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18th

18th December 2001

Two More Scottish Parliament Demonstrators Acquitted

Only One Conviction After Seven Trials

Today two more of the eleven activists who demonstrated against Trident in the Scottish Parliament in April were found not guilty of a breach of the peace.

Marjan Willemsen (24), a Dutch national who is a full time activist at Faslane Peace Camp, was acquitted by Sheriff Farrell on the breach of the peace charge and also for failing to turn up for a previous hearing. There was evidence from the Crown witnesses that Marjan had tied herself to the gallery railing, had thrown leaflets down into the chamber, had shouted out a request for the Parliament to discuss Trident and had gone limp when arrested. Sheriff Farrell was however satisfied that there was none of the fear and alarm necessary to establish the charge of breach of the peace. The protest had been clearly political and peaceful, judging by the songs that they were singing, such as "We will overcome."

Later, before a different Sheriff, Joy Mitchell (68), a retired headteacher from Berwick, was also found not guilty. At one point the Sheriff asked the Procurator Fiscal why the Parliament's Presiding Officer David Steel was not giving evidence if the matter was as serious as the Crown was claiming. He told the Procurator Fiscal that he did not understand why the eleven had not been tried together, a point the accused have been arguing from the very beginning of the process. The Sheriff said that there was no evidence that Joy had taken part in a breach of the peace.

Seven of the Scottish Parliament demonstrators have now been tried leading to one guilty verdict (which is being appealed), five acquittals (one of which is being appealed by the Crown), and one Not Proven.

David Mackenzie said: "With every fresh acquittal of the demonstrators the suspicion is growing that the Procurator Fiscal's office was reacting to Executive pressure when it embarked on these ridiculous prosecutions. We suggest that the Crown now avoids further embarrassment, waste of time and public money by accepting the not guilty pleas of the rest. Meanwhile it has not escaped us that the Parliament, to its shame, has still not debated Trident, which it has every right and duty to do, in spite of defence being a reserved issue."

13th

[Another Scottish Parliament Demonstrator Acquitted](#)

13th December 2001

Another Scottish Parliament Demonstrator Acquitted

Campaigners' Mounting Impatience with Scottish Criminal Justice System

Yesterday another of the eleven activists who demonstrated against Trident in the Scottish parliament in April was found not guilty of a breach of the peace amid growing concern among campaigners about the performance of the Scottish Justice system in its response to civil resistance to the UK's nuclear weapon system.

Morag Balfour (28), from Glenrothes, was one of eleven charged with breach of the peace after demonstrating during First Minister's Questions on 5th April. When the Crown completed its case in Edinburgh Sheriff Court, Morag's solicitor Andrew Brophy submitted that there was no case to answer, claiming that there was no evidence of the actual or potential fear, distress

and alarm essential to establish the charge following the clarification in the High Court Opinion in Smith v Donnelly.

After consideration Sheriff McKinnon accepted the submission. Five of the Scottish parliament demonstrators have now been tried leading to one guilty verdict (which is being appealed), three acquittals (one of which is being appealed by the Crown), and one Not Proven.

Today Brian Quail's trial was adjourned due to the unavailability of a Crown witness. Less understandable was the adjournment of Maire-Colette Wilkie's trial. She had made the court aware of her hearing difficulty but on the day no courtroom with a loop hearing system was available. Joy Mitchell traveled from Berwick for her trial today only to discover that the court did not have her on their schedule. They had clearly given her today's date at a previous hearing, as confirmed by friends and supporters who were present. The court expects to try her on the 18th December. Joy will formally complain.

Morag said: "This stupid prosecution has been a complete waste of everybody's time and the number of acquittals just confirms it. When you take into account the savage jail sentence given to Jenny Gaiawyn last month, the abuse that we got from Sheriff Ronald Smith when he called us parasites, the bias and incompetence of Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies and the muddle in Edinburgh Sheriff Court over our cases, you have to admit that the performance of the Scottish justice system is deplorable."

Yesterday the High Court upheld an appeal against sentence by Myra Garret, from London, who was fined £250 in Helensburgh Court by Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies for a breach of the peace at the blockade of Faslane in February this year, reducing it to £175. This is the fifth time in Trident Ploughshares cases that such an appeal against sentence imposed by JP Gillies has been upheld

11th

Message from Jenny Gaiawyn in Cornton Vale

11th December 2001

Message from Jenny Gaiawyn in Cornton Vale

Motion to Scottish Parliament

Below is a message from Jenny Gaiawyn dated 5th December from Corton Vale womens prison.

Jenny is in a cell on her own (because she is a non-smoker) and she is able to have her books and papers for study. A friend at university is sending her lecture notes. Jenny has decided not to appeal the outrageous sentence because if she was released on appeal she might end up going back in at a time even more disruptive to her studies.

See [press release](#) of court appearance and joint MSP and MEP letter to the press.



Photo taken when anti-war activists entered and blockaded British Military Joint Forces HQ at Northwood, London. Prayers were said for the innocent past, present and future victims of the Bush and Blair administrations throughout the world.

(JPEG, 18.4 kb)

Thank-you to everyone who has sent me letters and cards of support. Your words keep my spirit strong.

I am sorry if I don't reply to you all, I have limited access to stamps as they won't let me have the ones people send in. The only things I can get through the post are letters, cards, money and books.

I am doing well in here, I think about how in many countries I would have been conveniently "disappeared" a long time ago for my beliefs. That is one of the reasons I feel we all have to speak out, there are many who are forced to be silent that for us to choose silence would be criminal and immoral.

I am glad people share my outrage at the disgraceful behaviour shown in court last week. I'm glad that people are acting on their outrage by contacting the MSP, MP, MEP and local paper. We should all be raising our voices at the arrogance displayed by so many individuals within the criminal justice "system" in their response to our peaceful actions.

I hope my time in here, and the stand myself and others have made in the name of peace inspires others to overcome their unjustified fear of the system.

I send my love, respect, strength and hugs to you all out there.

Wishing you all the best.

In peace

Jenny

05 December 2001

MOTION TO THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

This Parliament condemns the disgraceful three-month prison sentence handed down to Jenny Gaiawyn on 29 November by Sheriff Morag Galbraith for a breach of the peace at the February blockade of Faslane nuclear base earlier this year; considers this sentence an outrageous attack on this young woman's human right to protest peacefully, which is a fundamental human right enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and as such should be upheld in law; further considers the sentence a scandalous reflection of the arbitrariness of Scottish law and calls on the Justice Minister to set up an inquiry into the inconsistencies of sentencing in Scottish courts, which have seen people both acquitted and fined or even sentenced to a prison term for the same "crime" of breach of the peace.

Tommy Sheridan MSP

10th

Hefty Compensation Order for Remembrance Day Action

10th December 2001

Hefty Compensation Order for Remembrance Day Action

Today a Scottish magistrate ordered two Trident Ploughshares activists to pay substantial compensation to the Ministry of Defence after finding them guilty of cutting a fence at Faslane naval base on Remembrance Day last year.

