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December **Jury backs granny's anti-nuclear graffiti**

18th

18th December 1999

Jury backs granny's anti-nuclear graffiti

Below is a report on Helen John's case from the Guardian.

Not reported is the fact that at one stage the jury asked the judge if they were able to take international law into account in reaching their verdict. The judge said no.

Tony Benn testified that the British Government, with its repeated flouting of international law, was a threat to democracy. Excellent expert witness was also given by MP Alan Simpson who told the court that it was nigh well impossible to get information out of the MOD, even when large spending on projects was involved. The judge deferred sentence until 16th June.

Jury backs granny's anti-nuclear graffiti

Greenham veteran's paint protest at Westminster

Helen Carter

Guardian - Saturday December 18, 1999

An anti-nuclear campaigner who daubed graffiti on the House of Commons was found guilty yesterday of criminal damage. But the jury handed the judge a note condoning the actions of Helen John, a 62-year-old grandmother and former Greenham Common protester.

Judge Henry Blacksell QC, read the note out at Middlesex crown court. "We are unanimously agreed that the defendant had reasonable cause for her actions", it said. He told the jurors: "You can take it I can understand that ... and will be true to it". The judge deferred sentence for six months and gave Ms John a conditional discharge provided she remained of good behaviour in that time.

Ms John had daubed 18-inch high messages at St Stephen's Gate, the public entrance to the Palace of Westminster, early one morning in September. "No star wars", "Ban trident" and "Ban depleted uranium weapons" read the slogans.

Tony Benn, Labour MP for Chesterfield and veteran anti-nuclear campaigner, had given evidence to support Ms John during the three-day trial. Mr Benn told the jury he had been misled or kept in the dark on a number of nuclear issues while a government minister. He agreed that action such as hers was sometimes necessary to alert parliament and the public about what was really going on. "I think dissent and protest of a non-violent kind are an integral part of democracy", Mr Benn said.

The judge told Ms John, who has 23 previous convictions for similar or related offences: "You made it quite clear during your evidence, the deeply held convictions which you have and your determination to continue. "Nothing I say, whether it is sad, good or bad ... is going to alter that. But I have a duty to the public to ensure that no further damage is committed."

Ms John, 62, of Otley, West Yorkshire, denied breaking the law and insisted the public owned the Palace of Westminster. Had the public known what she was doing, it would have consented. Riel Karmy-Jones, prosecuting, told the court that despite a £4,500 clean-up of the graffiti, ghost outlines of the slogans remained and the damage was probably irreparable.

Ms John has been an anti-nuclear campaigner for many years. She set up the Menwith camp five years ago at Menwith Hill, the biggest US spy base in the world, and renamed the base WoMenwith Hill.

A spokesman for the lord chancellor's department said it was highly unusual for a jury to convict a defendant, then subsequently condone their actions, but he was unable to say whether the case had set a legal precedent.

ENDS

13th

Upcoming London Trial on DU, Star Wars, Trident, Sanctions: MPs to testify

13th December 1999

Upcoming London Trial on DU, Star Wars, Trident, Sanctions: MPs to testify

Members of Parliament Called as Witnesses

"I hope the government will see the writing on the wall regarding the dangers and illegality of Star Wars, Trident, depleted uranium and the sanctions against Iraq"

said Helen John, 62, a retired midwife, of Otley, West Yorkshire, who will be tried 15 December at Middlesex Guildhall Crown Court, Westminster, starting at 10 am. She has been charged with criminal damage after painting information about these issues on the St. Stephen's entrance of the House of Commons on 15 September. This action took place in solidarity with global protests in late September against US plans to expand its ballistic missile defence programme - Star Wars - a programme

"which will lead to a massive nuclear-powered arms race in space,"

Ms. John said. The action also took place in solidarity with TP2000, as the nuclear weapons on Trident submarines continue to pose a tremendous threat to all life on earth. Ms. John said,

"when others, or ourselves, are in great danger, it is reasonable to use whatever means necessary to fully alert those who are in a position to ameliorate this danger. In fact, everyone aware of such danger has the duty to raise the alarm, just as one has the duty to break glass, if necessary, to raise the alarm in the event of a fire."

Tony Benn, MP will be called as a witness that cabinet ministers and other MPs are not always fully informed about the dangers we are currently facing.

Alan Simpson, MP will provide expert testimony about the ballistic missile defence system, or Star Wars.

Alice Mahon, MP will testify about the illegality of the war in Kosovo and the US use of depleted uranium there.

Investigative journalist **Felicity Arbuthnot**, who has recently returned from Iraq, will be asked to provide testimony about the effects of sanctions and the US/UK use of depleted uranium weapons in that country.

Physicist **Dr. Chris Busby**, author of *Wings of Death* and consultant to the Low Level Radiation Campaign (Tel. 01597-824771, <http://www.llrc.org>) will be called as a witness to

the health risks associated with depleted uranium weapons. He will be looking at

"the process by which tiny ceramic beads of uranium created by the impact of DU weapons get into the lungs and thence into the lymph nodes, and the radiation dose consequences of that... single tracks of alpha radiation (e.g. from uranium) can cause genomic instability."

It is expected that information will be given as to why the dose model used by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) is inadequate. There may also be information on the restrictions placed upon the World Health Organisation by a 1959 Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Authority (IAEA), which has *limited the kind of research which WHO can undertake* about radiation health effects, and which *limits the kind and amount of information which WHO can release* about these (Res. WHA12-40, 28.5.59).

The defence is calling these witnesses in order to support the claim that what Ms John did, trying to alert Parliament and move it to action by writing about these issues on the wall, was reasonable given the circumstances. Ms John's solicitor, Frances Taylor, can be reached on: 0113-237-4047. Ms John can be reached on Monday 13 December only on 01943-468593.

8th

Breach Of The Peace Concept Challenged By Peace Activist

8th December 1999

Breach Of The Peace Concept Challenged By Peace Activist

A Trident Ploughshares activist appearing in a Scottish court has claimed that the charge she faces, Breach of the Peace, is outlawed under the Scotland Act 1999.

Pamela Smith (42), a peace campaigner and long term member of Faslane Peace Camp was in Helensburgh District Court defending herself on the charge, which related to her participation in a blockade of Faslane nuclear submarine base on February 15th this year. She challenged the charge itself on the basis that the European Convention on Human Rights, which has been incorporated into Scottish law as a result of devolution, rules out any criminal charge which does not specify the limits of acceptable behaviour. Breach of the Peace, traditionally a catch-all charge, plainly did not conform.

JP Stirling took this claim seriously and adjourned the case pending a Diet of Debate on 25th January 2000.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Scots Law has for too long been used to defend the UK's criminal nuclear weapons policy and to harass protesters. With the Gimblett verdict and a series of challenges from Trident Ploughshares on aspects of the incorporated Convention on Human Rights this is all set to change."

6th

Contradictory Testimony At Trial Of Demonstrator

6th December 1999

Contradictory Testimony At Trial Of Demonstrator

Expert Witness Claims Nuclear Death Toll Would be 250 Million

At Helensburgh District Court today defence witnesses contradicted crown evidence given by police officers in the trial of a Trident Ploughshares activist charged with breach of the peace.

Alan Wilkie, a retired company director from Currie, is defending himself on the charge,

which relates to a demonstration last November at Faslane naval base, home to Britain's Trident missile submarine fleet. A series of defence witnesses testified that no traffic in and out of the base had been affected by his actions and that the time given by police witnesses for the demonstration was inaccurate.

On the basis of these contradictions Wilkie submitted that he had no case to answer. This was rejected by JP Scullion after consideration.

Wilkie called as an expert witness Professor Jack Boag, an international authority on the medical effects of radiation. Professor Boag said that a nuclear war between the superpowers would lead to the deaths of at least 250 million people. Professor Boag also testified at the "Trident Three" trial in October in Greenock Sheriff Court when Angie Zelter, Ellen Moxley and Ulla Roder were acquitted on charges of malicious damage to the research barge Maytime.

The case was adjourned to 31st January 2000.

2nd

Ploughshares Activist Refuses Bail Conditions

2nd December 1999

Ploughshares Activist Refuses Bail Conditions

A Trident Ploughshares activist has refused to accept the bail conditions offered to him when he appeared today from custody in Barrow Magistrates Court.

River (44; also known as Keith Wright), a university lecturer from Manchester, was arrested along with Sylvia Boyes (56), a peace campaigner from Birmingham, in the early hours of 23rd November inside the dockyard at Barrow-in-Furness. They had intended to swim across the dock and board the nuclear weapons submarine Vengeance. They were carrying with them disarmament equipment such as hammers, glue and spray-on varnish.

Vengeance was officially commissioned last Saturday and is scheduled to sail to its base on the Clyde next week. Its departure may be delayed due to a fire on board the submarine on Wednesday morning which required the evacuation of the crew and took over four hours to deal with.

The court was prepared to release the activists provided they agreed to stay at least ten miles away from any nuclear weapons base. River said he would accept that condition if the court could assure him that no nuclear warheads would be within ten miles of the submarine that had been the target of their disarmament. No such guarantee was forthcoming and River was sent back to Preston Prison. Sylvia Boyes reluctantly accepted the bail conditions and was released. The activists will appear in court again on Tuesday 7th December.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"Predictably the court concerns itself with preventing legitimate disarmament action by responsible citizens and pays absolutely no attention to the appalling threat to public safety at home and abroad presented by Vengeance."

November Trident Ploughshares Open New Legal Front
29th November 1999

29th

Trident Ploughshares Open New Legal Front

Greenock Trial Advocate Brings In European Law

Today in Helensburgh District Court four Trident Ploughshares activists claimed that their entitlement under the European Convention of Human Rights to protest peacefully had been infringed by being prosecuted for breach of the peace. Their case was adjourned to allow the legal debate to take place.

Barbara McGregor (32) and Brian Quail (61) from Glasgow, along with Jane Tallents (41) and Eric Wallace (63) from Helensburgh, had taken part in a blockade of Faslane nuclear submarine base on 22nd April. By chaining themselves across the gateway they had for 30 minutes prevented personnel from entering the base.

Advocate John Mayer, who led the legal team which made history at Greenock Sheriff Court with the acquittal of the "Trident Three", argued that the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights on the 24th November, when anti fox hunting demonstrators had their right to protest peacefully upheld, had strong relevance for the case. He pointed out that the Convention had been incorporated into Scottish law by article 57 of the Scotland Act.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"One Scottish court has already agreed that protesters are justified in taking direct action against the illegal Trident weapons system. We are claiming that the Convention on Human Rights gives us a right not only to march with banners but to intervene peacefully and non violently when we know war crimes are being committed."

The legal debate will be held on 8th February 2000.

24th

Ploughshares Activists Remanded At Barrow
24th November 1999

Ploughshares Activists Remanded At Barrow

The two Trident Ploughshares activists who were arrested early yesterday inside the VSEL dock at Barrow-in-Furness appeared in Barrow Magistrates Court today on a charge of conspiring to commit criminal damage and were remanded in custody to appear again on Thursday 2nd December.

Sylvia Boyes (56), a peace campaigner from Birmingham, and River (44), a university lecturer from Manchester, had intended to swim across the dock and board the nuclear weapons submarine Vengeance, which is due to be commissioned this Saturday, 27th November. They were carrying with them disarmament equipment such as hammers, glue and spray-on varnish.

Sylvia Boyes applied for and was refused bail. During today's hearing she welcomed the description of her by the Prosecutor as a 'dedicated peace activist'. River did not make an application for bail. Sylvia will be held in Styal Prison in Cheshire and River will go to Preston Prison.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

This vessel and all parts of the Trident system are illegal. We will continue to act to disarm it, even if this means swimming in dirty freezing water in the middle of the night and going

to prison.

Notes: 1. On 1st February this year Trident Ploughshares members Rosie James and Rachel Wenham swam to and boarded Vengeance in the dock at Barrow and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower. They will appear in Lancaster Crown Court on the 24th January, charged with criminal damage.

2. On September 22nd 1999, in Greenock Sheriff Court, Sheriff Margaret Gimblett acquitted three Trident Ploughshares activists, who had disarmed the Trident barge *Maytime*, on the grounds that their action was justified since Trident presented an active threat that was illegal under international law.

23rd

Ploughshares Activists Arrested In Trident Sub Dock

23rd November 1999

Ploughshares Activists Arrested In Trident Sub Dock

Between 3 and 4 a.m. this morning two Trident Ploughshares activists were arrested inside the VSEL dock at Barrow-in-Furness, where the newest Trident submarine, Vengeance, awaits its commissioning.

Sylvia Boyes (56), a peace campaigner from Birmingham and River (44), a university lecturer from Manchester, intended to swim across the dock and board the nuclear weapons submarine. They are being held in Barrow Police Station.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"This vessel is designed to threaten to inflict the most brutal atrocities imaginable. This government is fully aware that it is breaching international humanitarian law by its active deployment of Trident and pays no attention to argument, entreaty, world opinion or court rulings. We have to take action. This is what drove Sylvia and River to risk the cold dark waters of the Barrow dock and imprisonment."

A further press release will be issued when more information is available.

Notes:

1. On 1st February this year Trident Ploughshares members Rosie James and Rachel Wenham swam to and boarded Vengeance in the dock at Barrow and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower. They will appear in Lancaster Crown Court on the 24th January, charged with criminal damage.

2. On September 22nd 1999, in Greenock Sheriff Court, Sheriff Margaret Gimblett acquitted three Trident Ploughshares activists, who had disarmed the Trident barge "Maytime", on the grounds that their action was justified since Trident presented an active threat that was illegal under international law.

22nd

Irish Activist Calls on Britain to Decommission Trident

22nd November 1999

Irish Activist Calls on Britain to Decommission Trident

Appearing in Helensburgh District Court today Irish citizen and trained nurse Mary Kelly criticised the British Government for failing to set a timetable for the decommissioning of its illegal nuclear weapons. She had been charged with breach

of the peace following her participation in February in a blockade of Faslane naval base.

