the lawyer representing one of the defendants questioned an MOD policeman Constable Brennan. He asked whether he would obey an order to shoot all people with black hair. The policeman was indignant, of course not he replied. The lawyer then asked, would he obey this command if he knew that the Government had just passed a law saying that everyone with black hair should be shot. At this point the Sheriff discontinued all questioning, saying that these were complex matters which such ordinary officers could not be expected to understand. These were questions that only senior military personnel and government officials could answer.

JP Stirling avoided the crux of the matter: under the Nuremburg Principles it is the duty of every citizen however humble their public role, to refuse an order which they know to be contrary to International Humanitarian Law. Helensburgh District court was unwilling to confront the issue of the illegality of the present British nuclear defence policy.

Said TP2000 activist and retired company director Alan Wilkie:

"Unfortunately our courts are still living in a smug little bubble of their own. Our law officers do not seem to have been living in the same world as the rest of us - a world in which war criminals from Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia have stood trial and been punished, entirely on the basis of international humanitarian law. As things stand in Scotland you won't get away with homicide, but you can get away with genocide. Indeed our government is currently getting away with the plans for genocide represented by the Trident system."

Next Tuesday, Sept 29th, two Finnish and one Dutch woman and one English woman will be in Helensburgh District Court. Ian Thomsons case continues at Dumbarton Sheriff Court on Oct 8th. Well before the first batch of 23 trials are over the next disarmament camp at the Scottish Trident submarine base, will take place in November.

This is a struggle the global community cannot afford to lose. The laws against mass destruction, genocide and long-term and lasting damage to the environment are there - but they need to be enforced. Here in Scotland global citizens are bringing this issue to the forefront of public debate. This is not a UK issue alone, it effects everyone everywhere which is why people from 10 different nations have been involved.

22nd

[Police Investigate Abuse Of Ploughshares Prisoners at Cornton Vale](#)

22nd September 1998

Police Investigate Abuse Of Ploughshares Prisoners at Cornton Vale

As C.I.D. officers of Central Scotland Police visited HMP Cornton Vale today to investigate allegations of assaults committed against Katri Silvonen (21), Hanna Jarvinen (20), both from Finland, and Angie Zelter (49), from England, the women themselves have been giving to their visitors further details of the massive over-reaction of the prison authorities

to their modest protest on Saturday against the rolling out of Britain's new Trident nuclear weapons submarine, HMS Vengeance.

Said Angie: "When I refused to move from my cell I was put in a three person hold, and my thumb was drawn back along with the wrist and then pressure was applied causing excruciating pain. I was not resisting and posed absolutely no threat to anyone. They could just have lifted me. Then I was stripped and left alone in cell. When I accidentally stood on the foot of one of the guards he said ' If you tread on my foot again I'll break your leg!' "

Katri and Hanna, who also were subjected to unnecessary violence and humiliation, were particularly distressed at the brutal treatment to which Angie was subjected and felt that the underlying culture of violence and intimidation in the prison was now being exposed.

We understand that in response to initial official inquiry the Governor has indicated that the staff had feared a roof-top protest and were convinced that the women were planning to involve other prisoners in a wide-ranging protest. The five women have been consistently clear that their protest was confined to themselves and was planned to cause minimum disruption to the life of the prison, on the basis that the target of protest was not HMP Cornton Vale but HMS Vengeance. They explained all this to staff before the beginning of the protest. Apparently the Governor also said that one of the prisoners was only naked in her cell because she had decided not to put her clothes back on. The Governor is also claiming that minimum force was used. Both claims are in direct contradiction to the prisoners' own testimony. It is difficult to judge whether the Governor has been internally misled or is a conscious part of the cover-up.

David Morris, MEP, is today putting down an urgent motion to the European Parliament in response to the Cornton incident and Scottish CND have drawn it to the attention of Amnesty International.

The women are on remand in connection with alleged offences relating to the Trident Ploughshares 2000 actions at Coulport in August, as part of TP 2000's direct campaign to disarm the UK's illegal nuclear weapons system. Tomorrow at 10 a.m Angie Zelter appears at Helensburgh District Court in the Victoria Halls, along with Australian Jens Light who has been on remand at Gateside in Greenock and Jens' sister Anja. In their defence they intend to show that their disarmament actions were necessary to prevent the international war crime being committed by Britain in its threatening possession of and readiness to use nuclear weapons.

20th

Women Disarmers Punished at Cornton Vale

20th September 1998

Women Disarmers Punished at Cornton Vale

The five Trident Ploughshares activists who are on remand at HMP Cornton Vale in connection with alleged offences relating to their disarmament activities during the August phase of TP2000's campaign, have been strip-searched and punished by the prison authorities after their modest protest, not against the prison regime, but against the roll-out of Britain's latest Trident submarine, HMS Vengeance, at Barrow -in-Furness on Saturday.

The women were strip-searched on Friday night. At this time a banner, made of newspaper strips stuck on to sheets with toothpaste, and reading: NO ESCAPE . . FROM TRIDENT, which they intended to drop from their cell windows on Saturday morning, was taken from them.

On Saturday the women remained in their cells and refrained from speaking and eating. The

response of the prison authorities was to handcuff them and lead them to separate cells outwith the remand unit. Angie Zelter refused to co-operate, but although her refusal was passive and entirely non-violent, she was stripped and forcibly removed to a punishment cell, where she spent the day naked and in pain. Said fellow prisoner Helen John, "They really hurt Angie." Another of the remanded prisoners, Krista van Velzen said, "They hurt Katri Silvonen too. She was really upset in the chapel this morning."

The prisoners have been deprived of access to personal cash for the remaining period of their remand, which means that items essential for their communication with families and the outside world, such as phone cards, stamps and envelopes, will not be available to them. They have also been deprived of recreation for five days.

Responding to concern that the women might not have access to legal materials for their defence, Prison Officer Tony Quinn, Supervisor of Younger Block, assured Angie Zelter's agent that she would have these materials when she wished.

Supervisor Quinn also fully recognised that the protest was in no way directed at the prison authorities but was the women's way of continuing their resistance to the UK's Trident nuclear system of mass destruction which was given a further boost by the addition of a fourth Trident submarine yesterday.

As full details of the treatment of the women emerges, especially that of Angie Zelter and Katri Silvonen, TP2000 will keep the civil rights and human welfare implications of the prison authorities' actions under continued scrutiny

19th

TP2000 Prisoners go on Hunger Strike

19th September 1998

TP2000 Prisoners go on Hunger Strike

The five Trident Ploughshares 2000 women on remand in Scottish women's prison Cornton Vale are on hunger strike today to signal their determined resistance to the British government's fourth launch of a Trident submarine, scheduled for this afternoon at Barrow-in-Furness.

They will refuse to cooperate within the prison for the entire day. According to Helen John, of the Menwith Women's Affinity Group, "we will remain in our rooms; we will not speak and we will not eat. We will also be sending a message to those who will be a Barrow-in-Furness via CND. We hope to hang banners from our windows saying 'THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM TRIDENT,' - even though these will only be seen from the internal exercise area our intent is clear."

The women will inform the prison staff that the protest is not directed against the prison, but is a protest against the launch of yet another genocidal weapon of mass destruction by the British Government.

17th

Sandra's Shame

17th September 1998

Sandra's Shame

Sandra Robertson, wife of Defence Secretary George, has been persuaded to ceremonially

bless Britain's new Trident nuclear weapon submarine, the new HMS Vengeance, at its launch this Saturday at Barrow -in -Furness. Vengeance will be the fourth Trident sub and its completion undermines the UK government's claim to work for a world free of nuclear weapons.

While the official ceremony is going on protesters will attempt a citizens' war crimes inspection of the launch area and will demonstrate against this increase in Britain's potential for mass destruction.

Meanwhile, just down the road from Sandra's Dunblane home, 5 woman are in Cornton Vale Prison awaiting trial for disarmament actions against the UK's escalating nuclear weapons system, while two men are being held at Gateside prison in Greenock. Two of the prisoners, Angie Zelter and Jens Light, along with Anja, Jen's sister who had been bailed, will appear at the District Court at the Victoria Halls in Helensburgh at 10 a.m. on Tuesday 22nd September, charged with malicious mischief and the breach of bye-laws.

The three will base their defence on the primacy of international humanitarian law and will be supported outside the court by fellow TP2000 activists who will visually represent the continuity of humanitarian law in armed conflict, from the Celtic Monk Adomnan to Judge Bedjaoui of the International Court of Justice which delivered its landmark Advisory Opinion in 1996 that "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to international law."

On Wednesday 23rd the only Scot on remand for disarmament action, Ian Thomson, will appear at Dumbarton Sheriff Court at 10 a.m.

2nd

Seventh Ploughshare Disarmer Sent To Jail in UK

2nd September 1998

Seventh Ploughshare Disarmer Sent To Jail in UK

Foreign Pressure on British Government

This morning at Dumbarton Sheriff Court, Ian Thomson was remanded to Greenock Prison until 23rd September following his arrest yesterday for damaging the fence at Coulport where UK nuclear warheads are stored and loaded onto Trident submarines. There are now seven Ploughshares political prisoners in UK jails, 5 women in Cornton Vale in Stirling and 2 men in Gateside in Greenock.