Jean Oliver (41), a youth worker with the YMCA from Biggar in Lanarkshire, and Douglas Shaw (51), a librarian, also from Biggar, were jointly charged with breaching the bye-laws which apply to the base and with causing malicious damage. In November 2000 they cut their way into the oil-depot to the north of Faslane.

Jean told Justice of the Peace Viv Dance that she had a simple defence to the charges, based on morality: Trident was designed to murder innocent people and that was wrong. Testing nuclear weapons and mining uranium for them had already caused many deaths and great suffering.

She said: "It is incredible that we have got to through all this to warn people about this mass murder and mass suicide by the destruction of the environment that supports all our lives."

JP Dance found Jean and Douglas guilty on both charges, fining them £50 for the alleged breach of the bye-laws. Although she admonished them on the malicious damage charge this was to take account of the amount of compensation involved. Procurator Fiscal Jonathan Kemp said that the estimated cost of repairing the section of chain-link fence they had cut was £1495.13. When Jean challenged this the PF said that the estimate had come from the MOD's Facilities Manager - an explanation which somehow satisfied the JP. They were each ordered to pay a half of this sum.

Jean and Douglas are likely to appeal the compensation order as based on a highly dubious estimate of which they had been given no prior notification.

4th

Month in Jail For Veteran Peace Campaigner

4th December 2001

Month in Jail For Veteran Peace Campaigner

Today Bingley magistrates sent veteran peace campaigner Sylvia Boyes to prison for a month after she refused to pay compensation and cost orders imposed for an anti-Trident action earlier this year.

Sylvia (57), from Keighley in Yorkshire, was one of a number of Trident Ploughshares activists who, in May this year, cut their way into the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston,

where components for Britain's Trident nuclear warheads are made. Subsequently she was found guilty of criminal damage in Newbury Magistrates Court where a compensation order of £300 was imposed on her along with court costs of £314. She appeared today in her local magistrates court for a means enquiry and told the court that on principle she had no intentions of paying either order.

Sylvia has been sent to Newhall Prison, near Huddersfield.* She is likely to serve 14 days of the 28-day sentence.

In January this year Sylvia, along with River, was acquitted of conspiracy to cause criminal damage by a jury in Manchester Crown Court after attempting to damage Trident submarine HMS Vengeance in November 1999.

David Mackenzie said: "When we find ourselves in new courts there is always the wild hope that things might be different, that this time it will occur to the bench that the state is actually wrong to be planning mass murder and that those who are acting against it should be congratulated not jailed. Sadly Bingley is not any better."

*HMP Newhall , Dial Wood, Flockton nr Wakefield, Yorkshire WF4 4AX

Update: Sylvia Boyes has since been moved to open prison HMP Morton Hall, Swinderby, Lincoln LN6 9PT.

November MSP and MEP Slam Savage Sentence on Peace Activist

29th

29th November 2001

MSP and MEP Slam Savage Sentence on Peace Activist

Three Months For Big Blockade Breach of the Peace

MSP Tommy Sheridan, MEP Caroline Lucas and Leader of the Iona Community Norman Shanks have strongly criticised a Sheriff for the sentence she passed on a peace activist in Dumbarton Sheriff Court today for her part in the Big Blockade of Faslane naval base in February.

Jenny Gaiawyn, a marine biology student in her early twenties at Bangor University, was found guilty on 5th November of a breach of the peace for her part in the blockade. Sentence was deferred for social enquiry reports and today Sheriff Morag Galbraith sentenced her to three months in prison. Jenny told the court that the Scottish court system was "arrogant and petty-minded" but she was not charged with Contempt of Court for that remark, which could have explained at least some of the heavy sentence.

Tommy Sheridan said: "This is a dammed disgrace. People guilty of threatening life and limb end up with less of a sentence and yet a woman willing to fight for peace is punished by a court system which is increasingly discredited and out of control." Tommy will ask Justice Minister Jim Wallace to set up an enquiry into the case.

Norman Shanks said: "This harsh sentence is out of all proportion to the nature of the offence and is inconsistent with sentencing patterns hitherto. The Sheriff unfortunately appears to be lacking in the wisdom and insight of some of her colleagues who are able to see the inappropriateness of Breach of the Peace charges and normal sentencing in the case of

protests against Trident."

Dr. Caroline Lucas, who was herself fined £150 last week on the same charge, said: "The 3-month prison sentence handed down to Jenny Gaiawyn today is an outrageous attack on her human rights, and a scandalous reflection of the arbitrariness of Scottish law. The right to peacefully protest is a fundamental human right, enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, and it should be upheld in law. The sheer absurdity of this sentence is demonstrated by comparing it to other sentences handed down in recent months for the same offence - one person has been acquitted, most others have received relatively low fines. When the law is administered in such an arbitrary way, it makes a mockery of the legal system. Coming in the same week as we have heard about the disproportionate number of women in British jails, this sentence also shows a complete lack of proper judgement."

There is a possibility that Jenny could be released on appeal. Meanwhile you can write to her at:

HMP Cornton Vale

Cornton Road

Stirling, FK9 5NY

The following letter has been sent to the press by Tommy Sheridan MSP and Caroline Lucas MEP.

Sir,

We are writing to express our utter disgust at the 3-month prison sentence handed down to Jenny Gaiawyn today, a marine biology student in her twenties at Bangor University who was found guilty of a breach of the peace at the February blockade of Faslane nuclear base.

This sentence is an outrageous attack on her human rights and a scandalous reflection of the arbitrariness of Scottish law. The right to peacefully protest is a fundamental human right, enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, and it should be upheld in law.

The sheer absurdity of this sentence is demonstrated by comparing it to other sentences handed down in recent months for the same offence - like ourselves for instance, one of us was acquitted, while the other was fined £150. When the law is administered in such an arbitrary way, it makes a mockery of the legal system. People guilty of threatening life and limb end up with less of a sentence and yet a woman willing to fight for peace is punished by a court system which is increasingly discredited and out of control.

Coming in the same week as we have heard about the disproportionate number of women in British and Scottish jails, this sentence shows a complete lack of proper judgement. Through our respective Parliaments we intend to raise these inconsistencies at the highest level and in the case of Scotland, I will ask Justice Minister Jim Wallace to set up an enquiry into the case.

Let us remember that nuclear weapons such as those based at Faslane are indiscriminate weapons of mass destruction. We find it inspiring that our young citizens wish to make use of their human right to protest peacefully in such a worthwhile cause and degrading that our legal system chooses to condemn them to such arbitrary and heavy sentencing.

TOMMY SHERIDAN MSP

CAROLINE LUCAS MEP

26th

[Green MEP Ready To Risk Jail In Faslane Case](#)

26th November 2001

Green MEP Ready To Risk Jail In Faslane Case

Green Party Member of the European Parliament Dr. Caroline Lucas said she would appeal the verdict and would not pay the fine after being found guilty today in Helensburgh District Court of a breach of the peace charge arising from the Big Blockade of Faslane in February.