Conducting her own defence she noted that every news bulletin carried an item about the decommissioning of IRA weapons. Along with other peaceful nations Ireland suffered from the threat of the UK's nuclear arsenal. She said it was time the equal attention and applied equal pressure was applied to the urgent need for the Nuclear Weapons States to begin nuclear weapon decommissioning.

During cross-examination by Kelly, two Strathclyde police officers, Sergeant Joseph Logan and Sergeant Stuart Ogilvie, made the intriguing claim that they were not aware that there were nuclear weapons inside Faslane.

In summing up Kelly asked JP Scullion to "continue that pioneering and brave precedent set by Sheriff Margaret Gimblett * and uphold international law." Scullion found her guilty and in view of the expense she had been put to attend court, fined her only £20.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"Mary gave a brilliant summary of the moral and legal basis for the struggle against Trident. Unfortunately, Helensburgh District Court still fails to get the point. The ongoing direct action and the trials in the pipeline will give it plenty more chances to get its legal act together."

* On September 22nd 1999 Sheriff Margaret Gimblett acquitted three Trident Ploughshares activists, who had disarmed the Trident barge "Maytime", on all the charges against them on the grounds that their action was justified since Trident presented an active threat that was illegal under international law.

15th

Ploughshares "Crimestoppers" Hold up Nuke Base

15th November 1999

Ploughshares "Crimestoppers" Hold up Nuke Base

This morning (Monday 15th November) a group of Trident Ploughshares activists managed for over an hour to prevent workers entering the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport, Loch Long, where Britain's Trident nuclear warheads are stored. There were 13 arrests, mostly for Breach of the Peace.

Among those arrested were Morag Balfour and Roz Bullen, both Scottish wheel-chair users and long-time peace activists. They formed part of a linked obstruction across the road.

Sylvia Boyes from Birmingham, Marjan Willemsen from the Netherlands and Jenny Gaiwyn from Faslane Peace Camp locked-on to three separate buses to blockade a second gate before being removed and arrested. This was Sylvia's second arrest this weekend and she was due in court this morning for a previous peace-related charge, as was Jenny.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"This morning with 30 activists we were able to disrupt the criminal activities of the base for over an hour. The Gimblett ruling in Greenock is helping more and more people to realise that Trident is deployed and is actively threatening genocide and that they have a perfect right to take peaceful and accountable direct action against it. We are looking forward to February 14th, when we expect to have hundreds of people ready to act to uphold the law."

Hi-8 video footage available of this morning's action. Also of yesterday's actions: pre-sunrise

vigil at Coulport; religious service outside Faslane North gate; walk across the moors above Kilcreggen to put a placard on a Trident-related communications mast.

14th

Ploughshares Activists Back at Trident Bases

14th November 1999

Ploughshares Activists Back at Trident Bases

In the wake of the acquittal of the "Trident Three" at Greenock Sheriff court, about 30 Trident Ploughshares activists have gathered for a weekend disarmament camp at Coulport on Loch Long. They aim to disrupt the work of the nuclear weapons bases on the Clyde and to encourage military and civilian personnel involved in Trident to consider their position under international humanitarian law.

Yesterday (Saturday 13th November) the activists handed in a letter to the officer in charge of the bases, Rear- Admiral Gregory, reminding him of the Greenock ruling and asking him for his response. The letter advises him that he is putting his personnel: "in an unenviable position by inciting them to engage in criminal and immoral activities."

Also yesterday, two Trident Ploughshares members were arrested near the Coulport perimeter fence. Both Sylvia Boyes (56), from Birmingham, and Joan Meredith (70), from Alnwick in Northumbria were charged with breaching the military bye-laws and Joan was also charged with resisting arrest after asserting her right to leave the MoD land by the route she chose. They were released after a brief time in custody.

More actions are planned for the weekend, including:

1. This afternoon a Trident Ploughshares notice will be fixed to the perimeter of a communications mast near Cove on Loch Long, which provides navigational support to Trident submarines as well as other shipping. Responding to the placard which is already there and which says that the facility is there to keep vessels safe at sea, the notice reads: "But Trident threatens life on land, sea and air."
2. Early on Monday morning the activists, led by the Adomnan affinity group, will attempt to prevent workers entering the Coulport base.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "After the decision at Greenock, (a complete surprise to some people but not to us), it is good to return to the bases with the same message, that Trident is both unlawful and criminal. There's a fresh edge to it now that people involved with the system, as well as the civil police who arrest us, have the chance to think again. Many of them are sympathetic to our stance and we hope that they will get the support they need as they think through what it means to be involved in law enforcement and national defence in a society which is becoming more openly unhappy about threatening genocide."

8th

First Ploughshares "Post-Gimblett" Camp this Weekend

8th November 1999

First Ploughshares "Post-Gimblett" Camp this Weekend

MoD to Surrender Maytime Boat

Trident Ploughshares activists are returning in numbers this weekend (11th to 14th November) to continue their direct action campaign against the United Kingdom nuclear

weapons bases at Faslane and Coulport, following the landmark ruling by Sheriff Gimblett.

The activists will camp at Peaton Wood on Loch Long side, half a mile from the warhead store at Coulport. A weekend of diverse activity is promised, followed by a concerted action against one of the bases early on Monday morning. There will be fresh effort to inform military and civilian personnel involved with the operation of Trident that international law will support them if they follow their conscience and abandon their "duties".

The MoD must now hand back confiscated items to Angie Zelter, Ellen Moxley and Ulla Roder. In an event richly symbolic of Sheriff Gimblett's judgement, the boat which they used to reach Maytime will be surrendered to them at the South Gate of Faslane this Thursday (11th November at 11 a.m.).

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"In one sense the Gimblett judgement has changed nothing. We have been convinced from the start of our right to disarm Trident. On the other hand it will have given pause to the political and military directors of Trident, to Trident sailors and base workers, as well as to Strathclyde Police who in the past have wrongly arrested us for upholding international law. We will press that advantage home."

October **Peace Activists Welcome Referral to The High Court**

27th
27th October 1999

Peace Activists Welcome Referral to The High Court

The Trident Ploughshares campaign has welcomed today's decision by the Lord Advocate of Scotland to refer to the High Court for legal clarification the judgement of Sheriff Margaret Gimblett last week in Greenock Sheriff Court, when she acquitted three disarmers on the grounds that their action was justifiable under international law.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"We are delighted that the Lord Advocate has not run away from this one. We have been looking forward to the day when the legality of Trident would be properly debated at this level. We are ready to demonstrate again that Britain's nuclear weapons system is utterly irreconcilable with the principles of international humanitarian law."

27th **Trident Three Praised in European Parliament**

27th October 1999

Trident Three Praised in European Parliament

Speech by Neil MacCormick, MEP, in the European Parliament - 27 October 1999:

Last week in Greenock on the western seaboard of this Union three brave women, Angela Zelter, Ellen Moxley and Bodil Ulla Roder, were tried on a charge of criminal damage. They had acted to impede the Trident missile system based on the Clyde. Their aim was to prevent what they considered a grave crime under International Law. The Judge, Sheriff Gimblett, directed the jury to acquit them on the ground that the prosecution had not proved that they acted with any criminal intent. The acquittal cannot be reversed but the judgement can be appealed. If it is, the Lord Advocate of Scotland will have to appear in our highest Appeal Court to explain the

lawfulness of a defence policy based on the threat to use weapons of mass destruction. The courage and judicial independence of Sheriff Gimblett, the courage of Angie Zelter and her companions has been in sharp contrast with the petulant failure of the US Senate to ratify the comprehensive test ban treaty.

The legal issue about the use and threat of nuclear weapons concerns the doctrine of 'double effect'. But there can be no clean surgical strike with a nuclear weapon. Slaughter on an unimaginable scale is not a case of "collateral damage" it is what the weapon in its intrinsic nature is designed to do.

Like most of my fellow countrymen I am deeply hostile to the use of Scottish waters for Trident. I am proud to represent a Party, the SNP, which opposes this absolutely, and glad that the whole Green/EFA Group is in complete solidarity with us on this.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"We are delighted that the Lord Advocate has not run away from this one. We have been looking forward to the day when the legality of Trident would be properly debated at this level. We are ready to demonstrate again that Britain's nuclear weapons system is utterly irreconcilable with the principles of international humanitarian law."

25th

Standard Fare From Local JP In Face Of Landmark Ruling

25th October 1999

Standard Fare From Local JP In Face Of Landmark Ruling

Today, Monday 25th October 1999, in Helensburgh District Court, German Ploughshares activist Anne Scholz (22) from Freiburg, was found guilty of a breach of bye-laws and fined £50 following her swim into Faslane naval base in August this year, in an attempt to reach and disarm a Trident nuclear weapons submarine docked there. Also today MSP Margo McDonald and Dorothy Grace-Elder have tabled motions for debate in the Scottish Parliament on the legal and constitutional implications of Sheriff Gimblett's ruling in Greenock last week.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"On the one hand last week's judgement in Greenock Sheriff Court, which freed three Ploughshares activists, has led to motions for debate in the Scottish Parliament touching on three hugely important issues: the relationship between Scots law and international law; the core of the UK's defence policy; the independence of Scottish jurisdiction in constitutional terms. On the other hand another Ploughshares activist is found guilty of the breach of a piddling piece of delegated legislation in a piddling local court. JP Stirling, who delivered today's verdict, has already admitted that he is incompetent to deal with cases involving international law. He demonstrated that incompetence again today. He has consistently failed to follow the logic of his confession and refuse to handle these cases, in which activists attempt to justify their direct action against the illegal bases on the basis that they are upholding international law.

The threat from Britain's Trident nuclear weapons remains imminent. The continued and lamentable failure of this local court to face its responsibilities and join the struggle to prevent nuclear crime is yet one more reason for continuing and intensifying our direct action."

22nd

TRIDENT ACQUITTAL SINKS IN

22nd October 1999

TRIDENT ACQUITTAL SINKS IN

Campaigners Plan Next Steps

The acquittal of Ulla Roder, Ellen Moxley and Angie Zelter at Greenock Sheriff Court has been recognised worldwide as a landmark for the peace movement.

The women were charged with malicious damage to and theft from the barge "Maytime", a floating laboratory on Loch Long in Scotland which provides operational support for Trident submarines. In the 18 day trial before a jury and Sheriff Margaret Gimblett, the defence called expert witnesses who gave evidence on the applicability of international law to the case and on the nature on Britain's Trident nuclear weapon system and the country's defence policy. The Crown offered no substantial rebuttal of this testimony.

The Sheriff concluded that the women had acted without malice and without criminal intent. In her view the illegality of the Trident system under international law justified their action. She directed the jury to acquit the women on all charges.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"This is a wonderful victory but we are now looking at the next stage. The verdict provides renewed scope for applying legal pressure on the criminal activity of our national leaders. Further direct action against the illegal installations is currently being planned. Watch this space."

20th

PLOUGHSHARES THREE ACQUITTED

20th October 1999

PLOUGHSHARES THREE ACQUITTED

Historic Step Towards Nuke-Free Britain

Today, Wednesday 20th October, Sheriff Margaret Gimblett has instructed the jury at Greenock Sheriff Court to acquit Angie Zelter, Ulla Roder and Ellen Moxley on the charge against them of damaging a Trident facility in Loch Goil in June this year.

The defence had submitted that it had been established that there had been no malice in the women's action. They had been acting to prevent a crime under international law and so had reasonable excuse. The Sheriff should acquit the women.

Sheriff Gimblett said

"I have to conclude that the three accused in company with others were justified in thinking that Great Britain in their use of Trident, not simply deployment, the use and deployment of Trident allied with that use and deployment at times of great unrest, coupled with a first strike policy and in the absence of any indication from any government official then or now that such use fell into any strict category suggested in the International Court of Justice opinion, the threat or use of Trident could be construed as a threat, has indeed been construed by others as a threat and as such is an infringement of international and customary law..... The three took the view they had the obligation in terms of international law to do whatever they could to stop the deployment and use of nuclear weapons in situations which could be construed as a threat. .. I have heard nothing which would make it seem to me that the accused acted with criminal intent. .. Therefore I intend to instruct the jury that they should acquit all three accused on charges 1 to 3 .. and the first part of charge 4."

18th

Britain Could Ditch Trident Overnight

18th October 1999

Britain Could Ditch Trident Overnight

Scottish Defendant in Witness Box Tomorrow

An international nuclear disarmament expert has claimed that the UK could abandon its reliance on nuclear weapons within 24 hours of a political decision.

Appearing in the Greenock trial of the three Trident Ploughshares activists charged with disarming a Trident facility on Loch Long in June this year, Rebecca Johnson, who monitors the global implementation of disarmament treaties, stated that there was no reason for delaying the injunction of the International Court of Justice to bring disarmament negotiations to a speedy conclusion.

Dundee MP John McAllion came to Greenock today to give his support to the three women. He was accompanied by Fiona Macaulay, Parliamentary Assistant to Member of the Scottish Parliament Dorothy Grace-Elder. She brought along a message of support for the women, signed by 25 Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Tomorrow morning, Tuesday 19th October, pensioner Ellen Moxley, from Dollar in Scotland will be in the witness box.

15th [MSPs Show Solidarity with Ploughshares Three](#)
15th October 1999

MSPs Show Solidarity with Ploughshares Three

20 MSPs Sign Statement of Support

MSPs John McCallion, Dorothy Grace-Elder and Tommy Sheridan will visit Greenock Sheriff Court on Monday 18th October to show their support for the three Trident Ploughshares activists on trial there for disarming a Trident facility on Loch Long in June this year.

The MSPs are members of a newly formed cross-party nuclear disarmament group in the Parliament.