The British Government now faces international embarrassment as it's embassies in Finland, the Netherlands, Australia and many other countries are lobbied for the release of Krista, Katri, Hanna and Jens. The UK has taken the lead in setting up the International Criminal Court and its imprisonment of those who have acted in support of the same International Laws tests its credibility to the limit, just as it's claim to be genuinely engaged in the disarmament process is undermined by the launching of the forth Trident submarine, HMS Vengeance on September 19th in Barrow in Furness.

The prisoners on remand will appear in court as follows:

22 September Helensburgh District Court Angie Zelter, Jens Light (and Jens' sister Anja)

23 September Dumbarton Sheriff Court Ian Thomson

29 September Helensburgh District Court Krista Van Velzen, Katri Silvonen, Hanna Jarviven and Helen John.

In spite of their incarceration the prisoners are all in good heart and anxious to continue the campaign from their cells. Katri (20) from Finland said: 'We have had great support here for our stance against Britains fearful disruptive weapons and our determination to uphold the law'

August Defencing Coulport Again

30th

30th August 1998

Defencing Coulport Again

The first Disarming Trident action since the two week TP2000 camp ended occurred this evening.

One disarmer attempted to enter the illegal Nuclear Weapons Store at Coulport. He has been charged with malicious mischief [most likely cutting the perimeter fence]

He was transferred from the naval base to Clydebank police station where he will spent the night before attending court tomorrow [31st Aug].

Ploughshares activist Ian Thomson had stated that his intention was to continue to dismantle the Coulport store.

27th

Imprisoned Ploughshares veteran in High Court today

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Angie Zelter, a Ploughshares activist who is on remand in the Cornton Vale women's prison in Scotland following three attempts to disarm the British Trident nuclear weapon system, was in the High Court today in Edinburgh. She was appealing against her imprisonment, and stated 'It is members of the UK Government who should be on remand. They are breaking international laws with the development and deployment of the first strike nuclear weapons system at the Trident submarine base in Scotland'.

This morning during a closed hearing, at the High Court, Angie was unsuccessful in her appeal and will now return to Cornton Vale Womans Prison to join the other political prisoners

Angie Zelter was one of the four women who made history in 1996 by being acquitted by an English jury for prevention of a major crime against humanity. The four women were on trial after causing an estimated 1.5 million pounds worth of damage to a Hawk aircraft bound for

oppression of East-Timor resistance in Indonesia.

In Cornton Vale women's prison

Angie Zelter, 49, Norfolk, UK, potter, remanded till Sept. 22

Hanna Jarvinen, 21, Finland, For Mother Earth campaigner in Gent, Belgium, remanded till Sept. 29

Helen John, 60, Yorkshire, UK, remanded till Sept. 29

Katri Silvonen, 20, Finland, For Mother Earth campaigner in Gent, Belgium, remanded till Sept. 29

Krista van Velzen, 23, Netherlands, For Mother Earth campaigner in Gent, Belgium, remanded till Sept. 29

In Gateside Greenock men's prison

Jens Light, 32, Canberra, Australia, Public servant, remanded till Sept. 22

26th [Foreigners Make New Attempt to Disarm Outlawed Nukes](#)
26th August 1998

Foreigners Make New Attempt to Disarm Outlawed Nukes

TP2000 Movement Press Criminal Charges Against Westminster

Faslane (SCOTLAND), August 26 1998 - Following over 100 arrest the previous two weeks, last night at 11:55 once again three international For Mother Earth campaigners, made a fourth attempt to disarm the British nuclear submarine system with. They were arrested as they cut their way through the high-security fence at the nuclear submarine base, HM Clyde Naval Base in Scotland. The non-violent activists, Katri Silvonen (20) & Hanna Jarvinen (21) both from Finland, and Krista van Velzen (23) from the Netherlands, had just been released for the third time yesterday at 10 a.m. when the procurator fiscal dropped all charges against them. This though they already made three attempts to disarm the control room of a Trident submarine with hammers, hacksaws, boltcutters and syrup.

Following the poor result of many other actions such as petitioning, letters and vigils, the three campaigners pledged to enforce enforce the historic opinion of the UN World Court of July 8 1996 with citizens disarmament actions, as is stipulated in the UN Nuremberg Charter. The three full-time international campaigners working in the international office in Gent (Belgium) stated just before their arrest that:

'it is a painful injustice to have four UK women and an Australian man in Scottish prisons for similar actions. The wrong people are arrested. It is the ones threatening to use nuclear weapons, which should be prosecuted. The UK government has released us to counter the growing controversy, widely published in foreign press, about the illegal and immoral British nuclear weapons. With our actions we embarrass Westminster as we expose the stubborn stand of Britain in the United Nations. Prime Minister Tony Blair continues to ignore decades of UN disarmament resolutions. But we are very hopeful, as our actions are perceived with great support and respect, even by the MoD security. These confrontational non-violent actions will force the UK government to support the global call for them to start and conclude negotiations to ban all nuclear weapons. The annual 1.5 billion pounds budget for Britains Trident should be

redirected to meet social needs.'

Citizens' Complaint against UK government accepted at Police headquarters

Yesterday an international delegation of the peace movement filed successfully a Citizens' Complaint against Members of the UK government and employees of UK nuclear weapons establishment at the headquarters of the Dumbarton Police. Stephen Allcroft, Morag Balfour and Koen Moens of TP2000, George Farebrother of the World Court Project UK, and Brian Quail of Scottish CND and TP2000, talked to Superintendent Wylie. Mr. Wylie is said to be most sympathetic and to have quickly grasped the issue, and said to understand that the UK government could break international and UK law with its nuclear weapons deterrent. The complaint will be forwarded to the Procurator Fiscal office in Dumbarton.

George Farebrother who was part of lobbying successfully the UN for the World Court opinion, stated that 'it is important to realize that governments are not above the law. This has been proved with legal actions against states such as Rwanda and former Yugoslavia. The international Court of Justice in The Hague can not make new laws, it merely states what international law is. It's ruling of 8 July 1996 states that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is generally contrary to existing international humanitarian law'.

Tomorrow, Rachel Wenham and Sylvia Boyes, two imprisoned TP2000 campaigners will appear at 10 a.m. in the Victoria Hall of the Helensbrough Court. It is not clear yet if the foreign campaigners will appear in court tomorrow. George Farebrother will be called as an expert witness, while Robin Boyes, a Minister of the Unitarian Church in Birmingham and Sylvia's husband will travel to show his support for the disarmers.

The campaigners of TP2000 announced that from today all Trident related sites across the UK become susceptible to direct disarmament actions. Nuclear weapons sites abroad will also be targeted, especially in Belgium (Kleine Brogel) and the Netherlands (Volkel), two US Airforce bases with tactical B-61 nuclear warheads.

26th **'For Mother Earth' Disarmers Remanded**
26th August 1998

'For Mother Earth' Disarmers Remanded

Their fourth Breach of Security at Faslane

Just after 11a.m. this morning three For Mother Earth campaigners, working full-time in the international office in Gent (Belgium) were remanded in custody till court appearance September 29th in Helenbrough, near Glasgow. Katri Silvonen (20) and Hanna Jarvinen (21), Finland, and Krista van Velzen (23) from the Netherlands broke into the base last night and reached the fuel depot before being apprehended and arrested at 11.55 p.m. This morning in court, having been asked if she was aware that she could go to Scottish women's prison in Cornton Vale, Krista van Velzen replied "Yes, I understand. But you've got the wrong people." Krista Van Velzen referred to the historic UN World Court advisory opinion of July 1996 outlawing nuclear weapons. Although previous attempts at serious dialogue have been unsuccessful, the campaigners are continuing to follow every avenue, to try to press the UK government to comply with its international obligations and to go ahead and disarm the illegal Trident nuclear weapons system.

Earlier this morning Pol D'Huyvetter, press contact of TP2000 and For Mother Earth spent between ten and fifteen minutes informing the duty officer and another sailor -who refused to give their names- about the legal problems with the Trident nuclear submarines. The officers were aboard board HMS Vigilant. Earlier the MoD denied the existence of berth 12 [where HMS

Vigilant was docked] after the first successful penetration into the heart of Britain's nuclear weapons system by swimmers Katri Silvonen and Krista van Velzen (see also today's excellent story and pictures in 'The Guardian').

The three For Mother Earth campaigners will join three other campaigners currently being held on remand. Angie Zelter (Norfolk - UK) and Helen John (Yorkshire - UK) are being held at Corntonvale women's prison, Angie facing trial on September 22, Helen on September 29, both in Helensburgh. Jens Light, an Australian national from Canberra, is also being held at Greenock prison, with his trial on September 22, Helensburgh. A further two women, Sylvia Boyes and Rachel Wenham, are currently having their case heard, each facing jail sentences.

Today the non-violent direct disarmament campaign will spread to all Trident related sites in the UK, as well as to other countries with nuclear weapons. Especially the US B-61 tactical nuclear weapons in Kleine Brogel both in Belgium and Volkel in the Netherlands are now being targeted.

High quality & spectacular TV footage available (pool) at Reuters TV and Associated Press TV in London. Hi-8 footage and stills are available at TP2000 Press office in Scotland (cfr. press contact).