On 12th February this year she sat down with others in the roadway leading to the north gate of the naval base. Conducting her own defence before Justice of the Peace John Macphail, Dr. Lucas elicited from Crown witnesses and from witnesses for the defence that her actions and those of her fellow protesters had been completely peaceful and non-violent.

In a lengthy legal submission she told the court that a breach of the peace had to involve behaviour that was genuinely alarming and disturbing and there was no evidence of this. Under the European Convention on Human Rights she had a right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly - and peaceful assembly on a highway was not necessarily unlawful. Her action was justified under international law and the Scottish High Court had erred in its judgment on the Lord Advocate's Reference when it said that the strictures of the International Court of Justice against nuclear weapons only applied in time of war.

Procurator Fiscal McRae based the Crown case on the fact that she sat in the roadway, did not stop doing so when asked and intended to prevent traffic entering the base. JP Macphail fined her £150 with 28 days to pay.

Earlier Krebs Dragonrider (44) was given his freedom after spending five weeks in Greenock Prison. Today Krebs was found guilty of a breach of the peace at the October 22nd blockade of Faslane and pled guilty to failing to appear at court. Due to the time he had served in prison on remand he was simply admonished on both charges.

David Mackenzie said: "There was not one shred of evidence that Caroline had breached the peace at the Big Blockade and she demolished the charge brilliantly line by line as well as giving an extremely thorough legal analysis. None of this, of course, had any effect on the automatic response of the JP."

22nd

[Green MEP Faces Faslane Trial on Monday](#)

22nd November 2001

Green MEP Faces Faslane Trial on Monday

Green Party Member of the European Parliament Dr. Caroline Lucas is due to face trial in Scotland on Monday 26th November for a breach of the peace charge arising from the Big Blockade of Faslane in February.

Dr. Lucas' trial will take place in Helensburgh District Court, a few miles from the naval base, home to Britain's Trident nuclear weapon submarines, where she took part in the blockade on 12th February and was arrested along with 384 others in one of the biggest protests against nuclear weapons for many years.

Dr. Lucas is well known as a strong and articulate critic of globalisation and was an official EU delegate to the recent WTO meeting in Doha. She is one of three parliamentarians arrested at the Big Blockade. Tommy Sheridan MSP was found not guilty of a breach of the peace in the

same court in October and George Galloway MP will be tried on 25th March. 76 other parliamentarians back the Trident Ploughshares campaign which organised the blockade along with CND.

David Mackenzie said: "Caroline's willingness to stand with us in confronting Britain's flagrant nuclear terrorism is a great encouragement."

Trident Ploughshares are winners of the 2001 Right Livelihood Award to be presented in the Swedish Parliament in December. The Award honours the campaign as "a model of principled, transparent and non-violent direct action dedicated to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Their imaginative campaign highlights the illegality of these weapons."

21st

Tripod Protester Fined

21st November 2001

Tripod Protester Fined

Yesterday in Dumbarton Sheriff Court a peace protester was fined £150 for helping to blockade Faslane naval base with a scaffolding tripod.

Ian Sanders (25), a PHD agricultural student from Aberdeen, represented himself. He was charged with a breach of the peace for linking arms with other protesters round the base of a tripod of scaffolding poles that was used to block the road leading to the south gate of Faslane naval base early on the morning of the Big Blockade in February.

Ian's skillful cross-examination of the police witnesses established that there was no hint of violence or aggression at the tripod blockade, and that there was no likelihood of the situation developing into one that would give rise to alarm or distress. When he was arrested at 4 a.m., there were only police and protesters about. When Ian attempted to ask the first witness about the alarm that might be caused by the presence of the Trident system Sheriff Lindsay Wood ruled this out as irrelevant. At the end of the Crown case Ian made a submission of no case to answer, arguing that there had been no evidence of alarm of distress, or the likelihood of the same, key criteria for the breach of the peace charge outlined in the High Court Opinion in the Smith v Donnelly appeal. The Sheriff rejected his submission, quoting a number of passages from the Smith v Donnelly Opinion, including the description of a breach of the peace as a "flagrant" act.

In his evidence Ian gave a simple account of his motivation for taking part in the blockade and insisted that he had been peaceful throughout and that his actions had harmed no-one. Procurator Fiscal Scott Simpson, summing up the Crown case, submitted that although no traffic was around at the time of Ian's arrest, the intention of the protesters had been to maintain the blockade until the morning shift arrived at the base. In his own summing up Ian again argued that the key criteria for breach of the peace had not been met. Finding him guilty Sheriff Wood said that it was reasonable to infer that Ian's action would lead to the holding up of traffic into the base and that it was "flagrant" enough to establish the charge. He fined him £150 with 28 days to pay.

Trident Ploughshares member David Mackenzie said: "Sheriff Wood got good marks today for his thoroughness and consideration in guiding Ian through the court procedure. Less impressive was his cherry-picking from Smith v Donnelly to back his assessment that a crime had been committed. He said that common sense had to be applied in such cases but it is a poor sort of common sense that is oblivious to the criminality of Trident."

19th

"War Crimes Inspectors" Close Rolls-Royce Office

19th November 2001

Peace Activist Protests Against Double Punishment

A peace activist has protested against being punished twice for his part in the Big Blockade of Faslane naval base in February this year.

The protest came from Lance Goodey, a fifty year old man from Glasgow who was in Dumbarton Sheriff Court this morning to explain why he had taken part in the blockade. He had been holding on to the leg of a tripod which was blocking the South Gate entrance to the Base.

Describing Trident as 'that monstrosity which is at the apex of the violence of the State' he went on to say how alarmed and disturbed he was at Trident which hung like the sword of Damocles over his head. Lance was also concerned that justice was being denied to him because no-one should be punished for the same offence twice and yet the Strathclyde Police had passed details on to the Italian police about this particular charge and he was denied entrance to Italy to take part in the nonviolent protests at the G8 summit in Genoa in July. He felt he had been charged, tried, found guilty and punished for his part in the blockade by being denied entry and forfeiting his airfare of £200.

Lance was one of six people involved in anti-Trident protests who were barred from Italy in July. The incidents raised concerns about the legality of the retention and transfer to a foreign police force of information about people arrested at Faslane especially if, as in Lance's case, there was no criminal conviction. To date Strathclyde Police have not given to campaigners a satisfactory explanation of how and why the transfer of information was made, raising a question mark against the normally constructive relationship between that police force and the anti-Trident campaign.

Sheriff Morag Galbraith made no comment on this issue and imposed the relatively severe fine of £200.

19th

Peace Activist Protests Against Double Punishment

19th November 2001

"War Crimes Inspectors" Close Rolls-Royce Office

An international "War Crimes Inspection Team" this morning visited the Rolls-Royce plc head offices in Buckingham Gate, London, looking for evidence of the company's involvement in crimes against humanity related to the UK's Trident nuclear weapons programme and the bombing of Afghanistan.