Altogether 20 MSPs have signed the following statement:

"We, the undersigned Members of the Scottish Parliament, express our solidarity with Ellen Moxley, Angie Zelter and Ulla Roder, now on trial in Greenock Sheriff Court. The deployment of the Trident nuclear weapons system by the UK government is an affront to the people of Scotland. We salute the courage and commitment of those who take a personal and determined stance against this evil."

51 British parliamentarians (5 MSPs, 5 MEPs, 41 MPs) have signed a pledge of support for Trident Ploughshares.

14th [Danish Peace Activist Testifies in Scottish Court](#)
14th October 1999

Danish Peace Activist Testifies in Scottish Court

In Greenock Sheriff court today, where she is on trial with two other women for disarming a UK nuclear weapons facility, a Danish woman told the jury how an increasing sense of alarm and urgency about the menace posed by nuclear weapons had spurred her on to engage in campaigning and direct action.

Triggered by a new series of nuclear bomb tests in 1995 Ulla Roder (42), a social worker and mother of two from Odense, published a newsletter and collected 4500 signatures for a petition seeking an end to the nuclear arms race. This led to a meeting with the Danish Foreign Minister, Nils Henry Petersen, about the nuclear tests going on in the US. She had also met with the Indian ambassador to Denmark to share concern about Indian's nuclear testing.

In April 1999 she had written to the Prime Minister, Mr. Rasmussen, to protest about NATO's expansionist policy and nuclear strategy. When he failed to reply he was sent a "citizen's summons", informing him of the illegality of NATO's nuclear weapons under international law. Although the people of Denmark had voted in a referendum against nuclear weapons on Danish soil, such weapons had been brought into Denmark on US ships with the full knowledge of the Danish government.

Roder said:

"I promised myself that that I did not want to be the only one left behind one day, realising that I had done nothing when I knew what could happen."

When questioned by the prosecutor Roder admitted that she, along with the two other women, had boarded the laboratory "Maytime", had damaged a number of items and thrown further items into the sea. She had intended to make sure that they could not again be used as part of the Trident system. Although their action had probably only caused a delay in testing the new Trident submarine, the women were only a part of the Trident Ploughshares campaign and many others were committed to direct action.

Roder did not believe the assurances she had received from the UK ambassador to Denmark that the UK government wanted a "safer world in which there was no place for nuclear weapons." The same government was even now colluding with the US in developing new nuclear weapons. She concluded her testimony by saying that she had no evil intention when she boarded "Maytime" on the 8th of June.

13th [Disarmers Besiege Delta House](#)
13th October 1999

Disarmers Besiege Delta House

Anti-Nuclear Activists Challenge Labour Party

This morning at 10am a group of anti-nuclear activists from the Trident Ploughshares campaign and Faslane Peace Camp hung banners above the doorway of Delta House, headquarters of the Labour Party in Scotland.

The banners read:

"SCOTTISH NEW LABOUR PARTY COLLUDING WITH NUCLEAR DEATH"

"TAKE TRIDENT TO COURT NOT DISARMERS"

"FREE THE LOCH GOIL THREE"

A local Ploughshares activist Eleanor Stobo said "As a Scot I feel totally betrayed by this Labour government which hides the fact that we just do America's bidding and threaten others with nuclear death. At Greenock just now three women are on trial for disarming part of the Trident

system. In all seriousness it's Blair and his gang who are the real criminals."

13th [Judge Backs Prisoner on Right to Act Against Nuclear Crime](#)
13th October 1999

Judge Backs Prisoner on Right to Act Against Nuclear Crime

Angie Zelter, on trial in Greenock for damaging Trident facilities worth £80k, told the court that the sole motivation for her action was the prevention of a horrendous crime being committed by the British government. The Trident system was not merely "possessed", it was deployed and ready to strike within 15 minutes. She and the other women knew they had to do something about it. She told the Procurator Fiscal: "You should be doing something too!"

In the same vein expert witness German judge Ulf Panzer told how a German organisation, Judges and Prosecutors for Peace, had tried all conventional means, including a mass demonstration of 250 judges, to have illegal American nuclear weapons removed from German soil. In the end they had to resort to a blockade of the US base at Mutlangen, when 20 judges, including Panzer, were arrested and prosecuted. He believed their action had made a difference and the Pershing missiles had been removed.

Trident Ploughshares pledger Jane Tallents said:

"The evidence in court today showed beyond a shadow of a doubt that even modest actions by individuals can make a significant difference. Every individual, whether they are an ordinary citizen, a procurator fiscal or a judge, has a right to take action against nuclear crime."

Ulf Panzer is available for interview this evening.

The banners read:

"SCOTTISH NEW LABOUR PARTY COLLUDING WITH NUCLEAR DEATH"

"TAKE TRIDENT TO COURT NOT DISARMERS"

"FREE THE LOCH GOIL THREE"

A local Ploughshares activist Eleanor Stobo said "As a Scot I feel totally betrayed by this Labour government which hides the fact that we just do America's bidding and threaten others with nuclear death. At Greenock just now three women are on trial for disarming part of the Trident system. In all seriousness it's Blair and his gang who are the real criminals."

12th ["Britain's Trident is a Child Killer" Defendant Tells Jury.](#)
12th October 1999

"Britain's Trident is a Child Killer" Defendant Tells Jury.

At Greenock Sheriff court where three peace activists are on trial for damaging a research laboratory connected to the Trident nuclear weapons system, one of the defendants, Angie Zelter, explained to the jury that she and her fellow activists had decided to disarm Maytime after exhausting every other possible means of preventing horrifying nuclear crime.

To a hushed court, she said that a likely target for a Trident missile would be Polyarni, a town

in northern Russia. Following an attack by Trident the town would be completely flattened and 90% of the population would be killed by heat, falling buildings and radiation. The death toll would probably include 7,000 children.

She had written letters, lobbied, demonstrated, conducted vigils, marched, held public meetings, written briefings and articles, tried to take out private prosecutions and approached the police, courts and Heads of the Judiciary. Along with her fellow pledgers in Trident Ploughshares she had attempted to engage the British government in serious dialogue about nuclear disarmament before the direct action phase of the campaign had begun.

In a climax to her testimony this afternoon Angie read out the Pledge to Prevent Nuclear Crime. She read : "As a global citizen with international, national and individual responsibility I will endeavour peacefully, safely, openly and accountably to help to disarm the U.K. nuclear weapons system I pledge that I will harm no living being by any of my acts and pledge to be calm and peaceful at all times."

Meanwhile, another important disarmament trial begins in Preston Crown Court tomorrow Wednesday 13th October. Annika Spalde, Stellan Vinthagen and Ann-Britt Sternfeldt, of the *Bread Not Bombs Ploughshares* group, are accused of conspiring to cause criminal damage to the new Trident nuclear weapons submarine, HMS Vengeance, in September last year at Barrow. Their original trial in May this year ended when the jury could not reach a verdict.

8th

[More Legal History at Greenock as Legal Aid Chief Executive is Summoned](#)

8th October 1999

More Legal History at Greenock as Legal Aid Chief Executive is Summoned

In an almost unprecedented move the Chief Executive of the Scottish Legal Aid Board was today ordered by a Sheriff Court to appear at the court to explain why the Board have refused to pay the travelling expenses of a special witness.

At Greenock Sheriff court where three peace activists are on trial for damaging a research laboratory connected to the Trident nuclear weapons system, advocate John Mayer stated that the evidence of German Judge Ulf Panzer was vital for the defence case. Angie Zelter, who is defending herself, said that she had met Judge Panzer 12 years ago and he had had a great influence on her. Along with 20 other German judges he had blockaded an American Pershing missile base in his own country and would testify to the right of citizens to take action when international humanitarian law was being breached.

The Legal Board Chief Executive will appear in the court on Tuesday 12th October.

This is only the second time that a Legal Aid Chief Executive has been "ordained" to appear in court to explain his decision . The previous instance was when Sheriff Robin McEwen, temporary Judge at the High Court, issued an interlocutor to be served on the Chief Executive. On that occasion the Board caved in and agreed the expenses.

The trial continues.

7th

[Disarmers' Target "Of Prime Importance to Trident" Admits Crown Witness](#)

7th October 1999

Disarmers' Target "Of Prime Importance to Trident" Admits Crown Witness

Theft Charges Dropped

On the ninth day of the Greenock trial of three women accused of damaging Trident-related floating laboratory "Maytime", a key Crown witness, the worker in charge of the facility, admitted that it was of prime importance to the Trident nuclear weapons system. Bargemaster Iain McPhee was pressed by Advocate John Mayer, on behalf of one of the defendants, Ulla Roder, to explain the function of the barge and its links with the nuclear weapons submarines. McPhee was so hesitant and evasive a witness that Mayer stated: "This is not cross-examination, this is dentistry." Eventually McPhee conceded that the barge conducted important research for the Ministry of Defence, that the research related to the operation of Royal Navy Submarines, including Trident submarines, and that the action of the women had had some effect on the ability of the research station to proceed with its work.

6th

[MSP Backs Ploughshares Disarmers](#)

6th October 1999

MSP Backs Ploughshares Disarmers

Member of the Scottish Parliament Tommy Sheridan came to Greenock Sheriff Court this morning to show his solidarity with Ellen Moxley, Ulla Roder and Angie Zelter, who are on trial for damaging a Trident-related laboratory in Loch Goil in June this year.

Tommy said:

"I am here to show my appreciation and admiration for the courage that these women have shown in challenging the Trident system."

Meanwhile, in the court itself, it has been agreed that the damage sustained by the floating laboratory "Maytime" should be estimated at £80,000. The trial is now expected to go into a fourth week (i.e., week beginning 18th October).

Each morning of the trial Trident Ploughshares supporters march through Greenock with banners and placards. The march starts at the Men of Clyde statue behind the Town Hall at 9.15 a.m. and reaches the Sheriff Court about 9.30 a.m.

5th

[Parliamentary support for the Loch Goil Three](#)

5th October 1999

Parliamentary support for the Loch Goil Three

MSP Tommy Sheridan will be speaking outside Greenock Sheriff's Court at 9.30am on Wednesday 6th October. He is currently the Scottish Socialist Party's sole representative in the Scottish Parliament, and has pledged his long-term support for the campaign. He is one of 51 British parliamentarians (5 MSPs, 5 MEPs, 41 MPs) who have signed a pledge of support for Trident Ploughshares.

As the trial enters a second week, the mood in the Court is positive, following the powerful evidence of defence witness Professor Francis Boyle from the USA on Friday, an expert in international law. The supporters begin each day with a procession through Greenock, to remind themselves and others of the wider implications of Britain's nuclear weapons, especially poignant after the accident in Japan last week. The prosecution yesterday resumed their case and, after a slow start, saw three more MoD witnesses take the stand. However, the trial is expected to continue well into next week, possibly longer.

Next Monday lunchtime Bruce Kent, the former chair of CND and long-time activist and anti-nuclear campaigner, will be making an appearance at the court to show his support for the

three women.

1st **"Maytime" Part of Trident System, Court Agrees**

1st October 1999

First Victory for The Defence as Greenock Court Admits US Expert

"Maytime" Part of Trident System, Court Agrees

The defence in the trial of the "Ploughshares Three" in Greenock Sheriff Court scored a significant victory yesterday as Sheriff Margaret Gimlett ruled that US international law expert Professor Francis Boyle from Illinois can give his specialist testimony today (Friday 1st October).

Professor Boyle, a key witness for the defence, has international standing as a practising lawyer and an academic. He has acted as agent or legal adviser for Bosnia Herzegovina, The Republic of Lithuania and the Palestine Liberation Organisation and is an acknowledged authority on international relations and international law.

Detective Sergeant Peter Cassidy, of the MOD police, was asked by the defence team what was the function of "Newt", a sister barge to "Maytime" in Loch Goil. He refused to answer the question and after discussion the defence did not pursue their cross examination on the understanding that the Crown acknowledged that both "Maytime" and "Newt" were connected to the Trident system.

This afternoon the jury saw video footage of the sea bed 200 feet under the surface, taken by Royal Navy divers. The film shows computer and electrical equipment nestling on the silt and decorated with live starfish.

Maggie Charnley, from Angie Zelter's affinity group, the Woodwooses, said: "It was great to see these bits of the Trident system being reclaimed by nature, but we will only be satisfied when this happens to the whole bloody thing."

Interviews with Professor Boyle available (From today 5 p.m. to noon tomorrow)

1st **In Court, US Expert Hammers Britain for Breach of International Law on Nukes**

1st October 1999

In Court, US Expert Hammers Britain for Breach of International Law on Nukes

This morning at the trial of Angie Zelter, Ellen Moxley and Ulla Roder, Professor Francis Boyle, the renowned expert on international law, began his testimony for the defence.

Questioned by Advocate John Mayer, on behalf of Ulla Roder, he explained that according to a range of international humanitarian protocols and principles, culminating in the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (July 1996), *there was no way that Britain's Trident nuclear weapons could be legal. A key point was that Trident is a weapon which cannot discriminate between civilians and military targets.* Its use against a military target close to a town would not lead to mere collateral damage, but would be wanton destruction.

In the questioning it was explained that the Trident missiles were rented from the US.

Advocate John Mayer: " What if I built a submarine in my backyard and fitted it out with 48 Trident warheads, would the mere possession of that submarine be illegal?"

Boyle: "Trident is already in your backyard. It is not a matter of mere possession. They are ready to be fired at 15 minutes notice."

Boyle pointed out that nuclear weapons had been developed in secrecy, under conditions of war, and were not at that stage subject to legal audit. Both the US and UK had been present at the World Court proceedings in 1996 but none of the scenarios they presented to the court in which their nuclear armoury would be potentially used were accepted as legal.