26th **Imprisoned Ploughshares Veteran in High Court Tomorrow**

Imprisoned Ploughshares veteran in High Court today

Angie Zelter, a Ploughshares activist who is on remand in the Cornton Vale women's prison in Scotland following three attempts to disarm the British Trident nuclear weapon system, was in the High Court today in Edinburgh. She was appealing against her imprisonment, and stated 'It is members of the UK Government who should be on remand. They are breaking international laws with the development and deployment of the first strike nuclear weapons system at the Trident submarine base in Scotland'.

This morning during a closed hearing, at the High Court, Angie was unsuccessful in her appeal and will now return to Cornton Vale Womens Prison to join the other political prisoners

Angie Zelter was one of the four women who made history in 1996 by being acquitted by an English jury for prevention of a major crime against humanity. The four women were on trial after causing an estimated 1.5 million pounds worth of damage to a Hawk aircraft bound for oppression of East-Timor resistance in Indonesia.

In Cornton Vale women's prison

Angie Zelter, 49, Norfolk, UK, potter, remanded till Sept. 22

Hanna Jarvinen, 21, Finland, For Mother Earth campaigner in Gent, Belgium, remanded till Sept. 29

Helen John, 60, Yorkshire, UK, remanded till Sept. 29

Katri Silvonen, 20, Finland, For Mother Earth campaigner in Gent, Belgium, remanded till Sept. 29

Krista van Velzen, 23, Netherlands, For Mother Earth campaigner in Gent, Belgium, remanded till Sept. 29

In Gateside Greenock men's prison

Jens Light, 32, Canberra, Australia, Public servant, remanded till Sept. 22

24th [Swimmers Once Again Reach Trident Nuclear Submarine](#)
24th August 1998

Swimmers Once Again Reach Trident Nuclear Submarine

Two International 'For Mother Earth' Campaigners Arrested

Tonight two For Mother Earth campaigners breached the high security at the Clyde Naval Base in Faslane, Scotland. This is their second spectacular action this week, in a non-violent effort to disarm the outlawed British Trident nuclear submarine system. The campaigners are enforcing the 1996 UN World Court decision which outlawed both the use and threat to use nuclear weapons, and wish to force the British Government to start multilateral negotiations to ban all nuclear weapons. Westminster has stubbornly ignored all UN resolutions to this effect. The activists, part of Trident Ploughshares 2000, took recourse to non-violent direct disarmament actions, after exhausting all other means. Four other activists, three UK women and a Australian man, were sent to Scottish prisons last Friday.

Over 100 arrests have taken place since the beginning of the Trident Ploughshares campaign on August 11th. Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, Rob Green, a former UK Naval Commander, and Australian Senator Bob Brown, are amongst the many who have shown support for this campaign, to rid Scotland of the illegal nuclear weapons system.

Krista van Velzen (23 - Netherlands) and Katri Silvonen (20 - Finland), both full-time campaigners at the office of 'For Mother Earth' International in Belgium, swam for one and a half hours across the ice-cold Gare Loch, penetrating the heart of Britain's first strike nuclear weapon system at 3:15 a.m. They wore wet-suits, and were carrying tools to disarm the nuclear submarine, hammers, bolt-cutters and sirup. It is not yet clear if they were succesful in disarming part of the Trident system.

Tonight's attempt follows a first attempt made in the early hours of August 17th, where they were arrested within only a few yards of a Trident nuclear submarine. Tonight, according to an independent monitoring source, they came even closer, one activist climbing onto the ship-lift above the Trident submarine.

The activists were arrested by the MOD at Faslane, and will possibly be greeted once again with high respect by the astonished security forces. Although first met with fear and distrust, the activists say that the MOD and local Strathclyde Police are displaying growing sympathy for the commitment and challenging non-violent methods employed by the emerging international Trident Ploughshares 2000 movement.

'If they send me to join the three other women in a Scottish jail, I can only state that they arrest the wrong people. We as citizens have the legal obligation to stop the preparation of crimes against humanity under the UN approved Nuremberg Charter', states the 20 year Finnish campaigner Katri Silvonen.

Twenty three year old Dutch citizen Krista van Velzen says

'We have no doubt that this Ploughshares movement is going to force Westminster to fulfil its commitment under Article VI of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by the year 2000. The people of the UK, nor the global community, want these costly weapons of mass destruction. It

is time to invest this waste of money and resources into meeting real social needs'.

24th

Foreign Trident Disarmers Released, One More UK Campaigner Remanded

24th August 1998

Foreign Trident Disarmers Released, One More UK Campaigner Remanded

TP2000 Presses Criminal Charges against UK Government

Today Helen John, a 60 year old determined disarmer, was remanded in custody in Cornton Vale Prison till her Court appearance in Helensburgh on September 29. Yesterday she attempted to disarm nuclear weapons at the Coulport Naval Base in Scotland (40 miles NW of Glasgow).

Surprisingly Katri Silvonen (20) from Finland and Krista van Velzen (23) from the Netherlands, two full-time 'For Mother Earth' campaigners working in Belgium, were released at the same court. These two young women had breached, for the second time in one week, the high security at the heart of Britain's Trident nuclear submarine weapon system, by swimming carrying hammers, boltcutters and other disarmament tools. Hanna Jarvinen (21), another Finnish For Mother Earth campaigner, was also released.

Pol D'Huyvetter from Belgium, TP2000 Press Officer, stated: 'I suspect that the British government intends to counter the swelling controversy abroad by releasing the foreign campaigners who have committed the most significant offenses breaching military security. How do you otherwise explain that Mr. Donnelly the Procurator Fiscal has dropped all charges against the foreign activists. Though making headlines in the foreign press, here in the UK press coverage has been minimal up to today.'

TP2000 files a Citizens Complaint at Dumbarton Court

This afternoon at 2 pm at the Dumbarton Sheriff's Court a delegation of TP2000 will file a Citizens' Complaint against Members of the Government of the UK and against employees in British nuclear weapons'. The complaint has been drafted with the assistance of Alan Wilkie (60), Scottish Secretary of the World Court Project (WCP) and George Farebrother (60), Secretary of the UK WCP, both of whom will join the TP2000 campaigners at Court this afternoon. It was the World Court Project which resulted in the July 1996 UN International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion outlawing nuclear weapons, and pressing the nuclear weapons states to negotiate a ban on all nuclear weapons under the NPT Article VI. In particular Britain, USA, Russia and France continues to refuse to begin such multilateral negotiations as demanded for many years by multiple UN General Assembly disarmament resolutions.

Helen John will now join three UK campaigners and an Australian activist who have been on remand since last Friday August 21. Two of them, Sylvia Boyes (56) from Birmingham and Rachel Wenham (25) from Leeds will appear in Victoria Hall, Dumbarton Court tomorrow at 10 am. Robin Boyes, Sylvia's husband and a vicar will travel up to Scotland to support his wife as he supports her for 100%. Helen John, from the Menwith Hill Women's Peace Camp in Yorkshire arrested at Coulport last night for cutting the fence, stated just before her arrest : "I admire the wonderful concept of all TP2000 activists, dedicated to bring an end to the Trident system. I will snip in the fence of international law against genocidal weapons. It is a great pity that courts do not yet support us."

TP2000 chooses non-violent and accountable direct disarmament, enforcing the 1996 UN World Court decision, specifically, to compel Westminster to sit down and start negotiations banning nuclear weapons by the year 2000. Around 110 activists were arrested over the past two weeks TP2000 international peace camp. The arrested were from Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, France, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Scotland, USA and Wales, amongst others. People from

Belarus, Romania, Russia, Sri Lanka and Ukraine were refused an entry visa when they wanted to join the 1,000 km peace walk which joined TP2000 on Nagasaki day in Faslane. The peace walkers had left from NATO hq in Brussels.

The released FME activists might take new disarmament action before leaving Scotland for their homebase in Belgium and the Netherlands, where a new Ploughshares campaign is being launched against US B-61 tactical nuclear weapons. Today starts the new phase of TP2000. All Trident related sites are now susceptible to direct disarmament actions.

21st **Court Crackdown on Ploughshares Activists**
21st August 1998

Court Crackdown on Ploughshares Activists

Four activists were remanded today in custody for between 5-32 days after breaking into the nuclear submarine bases at Faslane and Coulport. One French peace activist was fined £50.00 today for singing outside the gates of Coulport.

Angie Zelter, Jens Light and Anja Light, were arrested yesterday morning after cutting through Faslane's high security fence. In order to remove them the MOD brought in heavy machinery to cut down their own fence. Angie and Jens are remanded until September 22. Anja has been released on bail. Jens and Anja are siblings and have come over from Australia to join the Trident Ploughshares campaign.

At the Coulport site in the early hours this morning Sylvia Boyes and Rachel Wenham were arrested inside the base. Both women have been refused bail and are being remanded for five days.

It is noteworthy that 3 Swedish activists who appeared in court yesterday were released on bail in spite of two previous alleged breaches of bail, underlining the inconsistencies of the court's actions.

The activists are part of the Trident Ploughshares peace camp at Coulport. Before being arrested Sylvia said: 'I am going to continue my disarmament actions in order to uphold international law because a crime is being committed against humanity. If the government won't disarm Trident it's up to responsible citizens to uphold the law.'