While one group of seven activists went in to interview workers and search files another group prevented access to the office and displayed a banner which read: "Rolls-Royce Profits from War Crimes". They occupied the foyer for 90 minutes before being dragged away by security guards.

The company is under scrutiny for its involvement with the construction of the nuclear reactors for the UK's fleet of four Trident submarines, which are armed with 100 kiloton nuclear warheads. The warheads are considered illegal under international law since they cannot distinguish between civilian and military targets. Other allegations include: supplying the reactors for the UK's Hunter-Killer submarines used in cruise missile attacks on Afghanistan; supplying arms to countries with poor human rights records; burying weapons-grade nuclear waste at Crich in Derbyshire since the mid 1960s.

One of the group, David Heller (25), who is a volunteer with the Gent-based campaign For Mother Earth said: "Rolls-Royce are implicated in war crimes and crimes against humanity and we wanted to make them aware that people are opposed to their disregard for the law and

human rights."

The inspection team come from England, Scotland, Belgium, Germany and Finland and are members of the anti-Trident campaign, Trident Ploughshares, which on Friday evening closed Downing Street for an hour to draw attention to the UK's continuing and active deployment of Trident.

17th

[Campaigners Close Downing Street to "Secure Terrorist Suspects"](#)

17th November 2001

Campaigners Close Downing Street to "Secure Terrorist Suspects"

Today fifty Trident Ploughshares campaigners closed down Downing Street for an hour in order to draw attention to their claim that the deployment of Trident nuclear missiles means that UK government leaders are terrorist suspects.

At 5 p.m. this afternoon the campaigners handed in a letter for Prime Minister Tony Blair. They then locked themselves with padlocks and chains to the gate that protects the street. One activist, Dave Rolstone(54), a boatbuilder from Faslane Peace Camp in Scotland, climbed up the gate and perched on one of the ornamental lamp-posts. The banner hung on the gateway read: "CLOSED. Nuclear Terrorists Under Investigation. UK's Trident Missiles Could Kill Millions."

When police cut through most of the locks and chains the activists sat down against the gate and it was an hour before they were dragged or led away. There were no arrests.

The letter says:

"Your present "war on terrorism" has yet again highlighted to us and to the campaign, the terrorism which is implicit in our very possession of nuclear weapons. How can you argue that one Trident warhead of 100 kilotons can be used without killing thousands and terrorising thousands more? ... We ask that the UK practises the same civilised values that we expect from other countries in the world."

Trident Ploughshares member David Mackenzie said: "The Prime Minister who talks about the sanctity of human life is the same Prime Minister who has said he is willing to press the Trident button and let loose an unspeakable terror on millions of innocent people. We are determined to go on exposing the failure of the UK to practise what it so loudly preaches."

The Downing Street demonstration is part of a long weekend of action in London by the Trident Ploughshares campaign which is committed to nonviolent, open and accountable direct action against the Trident nuclear weapon system.

13th

[Three More Protesters Win Appeal Against Helensburgh Magistrate](#)

13th November 2001

Three More Protesters Win Appeal Against Helensburgh Magistrate

Today at the High Court in Edinburgh three anti-Trident protesters had their appeals upheld against sentences imposed by Helensburgh District Court Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies.

Conrad Hughes (29), a computer security specialist from Edinburgh, Charles McInally (52), a physical education teacher from Glasgow, and Bob Wallace, a student from Edinburgh, had

appealed the sentence given to them by the JP when he found them guilty of a breach of the peace at the Big Blockade of Faslane in February. Lord Weir and Lord Kirkwood found that fines of £250 handed down to each of the three were excessive and ordered them to be reduced. Conrad's was reduced to £175 and the fines of the other two were cut to £125, the variation being based on relative means.

The three represented themselves and the judges congratulated them on the "competent and restrained" presentation of their case. To establish that the magistrate was biased against anti-nuclear protest they quoted from the "stated case" he had prepared for an appeal submitted by Trident Ploughshares member Jane Tallents. JP Gillies had written: "I'm aware that incidents of this type at the naval bases situated on the Clyde are becoming far too common and was of the view that the Court must mark its strong disapproval of such by imposing an appropriate sentence."

An appeal against a fine by JP Gillies was also upheld on 4th October this year when Anne Kobayashi (60), from Essex, had her fine reduced from £250 to £175.

Jane Tallents said: "We hope that Argyll and Bute courts administration will now get the message and take on board the growing concern about the competence of this magistrate. There should be no place on the bench for the prejudice, the routine imposition of heavy sentences, or the unwillingness to listen to the arguments of the accused that he demonstrates time and again."

12th

Another Scottish Parliament Demonstrator Acquitted

12th November 2001

Another Scottish Parliament Demonstrator Acquitted

Remaining Cases Should be Dropped, Say Campaigners

Today another of the activists who took part in the anti-Trident demonstration in the Scottish Parliament on 5th April was acquitted at Edinburgh Sheriff Court.

Leesa French, from Edinburgh, was facing a breach of the peace charge before Sheriff Mhairi Stephen, for her part in the demonstration which caused a ten-minute suspension of First Minister's Questions. Leesa was one of 12 people who hung banners, sang peace songs and demanded that the Parliament address the question of Trident.

The Crown case consisted of the evidence of gallery attendants at the Parliament and a police officer, along with the official parliamentary video which covered the demonstration. One of the gallery attendants said she got a bit of a fright when the demonstration took place, but only because it was her first day in that job and she did not know what to expect. At the conclusion of the Crown case defence solicitor Joanna McDonald submitted that there was "no case to answer". She argued that there was no evidence of a breach of the peace. The witnesses had all agreed that the demonstration was peaceful and the video confirmed this. Joanna referred to the High Court's clarification of the criteria for the breach of the peace charge in the Smith v Donnelly appeal. The prosecution had to show that real alarm or distress had been caused, or were likely.

Sheriff Stephen agreed. It was clear that there had been a breach of the "decorum" in the rules of the Scottish parliament but it was also clear that there had been no breach of the peace.

Of the four demonstrators who have so far been tried only one, Jane Tallents, has been found guilty and she has appealed the verdict, while Elinor Mackenzie was found not guilty and the

charge against Ulla Roder was Not Proven.

David Mackenzie said: "By this time it should be obvious to the Procurator Fiscal that Edinburgh Sheriffs are less and less likely to treat this demonstration as a criminal matter, especially after the Smith v Donnelly appeal. The Crown has now a clear responsibility to put an end to this waste of public money and drop the remaining seven cases."

12th

[Activists in Faslane Trial Tell of Weak Security at Nuclear Submarine Base](#)

12th November 2001

Activists in Faslane Trial Tell of Weak Security at Nuclear Submarine Base

Two Trident Ploughshares activists on trial today at Helensburgh District Court for swimming to a Trident submarine berthed at Faslane have strongly criticised the security at the base.