September Greenock Peace Trial Sets the Real Moral Agenda

28th

28th September 1999

Greenock Peace Trial Sets the Real Moral Agenda

At the Labour Party Conference today, UK Prime Minister Blair spoke again of a "new moral purpose" for the nation. Meanwhile in Greenock three peace activists are on trial for challenging the immoral and illegal deployment by his government of the Trident nuclear system, a weapon of mass and indiscriminate slaughter.

The three women activists, Angie Zelter, Ulla Roder and Ellen Moxley are charged with causing £100,000 worth of damage to "Maytime", a Trident related floating laboratory, in Loch Goil in June this year. The women have pled not guilty to the charges, although they accept responsibility for their actions which they claim were necessary to prevent a violation of international humanitarian law. This morning the 15 jurors were chosen and sworn in, and the prosecution has started to present its evidence. Photographs of the damaged lab have been shown and the disarmament tools have been presented to the court.

There is an impressive line-up of expert witnesses for the defence, internationally renowned for their knowledge and experience. Among the witnesses are Professor Francis Boyle from Illinois, a specialist in international legal studies, German Judge Ulf Panzer, and Rebecca Johnson from Geneva, an expert on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Johnson claims that Britain has clearly violated the NPT, in which it has made a firm commitment to disarm its nuclear arsenal.

Public meeting: 7.30 p.m. on Friday 1st October in Friends' Meeting House, 38 Elmbank Street, Glasgow on the theme "Get Rid of Trident". Several of the expert witnesses will be

speaking, including Rebecca Johnson, Ulf Panzer and Prof. Francis Boyle (see previous briefings for further details of expert witnesses)

3rd

Activist paints the Scottish Parliament and High Court

3rd September 1999

Activist paints the Scottish Parliament and High Court

This morning Helen John was arrested for writing truthful statements where all of Scotland could see them, on the High Court and visitor's centre for the new Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh, on this, the anniversary of the day that World War II started for us.

What follows is the statement she wished to give to the press: "Slogans I hope to use:

DO NOT COLLUDE WITH GENOCIDE

BAN TRIDENT

BAN DEPLETED URANIUM

RECOGNISE INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

RESIST Nuclear American Take Over

"The UK and USA governments are war criminals. The use of force outside the UN Charter against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia places all UK and NATO citizens who continue to support these illegal regimes in the same category as those who supported Nazi Germany.

"The use of depleted uranium in the Gulf War and in the Balkans compounds the war crimes committed in Darmstadt, Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki that went unpunished at Nuremburg at the end of World War II, thus deeply damaging both the peoples of the UK and USA, encouraging them to feel proud of their acts of genocide.

"The Trident weapons system here in Scotland is positive proof of the UK's determination not to comply with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Instead it intends to upgrade these weapons of mass destruction and worsen the nuclear arms race.

"Recently, in a High Court appeal in Edinburgh against my conviction for criminal damage for cutting the fence at Coulport, Faslane's nuclear weapons store, three Scottish judges stated proudly that Scotland did not recognise International Humanitarian Law. Neither did the judges in Nazi Germany. Would those who gave their lives in WWII have wished to hear this? I think not.

"The Scottish Parliament is in its infancy, currently located in a House of God. My belief in the sanctity of life is shared by the majority of Scottish people, who have consistently shown in all polls that they are opposed to Trident. Let their Parliament uphold higher laws than those inflicted on them by an English Parliament in support of United States' policy. To prepare for genocide is a crime against humanity.

"Trident Ploughshares 2000 will continue to engage in all forms of non-violent direct action to prevent the threat to innocent lives posed by this illegal weapons system. When our senior politicians and our courts fail us, it is the duty of all law-abiding citizens to prevent crimes committed in our name.

"There are those who have disgraced Scotland, mainly Tony Blair, Robin Cook, George Robertson, and many in the legal system. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, never have so few betrayed so many." -Helen John, Menwith Hill Women's Peace Camp

August 29th **Swimming Activists Arrested in Faslane Overnight**

29th

29th August 1999

Swimming Activists Arrested in Faslane Overnight

This morning, at 1.50 a.m., two women members of the Trident Ploughshares campaign were taken from the water in the British nuclear weapon base at Faslane in Scotland, in the fourth attempt by activists to swim into the Trident submarine docks in the last 11 days.

Sylvia Boyes (56), a persistent peace campaigner from Birmingham, has a long history of active protest on peace issues and has been arrested 13 times since the Trident Ploughshares campaign began last year. Along with Anne Scholz (22), from Frieburg in Germany, she entered the water in the dark to the south of the perimeter of the base. They swam round the perimeter fence and after two hours in the water were intercepted while swimming under the jetties where the Polaris submarines were formerly berthed. They have been charged with breaching the by-laws which apply to the base.

Anne said:

"My plan was to get onto a Trident sub and lock myself to it. Sylvia had a hammer to use on the exterior and spray paint to use on computer monitors inside the boat. With a bit of luck we would have got there, just as Rosie and Rachel did in February, and we will keep trying till we do. We must act and continue to act against this evil and unlawful thing."

Campaign member David Mackenzie said:

"We are delighted that Sylvia and Anne went back to carry on the disarmament work just four days after our summer camp ended. Further actions can happen at any time. With significant court cases coming up and our confidence and commitment increasing all the time the campaign is on a roll."

Notes:

On 1st February Rosie James and Rachel Wenham swam onto Trident sub HMS Vengeance in Barrow and damaged test equipment on the conning tower. They will appear in Lancaster Crown Court on 24th January.

Over eighty activists attended the camp which led to 102 arrests for disarmament actions against the Coulport and Faslane nuclear weapon bases.

Due soon is Brian Quail's appeal against conviction for a disarmament action. The High Court in Edinburgh will decide whether the magistrate should have taken account of Brian's defence based on international law. On 27th September, Angie Zelter, Ulla Roder and Ellen Moxley will appear before a jury in Greenock Sheriff Court. On June 8th they caused £100,000 worth of damage to Trident-related test station in Loch Goil.

20th

Swimmers breach security at Trident nuclear base

20th August 1999

Swimmers breach security at Trident nuclear base

Last night (Thursday 19 August) two people were arrested inside the high security area where the Trident submarines are berthed at Faslane, Scotland. This brings the total number of arrests during this Trident Ploughshares camp to 78.

Marcus Armstrong (39) from Surrey, England and Louise James (18) from Cork, Ireland, swam for 45 minutes across the ice-cold Gareloch, penetrating the heart of Britain's first strike nuclear weapon system. They wore wet-suits and flippers and were carrying spray paint, which the two wanted to use to write the slogan: "Disarm NOW!" on the Trident submarine.

Entering the water opposite the base at 10:45pm, they crossed the Loch in darkness, avoiding the MOD patrol boats. At 11:30pm as they negotiated the floating barrier into the high security area, the intruder alarm sounded. They were arrested while swimming the final stretch of water towards the Trident submarine. They were both charged with breaching bye-laws affecting the base. They were released at 2:30am at the gates at Faslane barefoot in paper boiler suits, their wet-suits and flippers having been kept as evidence.

Marcus Armstrong said:

"We know that the Trident nuclear weapons system is illegal and immoral. The British government has reneged on all its promises to work towards nuclear disarmament. We wanted to reach the heart of the beast in order to give the clear message - "Disarm Now" and bring attention to the existence of these horrific weapons of mass destruction."

19th [Daring Attempt to Reach Trident Docking Berths](#)
19th August 1999

Daring Attempt to Reach Trident Docking Berths

As the number of arrests at the Trident Ploughshares camp in Coulport rose to 70, four activists were held early this morning at the perimeter fence of Faslane naval base en route to the docking bays where the Trident nuclear weapon submarines are berthed.

The four are Kirsty Gathergood (24), from Oxford, Josje Snoek (16) from the Netherlands, Clive Fudge from Norwich and Sylvia Boyes (55), from Birmingham. At midnight they negotiated the shoreline from just south of Garelochhead, partly in and partly out of the water, until they reached the point where the fence is extended into the loch. They then decided to cut through the fence rather than swim round, at which juncture they were arrested. They were charged with breaching bye-laws affecting the base. Additionally, Sylvia Boyes was charged with malicious mischief.

Kirsty Gathergood said:

"We were hoping to get inside the base and disarm a Trident submarine, if at all possible. This kind of direct action is necessary to bring to public attention the existence of these hideous weapons of mass destruction."

The four were released from MoD custody at 5 a.m. this morning. Three other activists are still in custody after an action yesterday against the Coulport base, where the Trident warheads are stored.

18th [Activists "Decorate" Trident Submarine Test Station](#)
18th August 1999

Activists "Decorate" Trident Submarine Test Station

August Camp Arrests Reach 63

Late yesterday, Tuesday 17th August, activists from the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport entered the compound of a nuclear weapons submarine testing station at Cove on Loch Long, Scotland, and painted peace messages on the exterior of the building and on the compound tarmac.

The test station is a neat little building that normally sits unobtrusively in the middle of the picturesque village of Cove. It is now covered with slogans such as: TRIDENT IS ILLEGAL, TRIDENT IS VERMIN and NUREMBERG 4 (Referring to the Nuremberg Principles under which all citizens are responsible for upholding international humanitarian law).

Among the eight arrested at the site and charged with malicious mischief was Peter Lanyon (67), from Leiston in Suffolk, a member of the Woodwooses affinity group, which is based in Norwich,

Peter, a retired teacher, said:

" The Trident system, every bit of it, must be exposed for the ugly and malicious thing that it is. That is what we were up to last night."

Also arrested last night were Sylvia Boyes (55), of Birmingham and Judith Pritchard (77), of Malvern, Worcestershire, who were apprehended while cutting their way into the Coulport base, where Trident nuclear warheads are stored.

The activists, drawn from 8 different nationalities, are part of the two week long Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport. Since the camp began there have been 63 arrests.

17th [Disarmers Pile on The Pressure](#)
17th August 1999

Disarmers Pile on The Pressure

53 Arrests as Court System Struggles

At the end of the first week of the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport the arrest count has risen to 53 as concern grows about the ability of the local court system to administer justice in an open and accountable way.

Today, Tuesday 17th August, a further 7 arrests have been made. One group of three activists were held when they obstructed the gateway of the Coulport base where the UK's Trident nuclear warheads are stored. Later three members of the Aldermaston Women Trash Trident group were taken from the waters of Loch Long by MoD police after entering the same base through shallow water at low tide, displaying a banner stating: "Trident is Illegal/ Disarm it Now".

After being held overnight on Breach of the Peace charges two Northumbrian women, Joy Mitchell (66) and Joan Meredith (69), were released on bail. This was, for both women, their

fourth arrest of the camp. Their trial will be held on 21st October. Today's hearing was in a tiny room in Rhu Community Hall, to which only four members of the public were admitted.

Trident Ploughshares pledger Jane Tallents said: "It's not on to hold these hearings in places which cannot accommodate the public interest which the issues arouse. We appreciate that the local Council has found it difficult to find suitable venues but it needs to sort the problem now before we begin to suspect that the authorities want to

hide these cases from the public view."

Many more actions are planned for the remaining days of the camp.

16th **Dutch Peace Activist Jailed in Scotland**

16th August 1999

Dutch Peace Activist Jailed in Scotland

At Argyll and Bute District Court today, Monday 16th August a Dutch Trident Ploughshares activist was sent to prison for seven days for refusing to pay a fine resulting from her involvement in a blockade in February at Faslane nuclear weapons base near Glasgow.

Marjan Willemsen (22), a Dutch student, had been held in custody over the weekend and appeared at a hastily convened hearing in a small room in Helensburgh Police Station, which could only accommodate four members of the public. In setting the sentence the JP did not take into account the days she had already served. Marjan told the Justice of The Peace: " I have said right from the start that I had no intention of paying this fine. I have done nothing wrong. I was acting to uphold international law."

David Mackenzie said:

"There appears to be no rationale or consistency in the response of the local criminal justice system to our disarmament work. How they deal with individuals seems to depend on the side of the bed they get out of. They are bringing the judicial system into disrepute. Add to that their failure to understand the relevance of international law to the local Scottish system and you have a lamentable failure in a key public service. As a Scot I am embarrassed and ashamed."

Meanwhile Trident Ploughshares activists are camped at Coulport for 14 days of concentrated action against the nuclear weapons bases on the Clyde. Since the camp began there have been 42 arrests and many further activities are planned for the coming week.

In Cornton Vale Prison Marjan will join Ellen Moxley, Ulla Roder and Angie Zelter, whose trial has now been set for 27th September in Greenock Sheriff Court, before a jury. On June 8th the three women put out of action a Trident related floating laboratory in Loch Goil, causing damage estimated as at least £100,000.

14th **Member of SNP executive arrested**

14th August 1999

Member of SNP executive arrested

Colourful protest ends in mass arrests

At a Trident Ploughshares rally, MSP Tommy Sheridan today spoke of his firm commitment to

getting the transport of nuclear goods onto the agenda of the newly formed Scottish Parliament. Mr Sheridan emphasised the need to create a diversification program for workers on the Trident sites, particularly relevant following yesterday's broadcast of naval workers' concern for their jobs if the base were closed.

Billy Wolfe, former chair of the SNP, spoke movingly in support of Trident Ploughshares saying, "All my party's members should have been down here today." He voiced his hope for the future that although there have been difficult days for disarmament campaigns, "We can now see the light". Police later proceeded to arrest him for Breach of the Peace as he moved to form part of a road blockade at Faslane South Gate.

The rally took place in the morning at the North Gate of Faslane Naval Base and was followed by a blockade of the South Gate. Drummers, pipers and other musicians provided a backdrop for dancing and street theatre that, combined with the speeches, led to a mood that was emotional but cheerful.