Angie Zelter is one of the Ploughshares women who disabled the Hawk jet in Warton, Lancashire which was bound for Indonesia two years ago, and was acquitted with three other women by a Liverpool court.

Serge Levillayer, a retired schoolteacher from Cherbourg in France was today fined £50 for breaching the peace. He was singing at a morning vigil outside the gates of Coulport, continuing his tradition of holding a vigil every Friday outside a construction yard in Cherbourg where nuclear submarines are built.

21st **Australian Nuclear Disarmer in Scottish Jail**
21st August 1998

Australian Nuclear Disarmer in Scottish Jail

Jens Light is being held in remand in Greenock Prison, Scotland, until a court appearance on September 22nd on the charge of 'Malicious Mischief', after having entered the Faslane nuclear

weapons submarine site through a hole he had helped to cut in the fence.

He did not accept bail conditions for the charge because he regarded his previous actions (such as walking through the front gates of the Faslane nuclear submarine base to attempt to see the Acting Commanding Officer) as an attempt to uphold international law. However the court did not clarify that it recognised international law in this case and that therefore these would be considered offences under Scottish law.

His sister, Anja, agreed to the bail conditions after pleading not guilty to the charge. Their case, along with Trident Ploughshares 2000 coordinator Angie Zelter, will be heard on September 22nd, 1998.

According to a statement before being taken to jail, Jens said:

"I go to jail now, sad about my loss of freedom but comfortable with my conscience."

"Although I didn't expect to disarm Trident, I hope that my actions will contribute the Trident nuclear system and all nuclear weapons including those in India and Pakistan being abolished before any nuclear weapons are used again."

"I feel particularly concerned as an Australian that we are part of the nuclear fuel cycle and that we sit 'uncomfortably' under the US and British nuclear umbrella. The nature of nuclear weapons is that if they are used anywhere their impact is global."

"I take this action for myself - so that in the near future I can, with my family, friends, humanity and all life, share a nuclear free world. I hope and pray that we are already on the brink of a nuclear free world. I feel the sophistication of conventional weaponry make nuclear weapons redundant."

His sister, Anja Light says:

"Jens is a prisoner of conscience. He has been locked up while attempting, peacefully and responsibly, to prevent crimes of unimaginable magnitude. It is an action I believe each of us wish we had the courage to carry out. I hope that all Australians support him and the continuing actions of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists in whatever way they can."

21st [Prisoners of Conscience in Scottish Jails Receive Both Scottish & Global Support](#)
21st August 1998

Prisoners of Conscience in Scottish Jails Receive Both Scottish & Global Support

Support is rapidly growing, both in Scotland and abroad, for the Trident Ploughshares 2000 movement, as three British and one Australian anti-nuclear activist, were taken to Scottish prisons following a series of non-violent direct disarmament actions at the British Trident nuclear submarine base located in Faslane, Scotland.

Alex Salmond, the leader of the Scottish National Party, granted his support for the Trident Ploughshares movement in a letter dated 29 July 1998.

Also the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and National CND are stepping up their involvement in this direct disarmament campaign which wants to force the British government to abide by the July 1996 UN World Court's decision outlawing 'the threat or use of nuclear weapons'. Dave Knight, CND Chair says: 'The protestors are exposing the hypocrisy of the UK

over war crimes. On the one hand the UK has taken the lead in setting up the International Criminal Court, but at the same time it still refuses to accept the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) Advisory Ruling, which judged weapons of mass destruction like Trident to be unlawful'.

Rob Green, a former UK Navy Commander, and today Chair of the UK World Court Project, sent a message of support all the way from New Zealand: 'The non-violent activists are using direct action to uphold the self-evident legal case against any use of Trident. This is why I am supporting the courageous people'.

George Farebrother, UK's Secretary of the World Court Project, stated: 'The wrong people are being arrested. International law, as clarified by the International Court of Justice, has a great deal to say about what the military can, and can not do to people in time of war. So who are the criminals? The activists who are putting their bodies and their freedom on the line to prevent a criminal cataclysm? Or the high officials and politicians who devise plans contrary to international law?'

Ben Oquist, assistant of Australian Senator Bob Brown, already proposes to table a motion in the Australian Senate demanding the immediate release of Australian activist Jens Light, and the start of negotiations leading to a global ban of all nuclear weapons. Australia has been for many years on the forefront of nuclear disarmament. Former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating reported on the 14th of August 1996 the historic report of the 'Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons'. With seventeen leading international figures they agreed that 'nuclear weapons pose an intolerable threat to all humanity and its habitat'. The Canberra Commission proposed practical steps towards a nuclear weapons-free world, and urged the nuclear weapon states to commit themselves, immediately and unequivocally, to eliminating all nuclear weapons.

Also Corbin Harney, spiritual leader of the Western Shoshone Indians in Nevada, sent his support to the activists. Britain has detonated for many years its nuclear bombs on the Treaty land of the Western Shoshone Tribe in Nevada.

Sylvia Boyes, a vicar's wife from Birmingham (56 yesterday), and Rachel Wenham (25) a housing coop worker from Leeds, will both be tried in the Victoria Hall, Dumbarton Court next Wednesday 26 of August, at 10 a.m.. Both women are now in the Cornton Vale women's prison. Angie Zelter (49) a potter from Norfolk, will be on trial in Dumbarton on September 22nd, together with Jens Light (32), a public servant from Canberra, Australia. He is now in the Greenock men's prison.

Anja Light, his sister, who is also at the Trident Ploughshares camp says, 'Jens is a prisoner of conscience. He has been locked up while attempting, peacefully and responsibly, to prevent crimes of unimaginable magnitude.'

Angie Zelter is one of the four women who disarmed the Hawk aircraft bound for Indonesia two years ago. Although having damaged the Hawk fighter for an estimated 2.5 million pounds, the jury found her not guilty, and she was acquitted 'for prevention of crimes against humanity' by Indonesia in East Timor.

More arrests are being expected the next days as already 97 people have pledged to disarm the Trident system if Westminster does not take immediate steps to abolish nuclear weapons, as promised in Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968.

Arrests reach 100 at Disarmament Actions

Australians brother and sister Jens and Anja Light were among four peace activists arrested today for cutting their way into Faslane nuclear submarine base with the intention of disarming trident warheads. With them was Trident Ploughshares 2000 co-ordinator Angie Zelter, who was one of the four women found 'not guilty' of £3 million damage to a Hawk plane in 1996. Their action brings the total number of arrests since August 11 up to 100.

The four disarmers were arrested at 1.30 pm after spending over 30 minutes inside the base between the security fence and 'razor wire' while the police used an angle-grinder to open the fence and remove them. They have been charged with 'malicious mischief' and are currently being held at Strathclyde district police station.

They are among 97 Ploughshares activists committed to continuing their peaceful and accountable actions of civil disobedience until the British Government upholds its commitment to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed in 1968, and recognises that their nuclear policy violates international humanitarian law according to the ruling of the International Court of Justice in July 1996.

"We hope the British government is starting to understand our determination to disarm Trident. The international media is following this event closely and we want to remind the Government that they should take this opportunity to be world leaders in the disarmament process. If countries like Britain don't take the initiative to disarm we will all be locked in the deadly and expensive arms cycle forever," said Anja and Jens earlier today.

Meanwhile a Swedish Church minister was released at Dumbarton Sheriff Court after breaching his bail conditions on 3 occasions by breaking into the Trident base. During each arrest minister Fredric Ivarsson wore his dog collar and carried a bible. Other members of the Corpus Christi group, Klaus Engell and Petter Joelsson carried a hammer and bolt cutters. Bringing a message of peace the Swedes say they will continue their actions until the British government realises that "stockpiling nuclear weapons is no solution to the threat of world conflict, all countries must learn to negotiate with respect and love."

19th [Disarmers Confirm They Were Close to Sub](#)
19th August 1998

Disarmers Confirm They Were Close to Sub

Today the Trident Ploughshares activists who breached security on Monday night at the Faslane Naval Base, where Trident nuclear weapon submarines are berthed and maintained, undermined earlier denials by the Ministry of Defence when they confirmed that they were within ten metres of a submarine in Docking Berth 12.

When they appeared in court today the three swimmers, Katri Silvonen (21), Krista van Velzen (23) from the Netherlands and Rick Springer from the USA (47), were given standard bail and a trial date of 10th November. Out of consideration for the distances to be traveled to court by the accused no intermediate diet was arranged. In the context of standard bail conditions being applied to one of the three, Krista van Velzen, said "I don't believe I have committed a crime or will in the future, but I will continue to engage in non-violent direct action to uphold international law." The other disarmers arrested on Monday night have been given trial dates of 22nd September and 27th October.

To date the UK government has failed to uphold international law and to rid its defence system of the capacity to inflict genocide, mass destruction and environmental disaster that is contained

in the Trident nuclear weapons system.

The Nuremberg Principles confirm that it is the right and civic duty of every individual, with particular reference to members of the armed forces, to refuse to carry out an order when that order contradicts international humanitarian law. The TP2000 activists are therefore determined to do their duty as national and international citizens and carry out the disarmament themselves, by non-violent direct action, for the sake of a future free of the horror of nuclear weapons.

This morning all the activists who had been held after a mass intrusion at the Coulport base on Monday were released after all the charges against them were dropped. Other disarmers charged with alleged offences relating to other similar but earlier actions have been bailed for trial. This inconsistency suggests that the court system is now finding it difficult to cope with the number of referrals. The number of arrests has today reached 89.