Rachel Remnant, 21, a zoology student at Liverpool University and Marcus Armstrong, 41, a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes, swam on 6th August through the protected waters around the base, under the security boom and into the high security area where two Trident submarines were berthed. They remained concealed in this area for 20 minutes, and were arrested while painting "ILLEGAL" on the side of one of the submarines. Although the swimmers are adamant that they painted on the sub they were not charged with vandalism, an omission more likely to be based on embarrassment than MOD benevolence.

Today they were facing charges of breaching the military bye-laws by being in a protected area without authorisation. Cross-examining Crown witnesses, they established that the Trident berths were only patrolled by between 9 and 14 security personnel and that there were no physical barriers to a swimmer entering the base from the Gareloch.

Rachel said: "Because we hold ourselves accountable for our actions we stopped when challenged and waited to be picked up. It would have been child's play that night for a terrorist to attach an explosive device to the hull and swim away unnoticed. When you consider of what is on the other side of that hull -a nuclear reactor, high explosive and plutonium - it's frightening how pathetic the security is."

Justice of the Peace Nicholson found them both guilty, fining Rachel £50 and Marcus £75.

Appearing in the same court was Krieb Dragonrider, who continues to be on remand in Greenock Prison. Krieb was charged with malicious mischief for cutting the perimeter fence at the Coulport warhead store in August 2000. JP Nicholson found him guilty but only admonished him, since he had already spent time in prison. Katri Silvonon (22), a Finnish woman currently working with the For Mother Earth campaign in Belgium, was found guilty of a breach of the peace relating to a vigil at the Coulport base this August and fined £75.

8th

[Anti-Trident Campaign Promises Direct Action in London Next Week](#)

8th November 2001

Anti-Trident Campaign Promises Direct Action in London Next Week

UK "War against Terror" Slated as Phoney

The anti-Trident campaign, Trident Ploughshares, will carry out a long weekend of direct action in London from 16th to 19th November.

The aim of the campaign is to carry out peaceful, nonviolent, open, safe and accountable direct action against the UK's Trident nuclear weapon system which it believes to be an illegal weapon of mass destruction. To date the campaign has focused on designated Trident sites, such as the submarine base at Faslane on the Clyde, the submarine building yard at Barrow, AWE Aldermaston and the nuclear weapon convoy base at RAF Wittering. Activists have carried out effective direct action at these sites, on two occasions delaying the entry into full service of submarine HMS Vengeance and causing considerable disruption at the Clyde bases and Aldermaston with intrusions and blockades.

The campaign has the support of 75 parliamentarians (including 26 Westminster MPs), many church leaders and celebrities, and has been awarded this year's "Alternative Nobel Prize" - the Right Livelihood Award, to be presented in the Swedish Parliament in December. In contrast to this civic support the campaign has attracted a good deal of judicial disapproval leading to 1516 arrests, 213 trials, 1418 days spent in jail (not including police cells) and fines imposed have reached a total of £30,044.

The aim of the long weekend in London is to take action against the political, military and resource nerve centres of the system. There will also be lobbying of MPs as well as vigils outside Westminster Abbey and in Parliament Square.

Trident Ploughshares member Peter Lanyon said:

"We are looking forward to bringing our nonviolent confrontation to the capital where the political responsibility for Trident resides. Any "war" against terror which does not disarm our own terror weapons is utterly phoney. Trident is poised and ready to kill millions of innocent people."

7th

Court Inconsistency Again as Big Blockaders Admonished

7th November 2001

Court Inconsistency Again as Big Blockaders Admonished

Today two peace campaigners were admonished for taking part in the Big Blockade of Faslane in February, an outcome that is in contrast to the heavy fines imposed on other activists for similar alleged offences.

Appearing in Dumbarton Sheriff Court before Sheriff Scott were Dave Rolstone, 55, a boat builder from Wales and Rooh Starr, 31, of Faslane Peace Camp, on charges of breach of the peace. Dave referred to the long established legal principle that the law had to serve the interests of the community as well as those of the state. Following this principle he had in the past visited Iraq in defiance of the laws on sanctions because these laws were morally wrong. The Trident issue was exactly the same. Sheriff Scott told Dave that however much he might sympathise with his views he had to apply the law as it stood. He found Dave guilty but was content to admonish him. Rooh pled guilty to the breach of the peace charge and was also admonished.

Punishments for those found guilty of a breach of the peace at the Big Blockade have ranged from simple admonishments to fines of £250. There are no identifiable objective factors to explain these variations, such as the perceived relative seriousness of the alleged offence. Some people who simply sat in the road have been more severely punished than some who were tied or chained to each other in complex ways that were difficult for the police to unravel. Ironically, punishments in Dumbarton Sheriff Court are in general much less severe than those imposed in Helensburgh District Court.

Trident Ploughshares member David Mackenzie said: "It surely is a matter of considerable

public interest that different magistrates and Sheriffs take such divergent views of anti-Trident actions and impose such different penalties. The criminal justice system is all at sea when it comes to dealing with this level of civil resistance."

Trident Three member Angie Zelter, who has spent the last month in Low Newton prison in Durham serving a sentence for an anti Star Wars action last year, was released on bail today after an appearance at Helensburgh District Court to answer outstanding warrants.

5th

Trident Ploughshares' Formal Complaint Re "Parasites" Slur

5th November 2001

Trident Ploughshares' Formal Complaint Re "Parasites" Slur

The Trident Ploughshares campaign has complained formally to a senior Scottish judge about the behaviour of Sheriff Ronald Smith in dealing with an anti-Trident case when he referred to peace protesters as "parasites".

The Sheriff's bizarre remark was made in Dumbarton Sheriff Court on 29th October as he fined Ludwig Appeltans and Harriet Jones £200 each for cutting the perimeter fence at the Coulport nuclear missile store in August this year. He said: "I look upon you so-called peace protesters as parasites, causing untold damage to fences, disrupting the base and wasting this country's money which could be spent elsewhere."

The campaign letter to the Lord President of the Court of Session, who is responsible for the administration of Sheriff Courts in Scotland, seeks a withdrawal of the remark and an apology and says: "The nature of our campaign means that we have frequent court experience. We are deeply distressed and indignant at the continuing and shameful failure of the Scottish justice system to address the criminality of the UK state in its active and threatening deployment of Trident and while some magistrates and sheriffs do deal with our cases with a level of professionalism and courtesy, we meet with a good deal of incompetence and bias. This remark by Sheriff Smith is however of a different order. It reveals an appalling level of prejudice allied to grievous personal vilification. His diatribe encompasses thousands of people he has never met and knows nothing about. It is a flagrant abuse of his judicial privilege."

Meanwhile concern about the competence and even-handedness of the local courts was again expressed after a Sheriff at Dumbarton Court found Jenny Gaiawyn, a marine biology student in her early twenties at Bangor University, guilty of a breach of the peace for her part in the Big Blockade in February. The Sheriff deferred sentence for social enquiry reports and refused to negotiate on the date for Jenny's recall. Jenny said: "We show what respect we can to the courts but today I got none in return. The Sheriff dismissed my defence arguments without considering them and would not let me explain that the recall date she demanded was right in the middle of my practical exams." When Jenny tried to make her point she was told to leave under a threat of contempt of court. She stood her ground, as did supporters in the public seats, and the court officials then abandoned the courtroom.