Towards the end of the formal proceedings, a number of direct actions took place, leading to 17 arrests (and rising at time of writing) including that of the prominent politician, Billy Wolfe. Other arrests include Marilyn Croser, a student from Glasgow and Helen Harris a teacher from Bristol who were both arrested inside the base after cutting through the perimeter fence. One campaigner was arrested whilst up a ladder, trying to cut through razor wire coils. The police had to steady the ladder while she continued to cut as they were unable to simply drag her down.

Tommy Sheridan also spoke in praise of a previous Ploughshares action, "We should all be supporting as strongly as possible the Loch Goil Three", referring to the three women currently on remand at HMP Corntonvale for an action involving the destruction of the Trident research floating laboratory. Their trial date is now set for Ellen Moxley, Angie Zelter and Ulla Røder to start on the 27th September in Greenock, with a pre-trial on the 2nd in Dunoon.

Marjan Willemsen, 22 from the Netherlands, was taken into custody in the middle of her supper by police yesterday after a warrant for her arrest was issued over an outstanding £100 fine. She is one of a number of Trident Ploughshares activists who have refused to pay a fine, "When illegal weapons of mass destruction are protected by the British legal system, their disarmament becomes an international responsibility."

Actions will continue throughout the Trident Ploughshares summer camp, which lasts until August 24th.

13th [Justice of the Peace Describes Case Against Activist as "a frail bark"](#)
13th August 1999

Justice of the Peace Describes Case Against Activist as "a frail bark"

In finding no case to answer in an assault charge against Trident Ploughshares activist Angie Zelter, Justice Fraser stated: "A famous Queen's counsel once said of a Crown case, 'It was a frail bark that set sail towards the horizon, disappeared and was never seen again.' This is what this case reminds me of."

In an attempt to apply for a formal pass to enter the base last November Angie had driven through the gates at Faslane. She was detained and charged with assaulting a police officer. Prosecution witnesses confirmed that at no point did Ms Zelter's vehicle come into contact with

the police.

Morag Balfour, 26, said: "This case should never have been brought. It has exposed the Ministry of Defence's willingness to use malicious means to silence dissenters. Clearly they picked on Angie due to her high profile within the movement."

The inconsistency of the legal system was demonstrated again this morning when three other Trident Ploughshares activists were released without charge after cutting the fence at Coulport last night - charges appear to be trumped up or dropped at will. Despite this, the Trident Ploughshares campaign encourages the legal system to maintain its independence, uphold international law and refuse to criminalise anti-nuclear dissent.

12th [17 Arrested as Activists Blockade Nuclear Bomb Store](#)

12th August 1999

17 Arrested as Activists Blockade Nuclear Bomb Store

Further Embarrassment for MOD

Early today, Tuesday 13th July 1999, four Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists from the Midlands were able to enter the "secure" Nuclear Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston in Berkshire, the secret factory involved in the research and manufacture of materials for nuclear missiles. The action signals the extension of the TP2000 campaign to Trident related sites in England and is a further embarrassment to the MOD following the incident on June 8th when TP2000 activists put out of action an unguarded Trident - related floating laboratory in Loch Goil.

The activists, Roger Franklin from Horsley, Sylvia Boyes from Birmingham, Marlene Yeo from Burton on the Wolds and Alison Crane from Stafford, all members of the TP2000 Midlands affinity group, had time to display banners before being arrested. They are being held by Newbury police while charges are formulated.

Alison Crane said:

"I have appealed to the Government and to the management at Aldermaston to take account of international law and abandon these weapons of mass destruction. I am now appealing to the people involved in their manufacture and maintenance to choose instead to help build a world free from the threat of nuclear annihilation."

Under the "No Hiding Place" principle on war criminals, the perimeter of the Aldermaston site is currently sporting posters identifying Robin Bradley, the factory's Chief Executive, as indictable for his role in the manufacture of weapons of illegal weapons.

6th [MSP Tommy Sheridan Joins Disarmament Protest and Promises Action in Scottish Parliament](#)

6th August 1999

MSP Tommy Sheridan Joins Disarmament Protest and Promises Action in Scottish Parliament

Activists are Fined as August Action Beckons

MSP Tommy Sheridan is among the politicians who will join the Trident Ploughshares rally and action at 10 a.m. on August 14th at the north gate of Faslane naval base, home to the UK's Trident nuclear weapons submarines. Meanwhile, as international disarmers gather for the two-week camp at Coulport

from the 10th to 24th August, two activists have been convicted for their protests at previous camps.

Tommy said: " I am looking forward to taking part in the protest against Trident on the 14th. I shall be tabling a motion in the Scottish Parliament calling for it to be removed from Scotland."

On Monday (2nd August), in Helensburgh District Court, Rupert Eris, a nature conservation warden from Norfolk was fined £50 for his part in a blockade of Faslane north gate in February. Rupert said: "When British service personnel are in Kosova to uphold international humanitarian law it is absurd to claim that the same law does not apply in Scotland." On 4th August, in the same court, another activist, Peter Lanyon, a retired teacher from Suffolk, was admonished on charges of malicious mischief. Peter said: " In spite of a most courteous discussion, Justice of the Peace Stirling and I fundamentally disagreed about the place of international humanitarian law in Scots law. I will appeal."

The Trident Ploughshares direct disarmament campaign will be a year old on 11th August. In that time there have been many disarmament actions, leading to 231 arrests and 38 court cases. Among the more dramatic actions are the swimming feats last August when three disarmers twice swam to within metres of a Trident submarine at Faslane; the damage done to testing equipment on board HMS Vengeance at Barrow in February; the putting out of action of a Trident-related floating laboratory in Loch Goil in June. Ulla Roder from Denmark, Ellen Moxley from Dollar in Scotland and Angie Zelter from Norfolk face charges connected to the Loch Goil incident and are currently on remand in Cornton Vale prison.

July Vengeance Disarmers to be Tried in January
17th July 1999

17th **Vengeance Disarmers to be Tried in January**

Counsel Gareth Pierce Looks for Good Outcome

Rosie James and Rachel Wenham, who on 1st February got on board nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vengeance in the dock in Barrow and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower, appeared at Lancaster Crown (Sessional) Court yesterday Friday 16th July, when trial was set for 17th January 2000 at Lancaster Crown Court, under Judge Livesey.

Defence counsel Gareth Pierce commented, "Let's hope the trial date in the new millennium augurs well for a good outcome".

Rosie and Rachel objected to the proposed venue of the trial - Preston, on the grounds that the extent of the defence industry in the area was liable to prejudice any jury. They were also concerned that there might be prejudice arising from the trial of the Bread not Bombs* activists in Preston in October. The judge, agreeing to change the venue to Lancaster said, "I've lived here all my life. I know the extent of the [defence] industry [in Preston]".

The women now face two separate charges - of criminal damage to the submarine, and of criminal damage to the testing equipment. No value has been placed on either charge as yet.

Rachel's comment was, "There still a lot of disarmament to be done. The damage we've been

charged with is just a start."

Rosie and Rachel remain on bail with what the judge described as "prudent" conditions" - residence at a specified address - and not to go to Barrow.

*On 14th May, the 8 day trial in Preston Crown Court of three Swedish Ploughshares activists ended when the jury, after 7 hours of deliberation, could not reach a verdict. Annika Spalde, Stellan Vinthagen and Ann-Britt Sternfeldt, of the Bread Not Bombs Ploughshares group, had been accused of conspiring to cause criminal damage to HMS Vengeance in September last year at Barrow. Their new trial begins on 11th October.

14th **Burton -on-the-Wolds Activist Released**

14th July 1999

Burton -on-the-Wolds Activist Released

Activists Challenged War Crime Inside H-Bomb Factory

Yesterday, Wednesday 14th July 1999, the 4 Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists (including Marlene Yeo from Burton-on-the-Wolds), who entered the "secure" Nuclear Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston early on Monday morning, were released from Newbury police station, pending further investigations. They will return to Newbury on 24th August for further questioning, which is likely to lead to charges of criminal damage.

Their major aim in entering the secret factory, which designs and makes components for the nuclear warheads deployed on Trident submarines, was to engage workers in dialogue about the appalling nature of the work in which they were engaged. In their attempts to do so they met with some hostility and much apathy.

Marlene Yeo said:

"Last weekend I watched a TV documentary about the Gulag in the former Soviet Union in which a number of people who had been part of that machine of death and repression were put on the spot. Their response was exactly that of the workers I met inside the nuclear bomb factory. They said they didn't care. Obviously people who build and plan to use weapons of mass destruction have to develop thick skins."

From Cornton Vale prison in Scotland, where she is being held after the successful disarming of a Trident -related lab in Loch Goil in June, Danish citizen Ulla Roder commented:

"We saw the same reaction at Nato HQ in Brussels in May. However, as we put the facts to them, some of them were obviously beginning to think about the enormity of what they were involved in. We have to continue to work at peacefully "disarming" the humans who make this dreadful system tick. We will do this by giving them the information and arguing the case."

14th **Activist Set Free after Parliament Day Action**

14th July 1999

Activist Set Free after Parliament Day Action

Yesterday a Trident Ploughshares activist was released from custody after appearing in Helensburgh District Court on charges related to his action in July when he celebrated the official opening of the Scottish Parliament by attempting to demolish the perimeter fence at the Coulport nuclear weapons base on Loch Long. Ian Thomson (57), a joiner to trade and a peace and environmental campaigner of many years' standing, was also charged with being in a prohibited place on the 30th April when he swam out to the new Trident submarine, HMS Vengeance, as it

docked at Coulport. Ian's defence was that he had been acting on both occasions to uphold international humanitarian law. Damage to the perimeter fence at Coulport was estimated at £250. Ian was found guilty on both charges. Since he had already spent 12 days on remand at Greenock prison he was released without sentence. Ian said: "On the day we were celebrating the foundations of a new civilised future for Scotland it seemed right to me that we should be at the same time putting firmly in the past all the greedy, destructive and hate-ridden attitudes that Trident represents. We were opening parliament. Why not open up Coulport and expose our nuclear nightmare?" TP2000 pledger David Mackenzie added: "In spite of the fact that Brian Quail has an appeal before the High Court in Edinburgh to establish the duty of local courts to pay attention to international law, Helensburgh District Court is still somewhere on Planet Zog. Meanwhile, back on Planet Earth the superiority of humanitarian law over local regulations is hardly in dispute." **TP2000 Updates:** 1. Yesterday, Wednesday 14th July 1999, the 4 Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists from the Midlands who entered the "secure" Nuclear Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston early on Monday morning, were released from Newbury police station, pending further investigations. They will return to Newbury on 24th August for further questioning, which is likely to lead to charges of criminal damage. 2. The three TP2000 activists who disarmed the floating Trident-related lab in Loch Goil on June 8th are still in Cornton Vale prison awaiting trial. Damage to the lab is estimated at £100,000.

13th **Security at Atom Bomb Factory Breached by Activists**

13th July 1999

Security at Atom Bomb Factory Breached by Activists

Further Embarrassment for MOD

Early today, Tuesday 13th July 1999, four Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists from the Midlands were able to enter the "secure" Nuclear Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston in Berkshire, the secret factory involved in the research and manufacture of materials for nuclear missiles. The action signals the extension of the TP2000 campaign to Trident related sites in England and is a further embarrassment to the MOD following the incident on June 8th when TP2000 activists put out of action an unguarded Trident - related floating laboratory in Loch Goil.

The activists, Roger Franklin from Horsley, Sylvia Boyes from Birmingham, Marlene Yeo from Burton on the Wolds and Alison Crane from Stafford, all members of the TP2000 Midlands affinity group, had time to display banners before being arrested. They are being held by Newbury police while charges are formulated.

Alison Crane said:

"I have appealed to the Government and to the management at Aldermaston to take account of international law and abandon these weapons of mass destruction. I am now appealing to the people involved in their manufacture and maintenance to choose instead to help build a world free from the threat of nuclear annihilation."

Under the "No Hiding Place" principle on war criminals, the perimeter of the Aldermaston site is currently sporting posters identifying Robin Bradley, the factory's Chief Executive, as indictable for his role in the manufacture of weapons of illegal weapons.

June **Loch Goil Disarmers Face £100,000 Theft and Damage Charge**

17th June 1999

17th

Loch Goil Disarmers Face £100,000 Theft and Damage Charge

Dramatic Failure in MOD Security Still Unexplained

The three women Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists involved in last week's dramatic disarmament action in Loch Goil returned today (17th June) to Dunoon Sheriff Court where the charges against them were more clearly defined, referring to a total damage value of nearly £100,000.

Last Tuesday, 8th June, peace activists Ellen Moxley (63), from Dollar, Scotland, Ulla Roder (44) from Denmark and Angie Zelter (49), from Norfolk, England, boarded "Maytime", a floating laboratory which checks the "sonar invisibility" of Trident nuclear submarines, and cleared out the lab, throwing the equipment into the loch. They have now been charged with:

- ▶ Malicious mischief to a value of £30,000. This appears to refer to damage to a winch, control panels, an aerial antenna and a control room window.
- ▶ Theft by throwing into the loch to the value of £69,000. This refers to the computers, other electronic equipment, components, manuals and other documentation the women pitched overboard.

One of the conditions for bail was a commitment from the women that they would not re-offend in the interim. They were ready to accept this on the understanding that disarmament activity would not be considered by the court to be a crime. The court refused to agree to this and the women now return to Cornton Vale prison. Although their trial must take place within 110 days no dates have yet been arranged for future hearings.

Commenting on the bail issue Trident Ploughshares 2000 pledger Sian Jones said:

"In years to come we will look back at these events and will be amazed that there could ever have been any doubt within the judicial system that Trident is utterly unlawful; or that there could be any question about the legal and moral validity of what these women have done."

Maytime is part of the Floating Laboratory Complex in Loch Goil run by the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA), a technical arm of the UK Ministry of Defence. Submarine tests are conducted regularly at the facilities in Loch Goil and the latest Trident sub, HMS Vengeance has still to undergo acoustic trials.