Among five women arrested at the Faslane North Gate during the mass action this morning was Amelia Benjamin of the renowned early music group Venus Birds. Her crime was playing a Bach solo on her viol and her alleged offences were Breach of the Peace and Resisting Arrest.

19th **Mass Action at Faslane Against UK War Crimes**
19th August 1998

Mass Action at Faslane Against UK War Crimes

At the North Gate of the Faslane Naval Base where the submarines carrying Britain's illegal Trident nuclear weapons are berthed and maintained, activists from Trident Ploughshares who have pledged to uphold international law by disarming the weapons system in a non-violent way took part in a mass action which saw the gate blockaded, the security fence cut places and 5 arrests, while activists from the permanent Peace Camp demonstrated at the base's South Gate.

The police are present in great numbers. The small number of arrests may well be due to the fact that there have already been 86 in the last nine days, which is drawing nation-wide publicity to the determined action to uphold the law and leading to a whole series of trials in the subsequent months in which the primacy of international humanitarian law will be tested. The police have instead deprived many of the activists of their legitimate disarmament tools, such as bolt cutters, hammers, hacksaws and chisels. The police blocked the Garelochhead to Helensburgh road outside the base.

After a half-hour concert by the internationally renowned early music quartet, the Venus Birds, the disarmers, inspired by Monday night's foray in which two women and a man reached a submarine docking bay, set about the fence and attempted to carry out a citizens' war crimes inspection. They are determined to expose the hypocrisy of the UK on the matter of war crimes. On the one hand the UK has taken the lead in setting up the International Criminal Court but at the same time it stubbornly refuses to accept the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice in July 1996 which ruled mass destruction systems such as Trident unlawful.

The blockade of the North Gate has already lasted an hour and a half and is continuing.

Many of the disarmers arrested for actions which took place this week and last week appear in court today, including, Katri, Rick and Krista who reached Docking Berth 12 on Monday night.

End of Press Briefing 12

18th

Trident Ploughshares Disarmament Activists Reach Nuclear Submarine in Faslane Naval Base
18th August 1998

Trident Ploughshares Disarmament Activists Reach Nuclear Submarine in Faslane Naval Base

For Mother Earth Activists' Spectacular Coup

At 1.15 this morning 3 peace activists reached the submarines at the heart of the British nuclear weapons system. Three TP2000 divers from the international organisation For Mother Earth, clad in wet suits and carrying disarmament tools, breached the outer circle of security at the Faslane Naval Base and reached Berth 12, causing panic among the security forces according to an independent source monitoring the naval base.

Said a camper at the permanent Peace Camp at Faslane: "It was like a pin-ball machine! All the lights went on and the alarms went off. All hell broke loose."

The successful intrusion is the latest in a series of direct non-violent disarmament actions by activists based at the TP2000 camp at Coulport. Overnight 14 disarmers were arrested, bringing the total to date to 81 since August 11th.

97 people have signed the TP2000 pledge to peacefully and accountably disarm the UK nuclear weapons system, which is illegal under international law, referring to the historic ruling of the International Court of Justice in La Hague.

It is still a mystery how the three disarmers were successful in reaching the submarine inside the Faslane Naval Base as the base has been on alert since the arrival of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaigners. Katri Silvonen from Finland (21) and Krista van Velzen from the Netherlands (23), both working full-time as volunteers at the international office of For Mother Earth in Gent (Belgium), and Rick Springer, an author and disarmament campaigner from the USA (47), have been arrested by MOD security around Berth #12 where the submarine was probably stationed. They made a common statement reading : "If you attempt to disarm an illegal nuclear submarine, you may be considered as threat to safety. If you threaten to incinerate millions of people, and the very existence of our planet, it is called national security". The activists stated clearly that they are here to stop the planning of crimes against humanity.

Sergeant Miller of the MOD security refused to give more details about the arrests. Along with this sea-borne team. For Mother Earth had also two land teams with a total of seven non-violent disarmers. Their sea-borne team had one Dutch activist, one from the USA and one from Finland. The land based teams had one Dutch, two UK, one Finnish and one Belgian.

Background Information for Journalists

Britain's Nuclear Weapons System

The UK nuclear weapons system is based on Trident missiles bought from the USA and ready to be fired from three submarines (four from September) based at Faslane Naval Base on the Gareloch near Glasgow and stored and loaded onto the subs at Coulport on Loch Long a few miles further west. The Trident system, in which each warhead has eight times the destructive power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, is a massive escalation in Britain's nuclear capacity and has been outlawed under international law.

International Law

In July 1996 the International Court of Justice gave its Advisory Opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons, stating that "methods and means of warfare which would preclude any distinction between civilians and military targets, or which would result in unnecessary suffering

to combatants, are prohibited. In view of the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, ... the use of such weapons is scarcely reconcilable with such requirements" (ICJ July 1996)

Trident Ploughshares 2000 (TP2000)

The Ploughshares movement is a confrontational but non-violent resistance to the arms race and nuclear weapons. Over the years its members have been involved in many disarmament actions, including the disabling of a Hawk aircraft bound for East Timor, for which four women were acquitted. TP2000 was launched in May this year and 97 activists have signed its pledge to prevent nuclear war crime in a non-violent manner. The organisation and individual activists see themselves as fully and openly accountable for their actions. The disarmers will continue their peaceful disarmament attempt until 1 January 2000 or until the government commits itself to the immediate disarmament of the Trident system.

TP2000 is an international movement and activists from more than a dozen countries are present at the Coulport disarmament camp for an intensive 15 day period of action.

18th **Attempt to Disarm with Melodious Strains!**
18th August 1998

Attempt to Disarm with Melodious Strains!

YOU ARE INVITED TO A CONCERT at the North Gate of HMNB Clyde at 8am tomorrow. Venus' Birds, an internationally renowned early music quartet, will be holding a special music concert for viol consort to which the Base Commander of HMNB Clyde has also been invited.

The concert will continue for half an hour, after which there will be a MASS DISARMAMENT ACTION by Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists. This will include a Citizen's Inspection of the base and more than 20 people trying to cut through the fence into the base.

Nine people were arrested in the early hours of this morning, of which 6 will appear in St. Michael's Rectory, Helensburgh, tomorrow; a time has not yet been confirmed. Altogether, there will be 22 trial hearings for Trident Ploughshares activists from 7 different countries tomorrow, mostly charged with Malicious Mischief or Breach of the Peace. This has not deterred the activists who claim to be upholding international law, and plan to continue their attempts to openly and non-violently disarm Trident.

Claire Fearnley, from Trident Ploughshares, says "We're delighted by the success of our disarmament actions so far as we are appalled by the failure of the British government to uphold international law."

Last night's action, during which two women and one man reached the docking bay where one of the Trident submarines is rumoured to be being stored, has been the closest that any of the activists have been to the submarines so far. Extra police surveillance of the Trident Ploughshares camp at Peaton Hill has been evident since this morning, in the form of helicopters and surveillance boats.

Two women spent over an hour painting messages on the perimeter fence at Coulport, before being arrested by police yesterday. The messages included, "Trident is illegal -ICJ 1996", "Disarm now" and "Site of crime". They were painted in five foot high letters in red and luminous green paint which are visible from Loch Long. They also spent more than half an hour cutting the fence, removing a section of the alarm cable and continued after the police had noticed them until being arrested. They were singing for the duration. They were later released.

17th [Swedish Nationals Among 10 Disarmers Held Overnight](#)
17th August 1998

Swedish Nationals Among 10 Disarmers Held Overnight

Following yesterday's mass action against the main gate at Coulport in which the security fence was breached in fourteen places and the gate itself was successfully blockaded, leading to 37 arrests, seven of those arrested appeared in court in Helensburgh this afternoon, when they were given standard bail and trial dates. All the others have been released.

Among those held overnight were Angie Zelter and Sylvia Boyes, who have now each been arrested three times since the beginning last week of the Trident Ploughshares non-violent direct action against Britain's illegal Trident nuclear weapons system. Along with Helen Johns, these two women were given an Intermediate Hearing date of 6th January 1999 and a Trial date of 27th January 1999.

The Court was held in the premises of St. Michael and All Angels church, an ironic venue for the appearance of Fredrik, a pastor of the Swedish church, and his Swedish fellow Christian disarmers Petter and Klaus who along with retired teacher Peter Lanyon, were given an Intermediate Hearing date of the 10th March 1999 and a Trial date of 31st March 1999.

All seven were able to clarify that they had neither done nor had any intentions of doing anything illegal. The Sheriff noted that it was a matter of proof as to whether an offence had been committed or not.

At noon today there were two further arrests, of Ellen Moxley and Margaret Bremner, for obstructing the North Gate at Faslane. This brings the total number of arrests since the beginning of the TP2000 action to 60.

16th [Mass Disarmament at Nuclear Bomb Base](#)
16th August 1998

Mass Disarmament at Nuclear Bomb Base

JOIN US as more than 30 Ploughshares activists cut the fence! After a week full of action and 21 arrests, activists mass together to reinforce their struggle to uphold international law.

TODAY!!!