October Four Courts, A Prison And Some "Parasites"

29th

29th October 2001

Court Update

Four Courts, A Prison And Some "Parasites"

Today Trident Ploughshares activists and supporters were in four different courts, and just a few hours after Ulla Roder got out of Cornton Vale prison Rona Couper was sent there.

In Neath Magistrates in Wales Helen Harris had a means enquiry for unpaid fines for various deeds, one going back to 1999 when she cut into Faslane and roamed about a bit. Today she was given a prison sentence of 28 days, suspended for seven days to give her the chance to start paying by instalments.

Marjan Willemsen's trip to Edinburgh Sheriff Court for the April Scottish parliament demo charge was rather wasted since the court ran out of time and she was adjourned to 18th December, but she she get a variation in her bail conditions - she can now go to the Scottish Parliament building again, always supposing she wanted to.

At Dumbarton Sheriff Court a visiting Sheriff, Ronald Smith, behaved rather badly. In fining Luud Appeltans and Harriet Jones £200 each for cutting into Coulport in August he said: "I look upon you so-called peace protesters as parasites, causing untold damage to fences, disrupting the base and wasting this country's money which could be spent elsewhere."

Later he harassed and bullied Rona Couper who was up on a Big Blockade charge. He would not let her speak about the waste of money on Trident when the health service was starved of funds and when she attempted to argue from the Geneva Protocols he said: "We'll no hear about the Geneva Convention. that's got nothing to do with anything." When she said she would not pay the £200 fine he sent her straight off to Cornton Vale. She will be out on Thursday morning. We will complain to the Lord Advocate about Sheriff Smith.

It was also a Big Blockade day at Helensburgh District Court. On the bench was another prejudiced magistrate, Fraser Gillies from Rothesay. Five people were found guilty and variously fined: Bruce Craig from Edinburgh (£100); Glasgow poet Karen Thomson (£180); Anna Wright from Sutherland (£100 - she said: "I was there to protect all the things I love."); Rachel Milling, from Woodbrooke, the Quaker Colege (£200); Campbell McGregor (£150). Today JP Gillies seemed to be taking some account of people's ability to pay, but his unique inconsistency was still in evidence.

27th

Euro Green Spokesperson Defies Scottish Court

27th October 2001

Euro Green Spokesperson Defies Scottish Court

Marion Coyne (49), the Belgium based spokesperson for the European Federation of Green Parties, told the magistrate in a Scottish Court yesterday that she would probably not pay the fine he had imposed for an alleged breach of the peace at the Big Blockade of Faslane in February.

Marion, whose Federation represents 10 million Green voters across Europe, told Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies in Helensburgh District Court that there was a sad irony in the way the court

system was treating peacemakers as people who breached the peace. When the JP fined her £180 (as he did all those found guilty yesterday) she said that she did not think she would pay.

Marion's case followed that of Philippa Gallop (24), a researcher from Oxford, who was facing the same charge. Philippa argued that the only restrictions on the right to protest enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights referred to behaviour liable to undermine democracy or national security, or to provoke crime and disorder. These restrictions did not apply to her action on 12th February - the demonstration then had only caused a small amount of inconvenience. She was found guilty.

Hazel Neal (50), a chemist dispenser from Birmingham, said that sitting down in the road at the base was the very least she could - it was a matter of necessity. Eleisha Fahy (29), who manages the One World shop in Edinburgh, said that the charge against her of breach of the peace would be laughable if the issue were not so serious. JP Gillies found them both guilty and Eleisha told him she did not recognise the decision of the court and would not be paying the fine.

Gillian Lawrence (45), a community education worker from Edinburgh, pointed out that the gates to the base had been closed and there was no evidence that anyone had been alarmed. She was distressed at the fact that severe poverty existed in Craigmillar, where she worked, while vast amounts of money were wasted on Trident. When found guilty and fined she too said she not pay.

There was one exception to this sequence of guilty verdicts when Mary Black (38), a PhD student at Salford University and a campaign officer for the Socialist Alliance, made a submission of "no case to answer" following the Crown evidence. This was accepted by the JP.

23rd

Faslane Blockader Jailed

23rd October 2001

Faslane Blockader Jailed

A peace activist arrested at yesterday's blockade of Faslane naval base has been remanded in prison for over a month.

Kreb Dragonrider (44), formerly from Brighton, was one of the 170 people arrested yesterday and one of the five held in police custody overnight to appear in Helensburgh District Court today. Kreb was facing a number of charges related to anti-Trident actions and Procurator Fiscal Ian McCrae opposed bail on the grounds that Kreb had breached bail conditions in the past, had failed to attend court hearings and was "of no fixed abode". Justice of the Peace Nicholson agreed and remanded Kreb to Greenock Prison.* Kreb will be held until 26th November, the last of three trials dates set for him.

Kreb has recently left his settled address and has embarked on a Walk for Peace. Anticipating his imprisonment he said: "I shall in the meantime be peace walking in the exercise yard and sharing the message of peace to inmates and wardens alike!"

The other four held overnight, Barbara Maver, Georgina Smith, Sylvia Boyes and Brian Quail, were released on bail.

As well as Kreb two other Trident Ploughshares activists are currently in prison. Angie Zelter is serving a sentence in Low Newton prison in Durham for an anti-Star Wars action and Danish activist Ulla Roder is in Cornton Vale Prison in Stirling under threat of deportation.

* Greenock Prison, 85 Old Inverkip Road, Greenock, PA 16 9AH

22nd **OKBLOK: MSP's among 150 arrests at Faslane**
22nd October 2001

OKBLOK: MSP's among 150 arrests at Faslane

Two MSP's, an MEP and four veteran peace campaigners are among the 156 people arrested so far today at Faslane naval base.

The Trident Ploughshares/Scottish CND blockade of the nuclear submarine base started at 7am and within minutes police began arresting protesters.

Politicians arrested include SNP MSP Lloyd Quinan, SSP MSP Tommy Sheridan, and the Irish Green Euro MP Patricia McKenna.

Lifelong activists Pat Arrowsmith (71), from London, Judith Pritchard (79), from Malvern, Worcestershire and Dumbarton couple Bobby (86) and Margaret (83) Harrison are the oldest arrestees from among the 1000 people demonstrating against Trident today.

Jane Tallents, (43) from Helensburgh, who helped to organise today's blockade, said: "Today's action shows that people will come back to Faslane time and again in their determination to have this monstrous weapon banned.

"Trident is an indiscriminate weapon of mass destruction and a true war on terrorism would rid the world of all such obscenities."

22nd **Anti-Trident campaigners hail OKBLOK a success**
22nd October 2001

Anti-Trident campaigners hail OKBLOK a success

Faslane blockaders will be back

Anti-Trident campaigners today hailed the mass blockade of Faslane naval base as a success.