For information on "Maytime" see the DERA Website: <http://www.dra.hmg.gb/dera.htm>

9th [Trident Test Station Disarmers Remanded](#)

9th June 1999

Trident Test Station Disarmers Remanded

Dramatic Failure in MOD Security Still Unexplained

Today, Wednesday 9th June the three Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists who disarmed a vital part of Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system when they disabled "Maytime", a floating laboratory in Loch Goil, Scotland, were remanded to Cornton Vale prison when they appeared in closed session at Dunoon Sheriff court. Their case was continued until Thursday 17th June, pending further investigation.

Ellen Moxley (63), a peace campaigner from Dollar, Scotland, Ulla Roder (44) a shop assistant from Denmark and Angie Zelter (49), a potter and peace campaigner from Norfolk, England, made

their way from the shore to the Maytime's anchorage by inflatable boat. Once aboard they damaged 20 computers and other electronic equipment and circuit boxes, cut an antenna, jammed winches and other machinery with superglue, sand and syrup and tipped logbooks files and papers overboard. They were on board for almost four hours before MOD police, apparently alerted at last by a media enquiry, took them into custody. Initial estimates of the value of the damage range from £30,000 to £100,000,

The women are members of the "Pheasants' Union" group, part of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign which aims to rid the UK of its illegal weapons of mass destruction by non-violent and accountable direct action. When they met supporters outside the court they said: "We really cleaned it out!".

In their collective statement the women had said:

"Our actions are based on the legal and ethical premise that the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system is a system preparing for the mass murder of innocent civilians. As loving, feeling human beings we feel responsible for trying to do everything in our power to prevent the system from being able to operate, providing that our actions are safe, non-violent, open and accountable."

The Floating Laboratory Complex is run by the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA), part of the Ministry of Defence and submarine trials are conducted regularly at the facilities in Loch Goil.

8th **Peace Activists Disarm UK Trident Test Station**
8th June 1999

Peace Activists Disarm UK Trident Test Station

Vital "Silent Running" Equipment Put Out of Action by International Group

Today, Tuesday 8th June 1999, at 7.30.p.m. three Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists disarmed a vital part of Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system when they disabled "Maytime", a floating laboratory in Loch Goil, Scotland, which is used to check on the ability of individual submarines to avoid sonar detection.

Ellen Moxley (63), a peace campaigner from Dollar, Scotland, Ulla Roder (44) a shop assistant from Denmark and Angie Zelter (49), a potter and peace campaigner from Norfolk, England, made their way from the shore to the Maytime's anchorage by inflatable boat. Once aboard they cut their way into the lab with cold chisels and wrecking bars and disarmed the testing equipment with hammers, as well as throwing quantities of paperwork into the water. They draped banners over the lab, reading "Stop Nuclear Death Research" and "TP2000 opposes Research for Genocide."

The women are members of the "Pheasants' Union" group, part of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign which aims to rid the UK of its illegal weapons of mass destruction by non-violent and accountable direct action.

In their collective statement the women said:

"Our actions are based on the legal and ethical premise that the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system is a system preparing for the mass murder of innocent civilians over untold generations. As loving, feeling human beings we feel responsible for trying to do everything in our power to prevent the system from being able to operate, providing that our actions are safe, non-violent, open and accountable."

The Floating Laboratory Complex is run by the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA), a prime supplier of technical advice to the UK Ministry of Defence and submarine trials are conducted regularly at their facilities in Loch Goil.

May Over 260 Arrests at NATO Headquarters

30th May 1999

Over 260 Arrests at NATO Headquarters

Yesterday, Saturday 29th May, the third day of attempts by peace activists to carry out a Citizens' Inspection of the NATO HQ and gather evidence of the possession of illegal nuclear weapons, over 60 people, including 5 from the UK, were arrested, bringing the total to over 260.

On Thursday, when NATO officials refused to give any information to a delegation of the activists, some activists began to cut their way into the complex to continue the inspection. The Brussels police reacted by preventing the others from leaving the area. They then arrested them and removed from the site. Water cannon and long batons were used and some activists were heavily bruised. A senior police official said to a PA contact, "This is a war zone. We cannot tolerate anybody interfering with NATO."

Yesterday the action went on and the police continued to apply the Brussels Mayor's ban on demonstrations, at one stage arresting demonstrators as they got off a tram a mile from the HQ. Among over 70 people arrested were Trident Ploughshares pledgers Joan Meredith from Northumbria; Bob Sprocket and Johanna Berking from Brighton; Hazel Bloor of Durham; Peter Lanyon from Norwich. Except for Johanna, this was their second arrest within three days. Among international TP2000 pledgers arrested were Martyn Kelly of County Donegal, Krista Van Velzen and Marjan Willemsen of the Netherlands, and Danish Ulla Roder.

TP2000 pledger David Mackenzie said:

"Milosovic is being pursued, and rightly, for his war crimes. Yet, in the city that houses the HQ of NATO, which claims to be acting for democracy and freedom, straightforward dissent is banned. NATO itself refuses to be accountable to its people and to be open to the process of international law."

27th Walkers for Peace Face Batons and Water-Cannon at Nato HQ

27th May 1999

Walkers for Peace Face Batons and Water-Cannon at Nato HQ

19 UK Activists Among 140 Arrested as Brussels Police Resort to Violence

Today (Thursday 27th May) 500 non-violent activists from all parts of the globe who walked from the Hague to Brussels faced a barrage of police batons and water cannon at NATO'S HQ. In defiance of a ban on such demonstrations by the Mayor of Brussels they had gone to the HQ in an effort to carry out a Citizen's Inspection of the complex, in order to collect evidence of international war crime. Their protest is against NATO's illegal nuclear weapons policy and its disregard for international law in the conduct of the war in the Balkans. 140 of their number were arrested for a range of alleged offences, including trespass.

The 19 UK people arrested included TP2000 pledgers Brian Quail, secretary of Scottish CND;

Barbara McGregor, an artist from Glasgow; Joan Meredith and Joy Mitchell, retired teachers from Northumbria; Bob Sprocket from Brighton; Hazel Bloor of Durham; Rachel Boyd, Peter Lanyon and Angie Zelter from Norwich.

Angie, already well known in the UK for her part in the disarming of a Hawk aircraft in 1996 and her many arrests at the Faslane nuclear weapons base in Scotland, was one of many struck with batons and bruised. She said:

" When the police were laying into us with their long batons we pointed out that this was precisely what NATO was doing in Serbia to people just like us. Our words obviously hit home for their eyes dropped and many looked really shamefaced. I am ashamed of NATO. Its actions are not in my name."

The action is not over. The arrested activists were released late in the evening and have promised to return to the HQ tomorrow.

16th **16 Disarmers Arrested at Faslane**
16th May 1999

16 Disarmers Arrested at Faslane

Trident Ploughshares Arrests Reach the 200 Mark

Today, Sunday 16th May, 16 Trident Ploughshares activists were arrested variously for blockading the gates of the Faslane naval base, cutting the perimeter fence and padlocking themselves to it.

One was arrested for cutting into the Coulport base. These actions came after a demonstration at the North Gate which was attended by about 40 people, including SNP European candidate, Professor Neil MacCormick, who said:

"These bases are a menace to people in far countries and to Scotland. These hills and lochs were not made for the housing of instruments of mass killing and maiming. Scotland wants no nuclear weapons. "

Among those arrested were a group of four, including two wheelchair users, Morag Balfour and Roz Bullen, who attached themselves to the perimeter fence in a complex weaving of arms, legs, wheelchairs and padlocks. It took police well over an hour to deal with them and eventually Roz freed herself.

Arrested for blockading the South Gate was Joan Meredith, a 69 year old retired teacher of the deaf from Alnwick in Northumberland. Joan said:

" This has been a good day. It began with the Quaker service at the North gate when the speakers highlighted the contrast between the beauty of the countryside all around and the ugliness of nuclear weapons. And now to see so many people willing to put themselves on the line for what's right fills me with hope."

Today's arrests brings the TP2000 total to 200, with many court cases in the pipeline and two appeals to the High Court.

16th **Hung Jury in Ploughshares Conspiracy Trial**
16th May 1999

Hung Jury in Ploughshares Conspiracy Trial

On Friday 14th May, the 8 day trial in Preston Crown Court of three Swedish Ploughshares activists ended when the jury, after 7 hours of deliberation, could not reach a verdict.

Annika Spalde, Stellan Vinthagen and Ann-Britt Sternfeldt, of the Bread Not Bombs Ploughshares group, had been accused of conspiring to cause criminal damage to the new Trident nuclear weapons submarine, HMS Vengeance, in September last year at Barrow.

Stellan said:

"We are really impressed that a jury of ordinary citizens from a town so dependent on weapons production refused to find us guilty, in spite of them being told by the judge that that was their only option."

The three will appear in court on Friday 21st May when it will be decided whether there will be a retrial. Stellan was asked what he felt about a second trial:

"It's a heavy thought but I feel happy because it increases the chance of an acquittal and more pressure on the UK government to begin disarming the Trident system."

The judge has said that he will seek the view of the Attorney General on the application of the 1996 ruling by the International Court of Justice to Britain's nuclear weapons.

The Bread Not Bombs group work in association with Trident Ploughshares 2000 and TP2000 pledger Jane Tallents said:

"It is an enormous encouragement that at least some members of a jury have appreciated the moral and legal arguments we are bringing to bear, in spite of the judge blocking substantial parts of the defence. This result gives great hope to TP2000 activists as they continue to argue in court for the validity of direct disarmament."

Preston Crown Court is set to host yet another trial of disarmers when the Aldermaston Trash Trident activists appear on charges of damage to radar testing equipment on board the same submarine on the 1st February.

15th [MEP Candidate, Professor Neil McCormick, Joins Faslane Protest](#)

15th May 1999

MEP Candidate, Professor Neil McCormick, Joins Faslane Protest

Professor Neil McCormick, an SNP candidate in the European Parliamentary Election, will join the concerted action by Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists at the North Gate of the naval base at Faslane, tomorrow, Sunday 16th May at 1 p.m., to underline the anti-Trident message he intends to take to Europe.

The day of protest and action will begin with a Quaker service of worship at the North Gate. At 1 p.m. the Ploughshares activists who are currently camped at Peaton Wood near Coulport, supported by protesters, will undertake disarmament work on the base.

Peaton Wood is half a mile to the south of the main gate of the Coulport base on Loch Long.

12th [Activists Apply Fresh Pressure as Scotland Rejects Trident](#)

12th May 1999

Activists Apply Fresh Pressure as Scotland Rejects Trident

A recent Teletext poll showed a massive 85% rejection of nuclear weapons in Scotland and the Church of Scotland Assembly has given a unanimous restatement of its opposition to nuclear weapons.

Greatly encouraged by this strong support Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists will gather at Coulport this coming weekend to step up their campaign of non-violent direct disarmament.

The camp will run at Peaton Wood near RNAD Coulport (30 miles from Glasgow) from Friday 14th to Monday 17th May. Among a range of expected disarmament activities the highlights will be:

Saturday 15th: Street campaigning in Helensburgh from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Photo opportunity at 2 p.m. on sea-front just to the north of the Pier.

Sunday 16th: 11 a.m. Service of Worship by Quakers at Faslane North Gate.

1 p.m. Concerted action against the Faslane Base. Photo Opportunity at Faslane North Gate, 1 p.m.

Among the political supporters who are likely to be present will be TV presenter Lloyd Quinan and Neil McCormick of the SNP.

April 27th "One More To Hammer" Say Activists as Vengeance Sneaks North

27th April 1999

One More To Hammer" Say Activists as Vengeance Sneaks North

As HMS Vengeance prepared to leave Barrow for its lair in Faslane on the Clyde, activists from Trident Ploughshares 2000 promised that it would just be one more disarmament target in the campaign of direct action against the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system.

As the fourth nuclear weapons boat sets sail at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, protesters will be on the spit at the Rhu narrows at the entrance to the Gareloch to show their anger. They will return when it arrives, on either Thursday or Friday morning.

TP2000 pledger Ellen Moxley said:

"If the people of Scotland want to see what makes this government's talk of ethics and humanitarian concern a cynical mockery let them come to the Clyde and watch this unspeakable thing slink into its berth. It's not welcome here or anywhere. Its arrival will stiffen our resolve to continue disarming."

Meanwhile Simon Gillespie, an MOD spokesman, writing to TP activist Angie Zelter, has said that the government would take legal advice about Trident only if and when its use was being considered.

TP2000 pledger David Mackenzie said:

"It's obviously time for Dr. Strangelove 2. They seem to be saying that when the blips of hostile nuclear missiles appear on the screen they will send out for a lawyer. It just shows what the possession of these weapons does to the rationality of those committed to the system. The fact is they will not test the legality of Trident for real because they know it is indefensible under international humanitarian law."

March Retired Headteacher Admonished for Disarmament Action

31st 31st March 1999

Retired Headteacher Admonished for Disarmament Action

Northumberland Activists Damage Trident-Related Depot

At Helensburgh District Court today, 31st March, Barbara Sunderland, a retired headteacher from Bedfordshire, was found guilty and admonished for taking part in a peaceful blockade the north gate of Faslane Naval Base in August last year, during the Trident Ploughshares 2000 disarmament camp.

Barbara said:

"When I was a headteacher and we took the children out of school the safest way for them to get cross the busy road was for me or another teacher to stand in the middle, obstructing the traffic. Nobody arrested me then for obstructing dangerous traffic! Trident submarines are on hair-trigger alert and there is always the danger of an accidental launch, followed by retaliation."