Rendezvous at 12.30pm in the Information Tent at the Trident Ploughshares 2000 camp; Peaton Wood, near Coulport.

Telephone for more information.

"Trident is immoral and illegal. We will keep coming back until it's gone."

16th [Arrests Mount as Disarmers Blockade Coulport Gate](#)
16th August 1998

Arrests Mount as Disarmers Blockade Coulport Gate

Belgian and Dutch TV Journalists Refused Access By MoD

As Trident Ploughshares (TP2000) disarmers carried out a mass action against the Coulport

Naval Base, where the UK's illegal weapons of mass destruction are stored and loaded onto the Trident submarines, leading to successful intrusions, a continuing blockade of the gate and 17 arrests, accredited TV journalists from Belgium were refused information from the Faslane MOD press office.

Today at 1pm 50 activists descended on the main gate of the Coulport base where a mere 30 police with only two vans were taken by surprise as some of the protesters, including Angie Zelter, breached the fence to carry out a citizens' war crimes inspection while Helen from the Menwith Hill group cut her way through the fence. Still others, among them Barbara from Edinburgh in her wheelchair, have blocked the gate by locking on to each other with their arms in drainpipes. They are still lying there peacefully, surrounded by banners. 16 disarmers at this action (to date 8 confirmed by the MoD) have been arrested so far bringing the total number of arrests of TP2000 protesters to 40 in this phase of the campaign which will last till the 25th August.

Earlier, at 10.30 am an Australian brother and sister team were arrested for entering the Faslane nuclear submarine base to make a demand to the Commanding Officer to begin disarmament of the Trident system. Anja and Jens Light bring an international plea for peace, Anja having come directly from meetings with survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Accredited Belgian and Dutch TV crews who are filming the campaign for their home networks have been refused access to information from the MoD press office by civil servant Steven Willmott. Michel Peremans said "It's a pity they refused us an interview as this would have helped us to report objectively on the British nuclear submarine base and the protesters." The crews are at Faslane and Coulport as a number of the TP2000 activists are Belgian and Dutch nationals.

Prize for the most bizarre arrest so far goes to Lesley Bolton (56) a veteran veggieburger cooker and peace activist who was arrested yesterday at Faslane for advertising the burger bar by writing on a concrete post.

15th [Support for Nuclear Disarmament by Hundreds of Peace Activists](#)
15th August 1998

Support for Nuclear Disarmament by Hundreds of Peace Activists

Today, around 300 international peace activists gathered at a rally to show their support for the immediate disarmament of Britain's nuclear weapons system, the Trident submarines. They met at Faslane Peace Camp, and processed to the North Gate of HMNB Clyde, where a number of speakers addressed the crowd, accompanied by singing, dancing and music. The rally was organised by Scottish CND. There were no incidents; the demonstration remained colourful, joyful and peaceful. The base remained on high security.

A group of women from the peace camp at Aldermaston, the secret base where the Trident warheads are manufactured, were a moving sight as they marched, beating drums along the way.

Janet Bloomfield, a former chair of CND, brought greetings from Ground Zero, a protest group based in Bangor, USA, the US Trident naval base.

Pol D'Huyvetter took the stage to invite the police and MOD to organise themselves and stop obeying illegal orders, as is their right and civic duty under the Nuremberg Principles. He also made reference to a group of policeman in Germany who last year refused to guard the waste at

Gorleben on these grounds.

Serge Levillayer joined the walk from Brussels to Faslane at Cherbourg in France, the construction site for the French nuclear weapons: "Ploughshares is a very strong way to make a non-violent protest against these illegal weapons." He attends vigils every week at his hometown.

After the rally, many of the protestors have returned to Faslane Peace Camp to signal their support for the camp during its threat of eviction. One peace-camper said, "The camp is upholding International Law, Trident is not. It is Trident that should go, not us."

After fourteen arrests, activists enjoyed the chance to party and protest in the sun before another week of intensive actions to disarm Trident.

14th [Hundreds of Peace Activists Signal Open Season on Trident](#)

14th August 1998

Hundreds of Peace Activists Signal Open Season on Trident

Today a couple of hundred committed nonviolent peace activists began their direct disarmament campaign to disable the Trident nuclear weapon system with a march from the permanent peace camp at Faslane to the North Gate at Faslane, where, in a lively and peaceful demonstration they declared their commitment to challenge Britain's violation of international law.

The activists, from Australia, Belgium, England, Finland, Japan, the Netherlands, Scotland, Sweden, the USA, and Wales launched their seventeen months of determined actions with a blacksmith beaten on his anvil a model of a Trident submarine into the CND symbol. Today's historic gathering was supported by theatre, drumming, singing, poetry, juggling and dancing.

Brian Quail of the Peace Artist Affinity Group read out a final plea to the base commander to act upon his duty to uphold the law and show his solidarity with the human race by issuing orders to begin the dismantling of the illegal nuclear weapons system, but the appeal met with deafening silence. This means that the disarmers now have no other option but to enter the installations and damage them with the tools they have to hand.

The disarmers realise that they face arrest and are ready to accept responsibility for their actions in order to show the primacy of international and humanitarian law and to test the readiness of the criminal justice system to recognise that primacy. The events of the next fifteen days will make that issue unavoidable

14th [Ploughshares Veteran in Dumbarton Court this Morning](#)

14th August 1998

Ploughshares Veteran in Dumbarton Court this Morning

Since August 11th there have been 15 arrests of Scottish, English and Welsh activists based at the TP2000 camp. Fellow activists will give lively and colourful support to Angie Zelter, as she appears at Dumbarton Sheriff Court this morning, to face the spurious charge that she deliberately failed to turn up at court in connection with an alleged offence relating to her involvement in the requisitioning of an MOD boat for a citizens' inspection of the UK's illegal Trident system at the bases in Faslane and Coulport.

Although Angie has evidence of the official permission for her not to appear the authorities are

proceeding with the unjust charge, presumably in an attempt to limit her involvement in the current intensive action against the nuclear bases at Faslane and Coulport by activists at the Trident Ploughshares camp in Peaton Wood. Angie was one of the four women who made history in 1996 by being acquitted by an English court after causing an estimated 1.5 million pounds worth of damage to a Hawk aircraft bound for oppression in Indonesia on the grounds that their action was to prevent a major crime against humanity.

Outside the court at Dumbarton from 10.30 this morning Angie's supporters will use colourful street theatre involving banners and dressing up as judges and the military to demonstrate the ruling of the International Court of Justice making nuclear weapons illegal.

The campaigners are now considering filing a complaint, with the support of international lawyers and local residents, at the Sheriff Court in Dumbarton against members of the UK Government and employees in establishments concerned with the development, transportation, preparation, guarding and deployment of British nuclear weapons. "The situation is ridiculous," said David Mackenzie, "The wrong people are being arrested and charged."

Tomorrow, Saturday, the TP2000 action will be boosted by the demonstration organised by the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament which will bring people from all over the UK and beyond to march from the permanent Peace Camp at Faslane and protest against the UK's weapons of mass destruction at the Faslane North Gate

14th [TP2000 Activist Freed at Dumbarton](#)
14th August 1998

TP2000 Activist Freed at Dumbarton

Today TP2000 disarmer Angie Zelter was released from custody without any bail conditions at a hearing in Dumbarton Sheriff Court after being wrongly accused of deliberately failing to appear in court in connection with an alleged offence relating to the removal of an MOD police boat used by herself and three other women to carry out a citizens' war crimes inspection of the illegal UK nuclear weapons bases at Coulport and Faslane.

Angie said: "I was upset at the accusation that I would dodge a court appearance. In line with the TP2000 philosophy I hold myself accountable for my actions. I will not resist arrest or fail to appear at hearings or trials. The court correspondence showed that I had requested and had been granted leave not to attend." Angie will now appear in court on the 29th September.

Activists who have come from all over the world to share in the 15 day intensive period of non-violent disarmament are stunned by the contrast between the splendid local scenery and the horror of the nuclear arsenal. Anke van Altena of Antwerp said: "Today I read about the nuclear leaks there have been at Faslane and Coulport. I was keen to swim in the beautiful waters of Loch Long but not now. It is tragic that this area and the whole country has been polluted physically and morally by these nightmare weapons." According to the government report there have been 33 reactor leaks from the submarines at Faslane and Coulport, which occurred during routine maintenance work.

To date 18 of the activists have been arrested and the surveillance of the camp and the campers by the MOD police is intense. MOD cars and vans pass the camp every fifteen minutes or so, there are constant water patrols and the camp telephone has been behaving strangely, especially at night.

14th [Swedish Priest Cuts his way into Faslane Base](#)
14th August 1998

Swedish Priest Cuts his way into Faslane Base

Overnight TP2000 women activists who take their name from Aldermaston, Britain's secret bomb factory managed to cut their way through an outer and an inner fence at the Coulport base before being apprehended. Following vigils at the Coulport gate and at the Faslane North Gate at in the early morning, at 11 a.m. three Swedish Ploughshares disarmers, from a group called Corpus Christi, cut a large hole in the fence at Faslane Naval Base in an attempt to disarm the Trident nuclear submarines, before being arrested by a police dog handler.