Over 160 people were arrested at the nuclear submarine base as 1,000 protesters shut down the main gates for over five hours early today.

Organisers vowed to return to Faslane in February 2002 in an intensifying campaign. But they challenged the police decision today to ignore the criticism of mass arrests in a court decision earlier this month, when Tommy Sheridan MSP was acquitted of a breach of the peace.

David Mackenzie, of Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND, said: "To have these numbers shutting down the Trident base on a wet Monday morning shows the determination of protesters to keep going until this obscene weapon is banned.

"We are keeping up the momentum with an intensifying programme of actions including a further blockade at Faslane in February 2002.

"It is a real pity that Strathclyde police today continued their discredited policy of mass arrests. Tommy Sheridan was arrested today for doing exactly the same thing for which he was acquitted in court just two weeks ago, when the magistrate questioned the mass arrest policy.

"This yet again illustrates the mess the police and the courts are in over how they respond to

peaceful acts of conscience by people exercising their democratic rights.

"In spite of the seriousness of our message and the work we are engaged in, this protest today celebrated life in an amazingly enjoyable and hopeful atmosphere."

22nd [Faslane Security Breached Again](#)

22nd October 2001

Faslane Security Breached Again

Faslane staff told a Belgium-based peace campaigner wandering inside the nuclear submarine base during today's blockade to "go away."

The base was supposed to be on a high security status because of the mass protest of over 1,000 people demonstrating against Trident nuclear weapons.

But as police arrested around 170 people sitting in the roads outside, David Heller (25), of the For Mother Earth group, cut through the base perimeter fence and reached a 'sentry box' near the submarine berth.

David said that personnel there showed no interest in him when he knocked on their door and he was only arrested by Ministry of Defence police after approaching another sentry box.

"I cut through the fence and the razor wire and walked down past a number of uniform and civilian personnel and was not challenged at all," David said.

"I was right down at the sentry box type cabin at the end of a gangplank going over to one of the submarines. When I knocked they waved me away so I went to the next one but was arrested there."

David has been charged with breaching the bye-laws that apply to the base. His exploration of the base is the latest in a series of embarrassing security lapses at the submarine base. This year peace activists have swum to the Trident submarines inside their high security on several occasions.

22nd [OKBLOK News](#)

22nd October 2001

OKBLOK News

Mon22Oct2001 October Blockade of Faslane

In spite of many years of campaigning the UK government still refuses to face up to its moral and legal obligations and get rid of Trident and is now supporting US plans to put weapons in space. *"If voices cannot be heard through normal channels the ultimate act is to put your body where it cannot be ignored."*

Update: 11.15

1,000 people are taking part in the potrest. 151 people arrested to date, including 2 MSP's (Lloyd Quinan, SNP, and Tommy Sheridan, SSP) and Irish Green MEP Patricia McKenna

[OKBLOK: MSP's among 150 arrests at Faslane](#)

Update: 14.15

The blockade has finished. There were a total of 158 arrests. Further arrests of note were those of Billy Wolfe and Isobel Lindsay. The oldest person arrested was 87 year old

Frances McKeith. A brilliant day.

[Anti-Trident campaigners hail OKBLOK a success](#)

Update: 16.15

Final estimated number of people arrested is over 160. Those arrested included two Church of Scotland Ministers. The youngest were two school students aged 16. A further protest is already planned for February 2002.

Faslane Security Breached Again

TP Pledger David Heller cut through the Faslane base perimeter fence and reached a sentry box near the submarine berth during blockade.

[Faslane Security Breached Again](#)

23rd Oct: Faslane Blockader Jailed

A peace activist arrested at yesterday's blockade of Faslane naval base has been remanded in prison for over a month. Four others given bail. Two still in jail.

[Faslane Blockader Jailed](#)

19th

[Verdict Today on Aldermaston Citizen Inspectors](#)

19th October 2001

Verdict Today on Aldermaston Citizen Inspectors

The verdict on the Trident Ploughshares activists who have been on trial for the last two days in Newbury Magistrates Court will be given by Justice Wooller in Reading Magistrates Court today.

The four East Anglian activists, Barbara Sunderland (72), Davida Higgin (74), Peter Lanyon (68) and Simone Chimowitz (49), were arrested on Remembrance Sunday last year after cutting their way through the fence at AWE Aldermaston in an attempt to carry out a citizens' inspection of the site. They are charged with criminal damage. They are not disputing the facts of the case but are arguing that their action was justified as a last resort in responding to the threat posed by the illegal Trident nuclear weapon system.

Yesterday defence barrister Rajiv Menon argued that the Hutchinson appeal case should not be taken as conclusive authority on the defence of necessity. He referred to the 1999 appeal case of Abdul Hussain in which the High Court held that the defence of necessity was available to the defendants even though they had other options to deal with their very real fears.

Justice Wooller restricted defence expert witness Dr. Frank Barnaby to dealing with the dangers that Aldermaston posed to the surrounding public, on the basis that only this was relevant to whether the defendants were taking steps by their actions to avoid imminent danger. Dr. Barnaby explained the continuing risks of plutonium and tritium discharges, why the warheads needed servicing and the lasting and enduring damage to the environment which would be sure to result from any major accident.

Other defence witnesses were not allowed to take the stand, including George Farebrother of the World Court Project who would have been questioned on the efforts taken by the Trident Ploughshares Dialogue and Negotiation Task Group to establish meaningful contact with the UK government on the issue of disarming Trident.

Having considered the case overnight Justice Wooller will give his verdict this morning in Reading

Magistrates Court.

19th [School Students Join Faslane Blockade](#)

19th October 2001

School Students Join Faslane Blockade

Five secondary schools pupils from the west of Scotland will be among the many young people blockading Faslane naval base on Monday, in an event characterised by a huge diversity of age, background and nationality.

The students, mainly from the Cardonald and Paisley areas in Scotland, have indicated that they are willing to risk arrest. Chloe McCormack (16), from Cardonald said: "Sometimes young people are stereotyped as irresponsible but we care as much about the future of our world as older people do. We will do what we can to get rid of Trident." Joining her will be Jack Archer (17), Elizabeth Watson (16), Debbie Henderson (16) and Lisa Ball (15).

UK nationals will be joined on Monday by people of Dutch, Belgian, Irish and Finish nationality. Explaining why Faslane is such an important focus for people outwith the UK, Pol D'Huyvetter, of the Belgium - based For Mother Earth campaign said: "The Western nations have announced a war against global terror but most people worldwide feel they have been hostages to nuclear terror for a very long time. The heightened tensions in these days, especially over Pakistan and India, means that worldwide nuclear disarmament is a top priority. The arsenals of the nuclear weapon states, including the UK, threaten us all."

Among those present on Monday will be at least six MSPs, Christine Grahame, Sandra White, Dorothy-Grace Elder, Adam Ingram, Lloyd Quinan and Tommy Sheridan, the last two named having clearly indicated that they will risk arrest.