Another retired teacher, Peter Lanyon, of Leiston, appeared at the same court today on similar charges but his case was adjourned until 4th August due to a missing police witness. This means another 900 mile round trip for Peter. **Northumberland Activists Damage Trident-Related Depot**

On Sunday night (28 March 1999) the Northumbrian Trident Ploughshares 2000 Group dismantled large amounts of the fence at the Albemarle Secure Nuclear Vehicle Compound, 7 miles west of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Secure Vehicle Compound is an integral part of the Trident weapon system. It is regularly used by the nuclear convoys carrying nuclear warheads (containing high explosives, plutonium and tritium) on ordinary roads from the Burghfield nuclear weapons factory (near Reading) to Coulport nuclear weapons store (on the Clyde 30 miles west of Glasgow).

The group spent over half an hour chopping the fence, and painting slogans on the bunkers and concrete. They left some of their leaflets to make sure the MOD know who is taking responsibility for the disarmament. There have been no moves to arrest anyone.

22nd Police Admit People Can Shut Down Nuke Base

22nd March 1999

Police Admit People Can Shut Down Nuke Base

Admission of Vulnerability as Activists Admonished for Blockade of Faslane

As two Trident Ploughshares activists were admonished in Helensburgh District Court for their

part in a blockade of the North Gate of Faslane Naval Base, home to Britain's nuclear weapons submarines, a police witness admitted that a blockade by thousands of people could put the operation of the base under severe stress.

Angie Zelter and Clive Fudge, both of Norwich, may be the only two to appear in court following the blockade on 15th February which led to 49 arrests, including that of ex-chair of the SNP, Billy Wolfe. Both were found guilty and admonished. It was in answer to a question from Angie that a Ministry of Defence Police Officer agreed that life could easily be made very difficult for the base if thousands were to join the blockade.

Angie, a potter from Norwich, said: " I only came to do these actions because the government is breaking the law. We are always getting fresh information that underlines the fact that these weapons pose an immediate threat to the planet and its people. The recent discovery of faulty reactor cooling pumps in the new sub, HMS Vengeance, shows that we are daily risking another Chernobyl, to say nothing of another Hiroshima, only much, much worse."

Clive has been an anti-nuclear campaigner since 1964 and was one of the millions of signatories to the Declaration of Public Conscience which led to the nuclear weapons case being taken to the International Court of Justice. Clive said: "The police have noted that my conduct was orderly. Our blockade brought peace to the place and a temporary interruption of its plans for genocide."

16th [Scottish Prison Service Fails to Apologise to Peace Activist](#)
16th March 1999

Scottish Prison Service Fails to Apologise to Peace Activist

Prison Complaints Commission Recommendation Sidestepped

SPS Chief Executive EW Frizzell has rejected a recommendation from the Scottish Prison Complaints Commission to issue an unreserved formal apology to Trident Ploughshares campaigner Angie Zelter, following her mistreatment, along with three other women activists, at the hands of Cornton Vale staff in September 1998.

JJ McManus, the Commissioner, had indicated that staff had used "unnecessary force" in dealing with Angie's passive resistance during a prison based protest against the launch of the UK's fourth Trident submarine. In his reply to the Commissioner Mr. Frizzell claims that Angie was partly responsible for what happened. He expresses some regret at the distress caused but his reply falls far short of an unreserved apology.

The SPS had already accepted two other recommendations from Mr. McManus: to provide training for staff in dealing with passive resistance and to arrange that clothing designed for the prevention of suicide be only issued to prisoners at risk.

Angie said:

When Mr. Frizzell talks about me being partly responsible he reminds me of those judges who used to blame victims in rape cases of being in the wrong place or wearing the wrong clothes. All he needs to say directly to me is ' We were in the wrong. I am sorry that we used unnecessary force and I am sorry for the distress we caused you.

Angie criticised the methods of restraint that are currently used and approved by the SPS:

The authorities admit that the restraint procedures depend on the use or threat of pain to achieve compliance. What experienced was violence and intimidation, both verbal and physical.

Trident Ploughshares 2000 wants to ensure decent treatment for the other peace activists who are likely to be sent to Cornton Vale as the campaign intensifies. There is also concern for all women prisoners and the hope that the light the incident has shed on the regime in Cornton Vale will lead to further enquiry and the necessary reforms.

15th **Court Fails To Earn Respect of Peace Activist**

15th March 1999

Court Fails To Earn Respect of Peace Activist

Heavy Fines Dished Out

Today in Helensburgh District Court Trident Ploughshares activist Angie Zelter was fined a total of £375: £300 for alleged malicious mischief when she cut through the perimeter fence at the Coulport nuclear weapons base in August; and £75 for contempt of court arising from an appearance in January when she made to walk out of the court.

Facing a possible contempt of court sentence of 60 days in prison and asked for an unequivocal apology, Angie did indicate to JP McPhail that she was sorry if she had upset him. She respected him personally but she could have no respect for a court system which did not allow a full defence to be put or allow lines of questioning that were vital for the defence.

Angie said:

"A court which forbids such a defence is not acting in the public interest or concerned for public safety. I did not get a fair hearing and I will consider an appeal."

The court seemed surprised to learn of the leave to appeal to the High Court given to fellow disarmer Brian Quail on the basis that the same court may have been wrong in his case in not taking account of international law.

Also in today's session Jo Markham, another TP2000 activist, based at the Faslane peace camp, was fined £225 for blockading at Coulport during the August camp and breaking the bye-laws during another action at Faslane. The Procurator Fiscal continued his erroneous interpretation of international law by telling her that the byelaws took precedence over the Nuremburg Principles.

Jane Tallents, who co-ordinates court support for the activists, said:

"The local court system is beginning to creak under the weight of its inconsistencies and its myopic failure to register the relevance of the principles of international law to what is going on down the road behind the fences. We will continue to apply the pressure."

10th **'Nuclear Weapons a Blasphemy Against God' Says Swedish Pastor**

10th March 1999

'Nuclear Weapons a Blasphemy Against God' Says Swedish Pastor

Two Swedish pastors and a Swedish student have been found guilty of malicious mischief for cutting the fence at Faslane Nuclear Submarine base, and fined £50 each.

Fredrik Ivarsson, a minister in the church of Sweden said in court

'As a minister of the church, I strive to follow the teachings of the church. My church, and most of the churches in Europe have over and over again demanded that all nuclear weapons should be abolished. They are a threat to all life and a blasphemy against God the giver of life.'

Helensburgh District Court continues to disregard international law even though another Trident Ploughshares 2000 activist, Brian Quail, has just been given leave to appeal to the High Court. Lord Cullen said that it is arguable that the magistrate should not have excluded consideration of what were said to be principles of international law.

Mathew Berlow, representing student Petter Joelson today, said

"Although it may not seem the correct venue, this court must take into account International Law, it is binding on all of us.'

Klaus Engell representing himself said that International law aside, Trident was completely immoral and it was right to try and resist this evil.

7th [Appeal Breakthrough Puts Spotlight on Trial of Swedish Ministers](#)
7th March 1999

Appeal Breakthrough Puts Spotlight on Trial of Swedish Ministers

Two Swedish ministers and a Swedish student appear in court in Helensburgh on Wednesday this week in connection with disarmament activities at Coulport nuclear weapons base amid hope that local courts may at last be compelled to take account of international law, after another activist was granted leave to appeal his conviction.

On Wednesday 10th March at 10 .a.m. in Helensburgh District Court, Fredrik Ivarsson, (30), a minister in the Church of Sweden, trainee minister Klaus Engell (30) and student Petter Joelson (19) will appear on charges relating to their actions against the base in August last year, during the first phase of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign.

This is the first trial of Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists after retired teacher Brian Quail was granted leave to appeal against his conviction for a similar alleged offence.

Leave was granted by the High Court of Justiciary, on the ground that *"It is arguable that, in determining the question of 'without reasonable excuse', the magistrate should not have excluded consideration of what were said to be principles of international law."*

Brian said:

" This is a huge step forward. The JPs and Sheriffs will now have to sit up and take notice. It is high time the law in Scotland opened its eyes to the blatant illegality of the nuclear weapons installations at Faslane and Coulport. Let's hope that Fredrik, Petter and Klaus will be the first to benefit as the local courts wake up to their responsibilities."

5th [Activist Jailed for 'Not in my name' Actions](#)
5th March 1999

Activist Jailed for 'Not in my name' Actions

First Prison Sentence in TP2000 Campaign

Prominent politicians and a leading churchman came to the Faslane Naval Base this morning (Monday) to support the blockade of the base by Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists which has led to date to 41 arrests and considerable disruption to the operations there since 7 a.m.

Ex-Chair of the SNP Billy Wolfe was arrested for breach of the peace while Labour MP Dennis Canavan and Tommy Sheridan of the Scottish Socialist Alliance gave their support at the North Gate..

Among others arrested are 84 year-old Bobby Harrison of Dumbarton; Susan van der Hijden (29) a Catholic Worker and Marjan Willemsen (21) student, both from the Netherlands; Ulla Roder (44) a shop assistant from Denmark; young wheelchair users Roz Bullen and Morag Balfour.

For the peace movement the good news is that both Tony Blair (as impersonated by Maire-Colette (56) and Bill Clinton (Alan Wilkie, Maire-Colette's husband) were also arrested after a vain attempt by Rev. Norman Shanks, Church of Scotland Minister and leader of the Iona Community to get them to repent of their misguided compulsion to retain weapons of mass destruction.

[Photos on Scottish CND website](#)

2nd [Court Lightens Bail Conditions For Trident Disarmers](#)
2nd March 1999

Court Lightens Bail Conditions For Trident Disarmers

Five women had their bail conditions lightened when they appeared at Barrow Magistrates Court today (Tuesday 2nd March), accused of causing criminal damage to the latest Trident submarine, HMS Vengeance. They will next appear in court on 27th April.

On February 1st Rosie James and Rachel Wenham swam to and boarded HMS Vengeance. They damaged test equipment before giving themselves up. Three other women , Janet Kilburn, Helen Harris & Louise Wilder, were arrested when they went to the Barrow police station to deliver clothing to the wet-suited swimmers. All of the five women are accused of causing £25,000 of criminal damage.

No plea or declaration was made but the court softened the harsh bail conditions. They will now simply be banned from Barrow itself and required to check in at their local police station once a week.

The women are members of Aldermaston Trash Trident, a Trident Ploughshares 2000 affinity group. They believe that Trident nuclear weapons are illegal under international law, and that in building, preparing and deploying them the British government is guilty of preparing for genocide.

While in Barrow for the court the group were able to check that HMS Vengeance, which had been due to begin its sea trials on February 28th, was still in the Marconi Marine/VSEL dockyard, and to ponder to what extent the delay was down to their disarming efforts.

1st [Aldermaston Women in court for trashing Trident](#)
1st March 1999

Aldermaston Women in court for trashing Trident

At 9.45 am tomorrow, Tuesday 2nd March, five women will appear at Barrow Magistrates Court, accused of causing criminal damage to the latest Trident submarine, HMS Vengeance. They may have caused its sea trials to be delayed.

At 5.30 am on February 1st Rosie James and Rachel Wenham swam to and boarded HMS Vengeance. They painted "Illegal" and "Death Machine" on the sub, draped a banner "Women Want Peace" - over the conning tower and damaged test equipment before giving themselves up. The submarine, due to begin its sea trials on February 28th, is still in the Marconi Marine/VSEL dockyard.

Three other women, Janet Kilburn, Helen Harris & Louise Wilder, were arrested when they went to the Barrow police station to deliver clothing to the wet-suited swimmers. All of the five women are accused of causing £25,000 of criminal damage.

The women are members of Aldermaston Trash Trident, a Trident Ploughshares 2000 affinity group. They will each enter a not-guilty plea - based on their belief that Trident nuclear weapons are illegal under international law, and that in building, preparing and deploying them the British government is guilty of preparing for genocide.

The women will also apply for their very strict bail conditions to be removed.

February Activists Hit Aldermaston Death Factory

17th

17th February 1999

Activists Hit Aldermaston Death Factory

Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists this weekend targeted Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment, scaling fences to enter the base, planting 'seeds of hope' in the radioactive soil and holding the first performance of a specially-commissioned play.

This weekend saw further evidence of the re-emergence of the anti-nuclear movement in Britain, as activists from around the South-East, including students from Oxford University, took part in actions against the manufacture of nuclear weapons at Aldermaston.

On Saturday evening, two protesters - Tigger MacGregor (17) and Sam Geall (16) scaled the perimeter fence, hanging banners from the barbed wire and decorating the fence posts, before being escorted out by MOD police. Meanwhile, others were planting rows of sunflower seeds alongside the fence. (Sunflowers absorb radiation, lessening the impact of contamination from the base to the local environment.)

On Sunday morning protesters gathered outside the main entrance, blocking the entry of traffic to the base, were joined by MOD police to watch the first performance of 'Monster', a play devised by Oxford undergraduate, Tanya Abramsky.

Photographs available: protesters hanging colourful banners from the top of the perimeter fence; protesters planting sunflower seeds; performance of 'Monster'.

Notes:

Aldermaston AWE is the facility responsible for manufacturing vital parts of Britain's nuclear weapons, and would also be responsible for decommissioning in the event of a government decision to disarm. Aldermaston was the site of the first CND marches in the late fifties. Five women from 'Aldermaston Women Trash Trident' TP2000 affinity group - present this weekend - were recently arrested after two of them successfully disarmed HMS Vengeance, Britain's latest Trident submarine.

Members of Trident Ploughshares 2000 have pledged to rid the UK of its illegal weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000, by means of open, accountable and non-violent direct disarmament. Many disarmament actions are being planned currently and the next intensive phase takes place in the week beginning 29th March at one or other of the 36 Trident related sites round the UK.