One of the Swedish activists, Fredrik Ivarsson, a priest in the Swedish Church, was wearing his dog collar and carrying his Bible. He said: "After the Cold War Nuclear Weapons seem to have been forgotten but they're still there and now is a good opportunity to get rid of them for good. With the action I wanted to remind the British government that nuclear weapons are illegal according to International Law."

Ironically Corpus Christi is also the name of a US Nuclear Submarine. But the body of Christ cannot, according to the Ploughshare group, consist of Nuclear Weapons but of human beings who follow Jesus' message of love, as they claim to do in disarming the subs in a non-violent way.

"What kind of morality do we express by possessing nuclear weapons or by not resisting them?" asks Klaus Engell, another member. "Love your enemies!"

Betacam SP TV footage and stills of the Swedish action are available

13th [Fourteen Arrests at Nuclear Weapon Sites](#)
13th August 1998

Fourteen Arrests at Nuclear Weapon Sites

As Trident Ploughshares Activists intensify their struggle to disarm Britain's illegal Trident nuclear weapons system, fourteen disarmers have been arrested in separate actions. The actions are part of the initial 15 days of the campaign, in which 97 persons have pledged to peacefully and accountably uphold International Law.

At 4.45 a.m. a group of five English campaigners, including two young women students and a retired teacher, attempted to cut their way into the Faslane Naval Base. They were immediately arrested, charged with Malicious Mischief. One of them, Angie Zelter, who was heading for the Trident submarines in an attempt to dismantle them, said: "We will be back". While the four others have been released and will appear at Dumbarton Sheriff Court on the 26th August, Angie is being held on the grounds that she failed to appear in court in connection with another alleged offence.

At 8 a.m., while participating in a vigil at the main gate of the Coulport base, four U.K. activists were arrested for blocking the traffic and have been charged with Breach of the Peace. They have since been released and are due to appear in court on the 19th August.

At 12.30 p.m. eight committed Christians, Catholics, Episcopalian and Presbyterians, gathered to cleanse the base ritually from the polluting effect of the horrendous weapons within. This they did by pouring floods of multi-coloured but environmentally-friendly detergent in at the gate and by ringing a bell to exorcise the evil. This led to three arrests for Breach of the Peace.

5th

Peace Walk - Commemorations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

5th August 1998

Peace Walk - Commemorations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Twenty five peace walkers of nine different nationalities are well on track to complete on Sunday 9 August (Nagasaki Day) their For Mother Earth 1000km walk from the NATO headquarters in Brussels in to Faslane on the Clyde, in protest against the UK's contribution to the escalation of nuclear weapons and in the hope of a world without weapons of mass destruction. They will join Trident Ploughshares 2000's two weeks of direct disarmament actions which begins on the 11 August at the Clyde nuclear bases.

The walkers, from Belgium, Canada, France, Finland, Scotland, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United States and India, are gathering disarmament petitions and spreading flyers as they go, inviting local people to join with them for a day or more. Another twenty walkers from Romania, the Ukraine, Sri-Lanka, Russia and Belarus were refused entry to Belgium by the immigration authorities.

Pol D'Huyvetter, one of the Belgian walkers and For Mother Earth Campaigner stated " The British nuclear weapons are illegal. They are weapons of mass destruction, best compared with mobile human incinerators. The obvious illegal status of nuclear weapons was confirmed by the International Court of Justice in a historic ruling in July 8th 1996 and as citizens we have an obligation to stop this crime. Britain and all nuclear weapon states have to start negotiations for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons."

Tomorrow at 9 minutes to 12 the walkers will have a commemoration ceremony for the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, as they reach the outskirts of Glasgow. Katri Silvonen, from Finland, who is one of the foreign activists preparing themselves to carry out a non-violent direct disarmament action at the Trident base in Faslane stated: "There are nuclear warheads equal to 1152 Hiroshima bombs in Faslane, carried by Trident subs. By attempting to disarm the Trident System I feel I am doing what every responsible citizen should do under the Nuremberg principles to prevent preparations for war crimes and genocide."

On Friday 7 August, at lunchtime, the walkers will carry out a brief ceremony at the Peace Tree in Rutherglen High Street, arriving in Glasgow in the late afternoon. On Saturday they will walk from Kinning Park to Bell's Bridge via the cycle path and then on to Clydebank by the Lomond Cycle Path. Actions are planned for the arrival at Faslane to mark Nagasaki Day (9th August).

The walkers receive the support of the Campaign For Nuclear Disarmament while in the UK.

Notes:

About Trident Ploughshares 2000 - The Ploughshares Movement began in North America in the 1970s as a confrontational but non-violent resistance to the arms race and nuclear weapons. Over the years its members have been involved in many disarmament actions, including the disabling of a Hawk aircraft bound for east Timor at the Aerospace plant for which four women were acquitted in 1996. Trident Ploughshares 2000 began in 1997 and was publicly launched in May of this year. All 97 activists have pledged to prevent nuclear crime in a non-violent manner. The organisation and individual activists see themselves as fully and openly accountable for their actions. TP2000 has also been attempting to engage the government in dialogue, so far without success. If this continues the activists will initiate peaceful disarmament attempt from August 11 1998 until 1 January 2000 or until the government commit to immediately disarming Trident themselves, whichever is the soonest.

About The Disarmament Action - If there is no significant response by that time from the UK government or the Clyde Base Commander there will be "open season" on the nuclear

installations after the opening ceremony at the North Gate, Faslane Base, at 4 p.m. on Tuesday 11th August 1998. The Clyde bases are notoriously vulnerable to intrusion. This will be the first of a series of disarmament attempts, which will later have other trident related sites as targets, including the vulnerable command, control, communications and intelligence networks around the country.

4th **Horror Weapons Spotlight on Baghdad and London**

4th August 1998

Horror Weapons Spotlight on Baghdad and London

While talks between the UN and Baghdad on the dismantling of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction reach an impasse, growing world-wide attention is also being given to Britain's own nightmare weapons, as people from as far afield as Japan and Sweden raise their concern at the UK's continued contribution to nuclear escalation through the Trident system, and voice their support for the citizens' disarmament action of Trident Ploughshares 2000 (TP2000) which will begin on the 11th August at the Clyde bases, following an opening ceremony at the North Gate, Faslane, at 4 p.m.

>From Sweden Igge Olson, himself a Ploughshares activist, in a letter to the British Embassy in Stockholm says: " We are still convinced that the British Trident program is contributing to the nuclear arms race and is contradictory to International Law and International agreements. This means we are still prepared to go on and take non-violent action to start the dismantling of Trident submarines." In spite of the failure so far of the British government to talk to TP2000, Igge goes on to say: " We are at the same time happy to continue the dialogue."

In Hiroshima Anya Light of TP2000 will join local people in the annual commemoration of the dropping of the bomb on 6th August 1945, in acknowledgement of Britain's shameful and continued readiness to inflict on civilian populations the same horrors as the Japanese city suffered 53 years ago.

Meanwhile the For Mother Earth Group, an international peace group who have nearly completed their 1000km walk from Brussels to the Clyde, will commemorate Hiroshima Day on Thursday at Strathclyde Country Park, before joining the 15 day disarmament action at Coulport.

July Eleventh Hour Plea to Blair as Deadline Looms

31st July 1998

31st **Eleventh Hour Plea to Blair as Deadline Looms**

In a final appeal to Tony Blair before the Trident Ploughshares (TP2000) action to disarm Trident begins on the 11th August, Angie Zelter, a Ploughshares veteran who with three other women was acquitted in 1996 after seriously damaging a Hawk Aircraft destined for repressive action against the people of East Timor, urged the Prime Minister to engage seriously with the legal, prudential and moral arguments for the dismantling of the UK's weapons of mass destruction - the Trident nuclear system.

Dismissing the changes to the nuclear system announced in the Strategic Defence Review as tokenistic and likely to mislead the public, Zelter and the 8 other signatories to the letter of the 1st August point out that pre-arranged targets for the warheads are still ready to be used; that if these targets are land based any firing of the warheads would be an obvious breach of international and humanitarian law; that the very possession of such unspeakable weapons is poisoning us all morally.

Said Rachel Wenham of Aldermaston Women "We still hope that Mr. Blair will accept that this is serious politics and concerns the future of our children. We cannot begin to build a safe, prosperous and moral world community until we confront the biggest skeleton in our national cupboard, our nuclear crime."

With the letter is enclosed the names and addresses of the 97 activists who will begin the disarming work, underlining the openness and acceptance of accountability inherent in the action.

Meanwhile the Adomnan Group, an Edinburgh based cell of TP2000, has written to all the High Court Judges in the country, challenging them to face up to their judicial responsibility to consider what action they can take against the state when it is shown to be guilty of illegal behaviour and pointing out that if official channels are exhausted, the activists will be involved in "what would normally be classified as violations of the law ." and will begin the disarming work themselves.

Notes for Journalists:

1. The Ploughshares Movement began in North America in the 1970s as a confrontational but non-violent resistance to the arms race and nuclear weapons. Over the years its members have been involved in many disarmament actions, including the disabling of a Hawk aircraft bound for east Timor at the Aerospace plant for which four women were acquitted in 1996.