Sixth-former, Tigger, recently visited Downing Street as part of a youth consultation project between DEMOS, Save the Children and other youth organisation. She attempted to raise disarmament issues but discovered there was no platform within the day to discuss these issues. "New Labour simply don't want to talk about Trident," she says "Britain's nuclear weapons are illegal under international law and as global citizens, Sam and I felt it our duty to inspect the site at Aldermaston for evidence of war crimes being committed."

15th

[Canavan, Sheridan and Wolfe in attendance as 41 arrested in Faslane blockade](#)

15th February 1999

Canavan, Sheridan and Wolfe in attendance as 41 arrested in Faslane blockade

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Ex-Chair of the SNP Billy Wolfe was arrested for breach of the peace while Labour MP Dennis Canavan and Tommy Sheridan of the Scottish Socialist Alliance gave their support at the North Gate..

Among others arrested are 84 year-old Bobby Harrison of Dumbarton; Susan van der Hijden (29) a Catholic Worker and Marjan Willemsen (21) student, both from the Netherlands; Ulla Roder (44) a shop assistant from Denmark; young wheelchair users Roz Bullen and Morag Balfour.

For the peace movement the good news is that both Tony Blair (as impersonated by Maire-Colette (56) and Bill Clinton (Alan Wilkie, Maire-Colette's husband) were also arrested after a vain attempt by Rev. Norman Shanks, Church of Scotland Minister and leader of the Iona Community to get them to repent of their misguided compulsion to retain weapons of mass destruction.

[Photos on Scottish CND website](#)

10th

[Dennis Canavan and Norman Shanks Join Blockade of Faslane](#)

10th February 1999

Dennis Canavan and Norman Shanks Join Blockade of Faslane

On Monday 15th TP2000 activists will blockade Faslane Naval Base in order to disrupt and disable the operations there. This will be the climax of a weekend of action against Britain's nuclear weapons systems which will include lively street demonstrations in Glasgow and other Scottish towns on Saturday.

The campaigners, greatly cheered by the successful damaging of Trident submarine *HMS Vengeance* at Barrow on Monday morning, are gathering from all over Britain and as far apart as the Netherlands and Denmark for the weekend events. Taking an active part will be Dennis Canavan MP and the Rev. Norman Shanks, Church of Scotland minister and leader of the Iona Community. The siege of the North and South gates of the base will start at 7 a.m. on Monday and as well as being a strongly visual event is expected to cause serious disruption to the base.

Dennis Canavan said: "I support the Ploughshares campaign because the Trident weapon system is a threat to world peace. Even its threatened use is a crime against humanity. The money would be better spent on essential services, such as housing, health and education."

On Saturday 13th at 10.30 a.m. in the Argyle Street pedestrian precinct in Glasgow disarmers will present a wide range of lively activities around the theme of "Love the Planet-Scrap Trident". There will be street theatre, street art, turning war-toys into musical instruments, signing Valentines cards for the Ministry of Defence and the bases, etc. The women's drumming group SHEBOOM will join the celebrations at 1.30 pm.

8th

Trident Disarmer Bailed at Barrow for Unique Exploit

8th February 1999

Trident Disarmer Bailed at Barrow for Unique Exploit

Embarrassing security lapse confirmed

At Barrow Magistrates court today 5 women appeared on the charge of causing £25,000 worth of damage to a Trident nuclear weapons submarine in the VSEL dock in the town.

Rachel Wenham was remanded to appear on Monday 8th February while the others, Rosie James, Louise Wilder, Helen Harris and Janet Kilburn were released on strict bail conditions which bind them to reside at their noted address, to report three times a week to the local police station, to maintain an overnight curfew and to stay away from nuclear establishments. All five women are members of the Aldermaston women's peace campaign who for years have taken action against the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston and have tracked convoys carrying nuclear warheads from Burghfield to Coulport on the Clyde.

More details have emerged of Monday's events. At 5.30 a.m. Rachel Wenham and Rosie James swam unchallenged across 300 metre stretch of water to the submarine. They boarded it, draped a large banner with the legend "Women Want Peace", spray painted "Illegal Death Machine" and peace slogans on the hull, and damaged test equipment on the conning tower with the hammers they had with them before being arrested. Following their arrest the police telephoned their colleagues to inform them that they were in custody. When Helen Harris was handing in dry clothes for Wenham and James she was arrested as were the other two shortly afterwards. In court the police denied they had informed the women's colleagues of the arrest of Wenham and James.

Their Aldermaston colleague Sian Jones said:

"The police lied in court to cover up the fact that they lured Louise, Janet and Helen into Barrow so that they could claim they had also entered the dockyard. The bail conditions are ludicrous and will be challenged. The network of nuclear installations across the UK is so vast and extended that you can hardly go anywhere without being near one. This week we have shown that we mean business and we will continue to take direct action against these immoral and illegal weapons of mass destruction."

2nd

Activists charged with £25000 worth of damage to Trident submarine

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1st

Nuclear Trident Disarmed by TP2000 Peace Activist Women

AWTT Press Release

Aldermaston Women Trash Trident At Barrow

Rosie James and Rachel Wenham from the Aldermaston Women Trash Trident affinity group swam 300 metres through cold filthy water at Barrow dockyard to board HMS Vengeance. They hung a banner on the conning tower which read "Women Want Peace", painted the

words ILLEGAL DEATH MACHINE and peace / women's symbols on the hull and smashed testing equipment on the conning tower.

The three other women were informed by the police that their friends had been arrested, and so took them some food and dry clothing to Barrow Police Station. Then they were arrested! The police lied about this in court and implied they had been in the shipyard, and so all have been jointly charged with criminal damage to the submarine to the value of £25,000.

All five women were held in solitary for over 15 hours until they appeared at Barrow Magistrates on Tues afternoon. The women would like to thank the supporters from Barrow who were in court and took stuff to the police station, and to those who sent them nice messages.

Four have been bailed, but Rachel has not. She has been remanded to Risley, until next Monday (8th Feb).

The other four have horrendous bail conditions which are - until we can appeal for variation - not to go within one mile of any nuclear base in Britain; to be at home (curfew) between 11pm and 7am and to report to their local police station 3 times a week! Pleading will be on 4th March 1999. There will be a bail hearing on Monday 8th Feb 1999.

1st

Cornton Vale complaint prompts Prison Commission to recommend new training and procedures

1st February 1999

Cornton Vale complaint prompts Prison Commission to recommend new training and procedures

Following a complaint by prisoner Angela Zelter about her treatment at Cornton Vale in September last year, the Scottish Prisons Complaints Commission has recommended that the Scottish Prison Service considers introducing special training regarding passively resisting prisoners.

The Commission believes that the existing control and restraint procedures are not appropriate for passive resisters.

Further, the Complaints Commission has recommended that Cornton Vale reviews its practice of removing the normal clothing of prisoners located in the back cells and that clothing designed for suicide prevention is issued only to prisoners identified as being at risk of suicide.

Ms Zelter, who was on remand with four other women at Cornton Vale for disarmament activities at the nuclear weapons bases at Faslane and Coulport, had vowed not to speak, eat or leave her cell on 19th September, the launch day of the fourth Trident submarine bound for Scotland. She had notified staff of her intentions and her action was not designed to disrupt the prison regime in any way. However, in the absence of any other strategies to respond to this passivity, prisons officers applied the traditional control and restraint procedures. Three officers handcuffed and dragged her against her will to another room to be disciplined. Despite the extremes of pain and humiliation which this entailed, Ms Zelter remained passive and was then taken, using the same methods, to a back cell where her clothes were forcibly removed.

In response to her complaint the Commission has concluded that more force was used than was necessary. However, it absolves prison staff from any blame, arguing that they are unaccustomed to passive resistance and were constrained by the limitations of their training.

Although welcoming the recommendation for improved training for staff, Ms Zelter argues that

the existing control and restraint procedures are in all cases inappropriate. She said:

"The procedures are based on inflicting pain upon any resister and they belong to a prison ethos founded on intimidation rather than the humane management of vulnerable individuals. Unnecessary force is nothing other than assault. However limited their training is, staff have a duty as citizens to avoid assaulting others. My clothes were removed because staff wanted to continue to intimidate and humiliate me, as they did from the beginning of the incident."

Helene Witcher, who co-ordinated the local support for the women prisoners said:

"Disarmament actions will continue at Faslane and Coulport throughout the year. It is likely that further women will be imprisoned at Cornton Vale as a result. They may be amongst the first prisoners to learn whether the recommendations for new training have been taken forward. If so, it would mean that the humane and peaceful actions of imprisoned nuclear disarmers have begun to have an impact on the quality of life for all prisoners."

January **Activist Held in Contempt as TP2000 Signals Confrontation with Courts**
27th January 1999

27th

Activist Held in Contempt as TP2000 Signals Confrontation with Courts

This morning at Helensburgh District Court Angie Zelter of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign was arrested for contempt of court after challenging the competence of the court to hear her case.

After being held in custody for four hours she appeared again in court only to have both the original and the contempt case adjourned till March due to the failure of police witnesses to appear at the proper time.

Angie was appearing for trial resulting from a protest in August against the Trident nuclear weapons base at Faslane. Before the trial began she challenged the competency of the court to hear her case. She said that as it was now clear that the District Court did not recognise international law, her defence could not be heard in full.

Angie said:

"I can't go into the witness box and tell the whole truth if you say my truth is irrelevant. At the moment a Russian journalist is in prison for telling the truth about his country dumping radioactive waste in the sea around Japan. You are treating me in just the same way. What kind of democracy is that? If you can't give me justice here then I might as well leave"

At that she got up to go. The magistrate Mr McPhail JP said that he found her in contempt of court and ordered her to be taken into custody. The court was asked to rise for the magistrate to leave but everyone in the public gallery remained seated to register their solidarity with Angie. Eventually the magistrate had to leave with the public still seated.

Angie was brought back into court at 3 p.m. and agreed to submit to trial on the understanding that she would be given a proper hearing. However, the case was unable to proceed as the Ministry of Defence witnesses, who had been summoned for the afternoon hearing, could not be found.

Local resident and TP2000 activist Jane Tallents said:

"Within TP2000 we feel that the time has come to confront the court system more directly. We have been extremely patient and co-operative and have given the courts every chance to respond to the challenge that is given to them by the framework of international law, and they have been totally unable to do so. It is also very irritating to see yet again the inefficiency and lack of organisation of the court system and the MOD police leading to a waste of time and money. They get away with it but if we step out of line they come down on us like a ton of bricks."

Yesterday, after basing their defence on the primacy of international law, Clare Fearnley and Hazel Bloor were given hefty fines amounting to £500 for breach of the peace by the same court. During the August disarmament camp they had sat down on the road as part of a blockade of the gate of the Faslane naval base.

Meanwhile activists from all over the UK and as far afield as Finland and the Netherlands are preparing to come to Scotland for the weekend of 13th to 15th February when street action in Glasgow will be followed by a major blockade of the Faslane base on Monday 15th.

19th

Query over Security at Nuclear Weapons Base as Activist is Admonished

19th January 1999

Query over Security at Nuclear Weapons Base as Activist is Admonished

As Trident Ploughshares 2000 activist Katri Silvonen was found guilty and admonished today in Helensburgh District Court on charges related to her swim into the submarine dock at Faslane Naval Base on 18th August last year, her defence lawyer, Stephen Fox, queried the quality of security at the base.

Katri (21), from Finland was charged with breaches of the bye-laws that define the security areas at the base, after swimming across the Gareloch at midnight with 2 colleagues, all of them equipped to inflict disabling damage on a Trident submarine. At the witness stand her defence was that she had been acting to uphold international law, following years of campaigning against nuclear weapons that began with her realisation that the whole planet was under threat from these weapons. She said: " In Finland we have the Nato threat on one side and the Russian arsenal on the other. It became obvious to me that we are all at risk."

Local resident Una Campbell, a long term protester against the existence of the nuclear weapons installations on her doorstep, said:

" It was humbling to hear this young woman from Finland give such a clear and coherent summary of the environmental, moral and legal case against nuclear weapons and of the duty that falls on all of us to resist."

In finding Katri guilty Justice of the Peace Joe Scullion made no reference to her defence. The charges against her swimming colleague Krista van Velzen (24), from the Netherlands, were dropped after the court failed to provide an interpreter.

Katri's lawyer Stephen Fox said:

"There will be serious public concern about security at the base. These swimmers were in the water for over an hour before they were discovered not far from one of the Trident submarines. Their tactics and their equipment were relatively simple. The replies in court today from Ministry of Defence personnel do not give me with any confidence that they would be able to deal with highly trained and sophisticated intruders."

13th

Cancer Nurse Protests Against Nuclear Weapons

13th January 1999

Cancer Nurse Protests Against Nuclear Weapons

Today in Helensburgh District Court Margaret Bremner, a MacMillan Breast Care Nurse, called on the magistrate to recognise her peace protest as totally consistent with the rest of her role as a health worker. She was in court to answer to charges of Breach of the Peace and Vandalism arising from protests as part of the Trident Ploughshares camp in August last year.

Margaret agreed that she did blockade the gates of Faslane Submarine base on two occasions and did write anti-nuclear messages on the cell wall. She maintained, however, that she was not guilty of any crime because she saw it as part of her duty as someone who cares for the health of the community to try and prevent nuclear war.

The magistrate found her guilty and fined her a total of £150.

Margaret said:

'I've worked for 22 years as a nurse and constantly face shortages within the health service while we spend millions on Trident. My job is not only to care for the sick, but to help people recognise the causes of ill health. I know that there is no way that we could cope with the results of nuclear war. Producing the weapons already causes cancer and I feel that I have to be part of the struggle to get rid of them.'

Next Tuesday, 19th January, the two women who swam across the Gareloch and were arrested within metres of a Trident submarine will be put on trial. Krista Van Velzen, from the Netherlands and Katri Silvonen from Finland will appear at Helensburgh District Court at 10am.

On February 15th the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign continues with a blockade of Faslane base.