2. Trident Ploughshares 2000 began in 1997 and was publicly launched in May of this year. All 97 activists have pledged to prevent nuclear crime in a non-violent manner. The organisation and individual activists see themselves as fully and openly accountable for their actions. TP2000 has also been attempting to engage the government in dialogue, so far without success. If this continues the activists will initiate peaceful disarmament attempt from August 11 1998 until I January 2000 or until the government commit to immediately disarming Trident themselves, whichever is the soonest.

3. In July 1996 the International Court of Justice gave its Advisory Opinion, stating that "methods and means of warfare which would preclude any distinction between civilian and military targets, or

which would result in unnecessary suffering to combatants, are prohibited. In view of the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, ... the use of such weapons is scarcely reconcilable with such requirements." (ICJ July 1996)

4. Three Trident submarines are based at Faslane on the upper Clyde and a fourth is due to be launched in August this year. Each sub can deploy 96 nuclear warheads at a maximum range of 7,400 kilometers and the whole system is a major escalation from the previous Polaris system, capable of incinerating many millions of innocent civilians and polluting vast tracts of the planet. The annual cost to the British taxpayer is estimated at £1.5 billion.

5. Since coming to office in May 1997 the Labour government has consistently voted against general disarmament resolutions at the UN.

Peace Camp, Sint-Vincentiuspark, Evere, Brussels

Brussels, --- This afternoon, a delegation of fifty peace activist and Members of the European and Belgian Parliaments held a "citizens war crimes inspection" at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The mission of the inspection team was to gather prove that the Alliance is preparing nuclear war crimes. The inspectors asked to receive documents about NATO's Nuclear Planning Group and its first strike nuclear deterrent.

The citizens war crimes inspection was organised to mark the second anniversary of the historic opinion of the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the illegality of nuclear weapons. On July 8, 1996 this highest court in the world ruled that threat (i.e. also including construction, storage and planning) and use of nuclear weapons are contrary to international law, and more specifically to humanitarian law and the rules of war. Because, among others, the Hague Conventions, Geneva Conventions, Genocide Convention and Nuremberg Principles also apply to nuclear weapons, it follows that threat or use of these weapons of mass destruction is illegal and a war crime.

The delegation -- consisting of MEP's David Morris (UK- Labour, Socialist fraction) and Jaak Vandemeulebroucke (B- Volksunie, ARE-fraction); Belgian MP Hugo Van Dienderen (also representing the Green Group in the EP); and Eirlys Rhiannon and Eloi Glorieux of Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days -- had a meeting with 4 senior NATO officials lasting over an hour. Unfriendly and tense, the NATO spokespersons downplayed the legal arguments and refused to answer concrete questions. According to them, they didn't have to comply with the opinion of the International Court of Justice, because it is not legally binding (what they "forgot" was that the opinion is a clarification of existing international laws and conventions as the above, which have been ratified - and are thus binding - by the vast majority of states - including all 16 NATO-members!). NATO apparently also shares the goal of nuclear disarmament, but this can only be realised in the very long term .. For the foreseeable future, nuclear weapons will remain fundamental to NATO's defence posture. Asked concrete questions regarding the number, yield, location, alarm status and precise targets of NATO nuclear weapons, they consistently replied "we can neither confirm nor deny .. " or "that's secret".

Can we imagine Iraqi officials replying to UN weapons inspectors like that? As long as the answer to the question: "when is a weapon of mass destruction not a weapon of mass destruction?" is: "When it's one of ours!", how credible is international law? How to dissuade Iraq, India, Pakistan, ... if we don't dare clean up our own doorstep? ALL nuclear weapons are genocidal, whoever they belong to!

Because the delegation's inspection did not yield sufficient information, 12 other citizens war crimes inspectors made their way into the NATO HQ-compound through the fence in small groups. They were looking for data files or documents which would indicate if the Alliance is making illegal plans for the threat or use of nuclear weapons of mass destruction. Just three weeks ago, the NATO Nuclear Planning Group met in this HQ. We want to inspect if any nuclear war crimes were planned

here.

"All twelve citizens war crimes inspectors were arrested by NATO security and handed over to the Belgian police. They were released at 4:30 p.m. "Not these non-violent peace activists, but those that flout international law and prepare illegal nuclear war crimes should be arrested and prosecuted", declared Eloi Glorieux.

"It is hypocritical to threaten with a new Gulf War in Iraq for denial to be allowed to carry out inspection for suspected possession of weapons of mass-destruction, when you have yourself control over large numbers", said Pol D'Huyvetter another spokesperson for the inspection team.

Citizens Inspectors denied a visa by Belgian authorities

The citizens inspection team had delegates from Belgium, Britain, Finland, the Netherlands, Ukraine and the USA. Non violent peace activists from Belarus, Romania, Russia, Sri Lanka and Ukraine who planned to join the peace camp and citizens inspection were not granted a visa by the Belgian authorities, despite the fact that the invitations were supported by Members of both the Belgian and European Parliament, and a Sri Lankan Secretary of State. The Citizens Inspection is part of actions coordinated by an international peace camp set up near NATO HQ in Evere till July 12th.

8th **Brussels - Parliamentarians join Citizens Inspection against nuclear war crimes**
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June Nervous Nukebosses Draft in Riot Cops

28th 28th June 1998

Nervous Nukebosses Draft in Riot Cops

The Ministry of Defence, their faces still bright red after four peace women romped about the Coulport and Faslane bases in one of the MOD's own power boats, have hired 300 extra police officers and are busily engaged in special training of their forces in a startling response to the threatened Trident Ploughshares 2000 non-violent action against the nuclear weapon bases at Faslane and Coulport planned for August 11 onwards.

The three Trident submarines which carry nuclear weapons equal to 2,200 Hiroshimas are based at Faslane and armed at Coulport. These bases are protected by miles of razor wire, surveillance cameras, electronic trips, guard dogs and troops of special MOD police, many of them armed with sub-machine guns, but the authorities are often embarrassed at the ease with which peace protesters can get inside, roam around, take notes, make maps and have conversations with the friendly alsatians.

TP2000 have made it clear that unless the government begins to make genuine moves to disarm

the Trident nuclear weapons system by the 11th of August its activists will begin to do the job themselves. As retired teacher Brian Quail put it: "I feel like someone who lived near Auswitch death camp and had to watch the black smoke rising from the furnaces every day. With every hour that passes the chance increases that Trident missiles will be used for the mass murder they were designed for. We cannot just stand by."

Who are these extremists the MOD is so scared of? "All kinds of folk," said David Mackenzie, "I have a mortgage, a TV licence and I always get the wheely-bin out on time, but the government is pushing ordinary folk like me too far when it gives the fingers to international law and basic decency."

April Blair Challenged as International Activists Pledge to Dismantle the British Nuclear Weapon System

27th
27th April 1998

Blair Challenged as International Activists Pledge to Dismantle the British Nuclear Weapon System

This forthcoming Saturday (May 2nd) sees the launch in London of a group who have vowed to use nonviolent direct action to enable Britain to disarm its nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

PLOUGHSHARES 2000 aims to push the British Government into abiding by the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8th July 1996 that decided that the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons is generally illegal under international law because of the unique, indiscriminate and long-lasting damage their use would inflict on civilians and the global environment.

PLOUGHSHARES 2000 is simultaneously being launched in Hiroshima, London, Edinburgh, Gent and Gothenburg. The group is being co-ordinated by Angie Zelter, one of the four 'Hawk Women' who in 1996 caused £1.5 million worth of damage to a Hawk jet bound for Indonesia. They won their case in court - arguing that their disarmament action was a justified 'upholding of international law to prevent British complicity in the Genocide in East Timor'. In Britain a rapidly growing nucleus of 62 'global citizens' aged between 20 and 90 have already signed up as Ploughshares activists. Individuals join 'affinity groups' who are provided with handbooks, videos and nonviolence and safety training in preparation for their disarmament work. Transparency is a key element of the campaign and all the activists involved sign a Pledge to Prevent Nuclear Crime and their names are sent to the Government before they take action.

The group has already written to Tony Blair inviting him to negotiate a phased scaling down of Britain's nuclear threat before they attempt to physically damage the weapon systems' functional ability. They have issued a list of 9 disarmament steps that the British Government could take - such as removing Trident submarines from 24-hour patrol and removal of warheads to shore. If these steps are taken the group will hold off taking action. If no concessions are made they will start their disarmament actions on August 11th at Faslane, the Naval Base for Britain's Trident submarines.

PLOUGHSHARES 2000 actions are backed by a recent Gallup poll, which found that:

- ▶ 59% of people felt that Britain would be more secure without nuclear weapons,
- ▶ 87% wanted the government to start international disarmament negotiations.

Speakers at the Press Conference will include:

- ▶ Rupert Ticehurst, Barrister and Lecturer in International Law at Kings College.
- ▶ Angie Zelter, from the Ploughshares Core Group.
- ▶ Matthew Pelling from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which is backing the campaign

along with 42 other non-governmental organisations.

Notes:

The **Press Conference** is being held on the large hall at **Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London at 1pm on Saturday May 2nd 1998.**

A **Photo Opportunity**, involving a **spectacular banner drop**, will take place in central London in the morning of the same day. The location details are being withheld but interested journalists should gather at **10.45 am on 2nd May outside Aquarium** which is diagonally opposite the Thames from The Houses of Parliament, opposite the river from the Ministry of Defence buildings and Westminster Tube Station. They will then be taken to the venue - only 5 mins away.