19th [Conditional Discharge for Aldermaston Citizen Inspectors](#)

19th October 2001

Conditional Discharge for Aldermaston Citizen Inspectors

The Trident Ploughshares activists who have been on trial for the last two days in Newbury Magistrates Court were today found guilty but given a 12 month conditional discharge by Justice Wooller.

The four East Anglian activists, Barbara Sunderland (72), Davida Higgin (74), Peter Lanyon (68) and Simone Chimowitz (49), were arrested on Remembrance Sunday last year after cutting their way through the fence at AWE Aldermaston to carry out a citizens' inspection of the site. Charged with criminal damage they argued that their action was justified as a last resort in responding to the threat posed by the illegal Trident nuclear weapon system. The four are each to pay £92.50 for the damage caused and £100 for court costs. These will be transferred to their local courts.

Reading from his written judgment Justice Wooller made it clear he saw himself as bound by the ruling in the Hutchinson appeal in assessing a defence of necessity. Yesterday defence barrister Rajiv Menon had argued that that case should not be taken as conclusive authority on the defence of necessity and referred to the 1999 appeal case of Abdul Hussain in which the High Court held that the defence of necessity was available to the defendants even though they had other options to deal with their very real fears.

The four were far from downhearted. Peter Lanyon said: "It was an absorbing and inspiring two days in court and I had plenty arguing to do. Now we are heading up to Scotland for the

blockade of Faslane on Monday!"

18th [Aldermaston Citizen Inspectors on Trial in Newbury](#)

18th October 2001

Aldermaston Citizen Inspectors on Trial in Newbury

Four Trident Ploughshares activists went on trial in Newbury Magistrates Court yesterday, charged with criminal damage to the perimeter fence at AWE Aldermaston, the site where the components for the UK's nuclear warheads are made.

The four East Anglian activists, Barbara Sunderland (72), Davida Higgin (74), Peter Lanyon (68) and Simone Chimowitz (49), were arrested on Remembrance Sunday last year after cutting their way through the fence in an attempt to carry out a citizens' inspection of the site, to determine for the public what goes on there.

The four are not disputing the facts of the case but are arguing that their action was justified as a last resort in responding to the threat posed by the illegal Trident nuclear weapon system. The judge has conceded that their cutting of the fence was not a hooligan act - it was clear that they intended to get into the site.

Today the defendants hope to call as witnesses nuclear expert Professor Frank Barnaby and George Farebrother of the World Court Project. Three of the defendants are representing themselves while Simone is represented by barrister Rajiv Menon.

The TP campaign was initiated in 1998. Since then there have been 1350 arrests of its activists, 1351 days have been spent in prison, there have been 171 trials and fines totaling £25,274 have been imposed by the courts. The British government has consistently refused to meet the campaigners to discuss the disarmament of Trident.

18th [Not Proven Verdict for Danish Campaigner on Scottish Parliament Charge](#)

18th October 2001

Not Proven Verdict for Danish Campaigner on Scottish Parliament Charge

Sheriff Allows "Latitude" for "Bona Fide Protest"

A charge against Danish peace campaigner Ulla Roder, relating to an anti-Trident demonstration in the Scottish Parliament was found not proven today in Edinburgh Sheriff Court.

Ulla (46), from Odense in Denmark, was charged with a breach of the peace for her part in a Scottish Parliament protest on April 5th when with the eleven others she interrupted First Minister's Questions.

With one exception the Crown witnesses, three police officers and a Parliament gallery attendant, had no criticism of Ulla's behaviour and the gallery attendant described her as "gem". One police witness did suggest that elderly people sitting near Ulla in the gallery found the event upsetting.

Defending Ulla solicitor Joanna McDonald argued that the evidence led by the Crown had not been sufficient to meet the terms of the libel against her. Sheriff Craik appeared to agree and said: "A certain latitude of behaviour must be allowed in bona fide political protest."

Although free of this charge Ulla has returned to Cornton Vale Prison to complete her sentence

there for six counts related to anti-Trident actions, including her painting on the hull of Trident nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vanguard in Faslane earlier this year. A threat of deportation hangs over her following the recommendation of Sheriff Fitzsimmons in Dumbarton Sheriff Court.

In the Swedish Parliament on 5th December, along with the other Trident Three members Ellen Moxley and Angie Zelter, she will represent the Trident Ploughshares campaign to receive this year's Right Livelihood Award. The citation describes the campaign as "a model of principled, transparent and non-violent direct action dedicated to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Their imaginative campaign highlights the illegality of these weapons."

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "We are delighted that Sheriff Craik had enough common sense not to collude in the criminalisation of the April 5th protest. There is also a delicious irony in Ulla being hustled out of one parliament for protesting on this critical issue that it has failed even to debate and then receiving the plaudits of another for her determined challenge to Trident."

17th

Hundreds Expected At Faslane Blockade On Monday

17th October 2001

Hundreds Expected At Faslane Blockade On Monday

MSPs Will Join in Stand Against Britain's Terror Weapon

On Monday hundreds of people will disrupt the work of the naval base at Faslane, 30 miles from Glasgow, home to the UK's four Trident nuclear missile submarines, by blockading the entrances to the facility.

Hundreds of activists from all over the UK, from Ireland and from the continent, are expected at the gates of Faslane from 7 a.m. on Monday morning. Among them will be at least six MSPs, Chris Grahame, Sandra White, Adam Ingram, Dorothy-Grace Elder, Adam Ingram and Tommy Sheridan, the last two named having clearly indicated that they will risk arrest. Leading Scottish author AL Kennedy will also be there.

The blockade, jointly organised by CND and Trident Ploughshares, has been given additional sharpness by the events of September 11th and the US/UK attacks on Afghanistan. A minute's silence for commemoration and reflection at 9 a.m. will be honoured by activists and police alike.

A Trident Ploughshares statement on the current crisis includes the following: "The stated Western commitment (to end terrorism and mass murder) is inevitably flawed by double standards. In the case of the UK that is simply illustrated by our close involvement in a deliberate policy choice over Iraq which has led to so many deaths over the last decade and by our continued active and threatening deployment of weapons of mass murder. There is no credibility in claiming the leadership of a coalition against terrorism at the same time as continuing to engage in terrorism."

Best wishes for the blockade have come from Low Newton prison in Durham where Trident Ploughshares member Angie Zelter is serving a sentence for an anti-Star Wars action. Angie has just returned from monitoring and taking direct action against human rights abuses in Israel/Palestine and she said: "The consequences of getting involved in peaceful direct action in the UK are trivial when compared with the beatings, torture and murder that such activists face in Israel/Palestine. This gives us over here a much greater responsibility to act against injustice and warmongering."

A message of support also came from Danish activist Ulla Roder who is in Cornton Vale Prison in Stirling under threat of deportation. Ulla said: "Let's show them that we mean what we say - we

will get there in the end."

12th [West Dunbartonshire Councillor Blasts Nuclear Hypocrisy](#)
12th October 2001

West Dunbartonshire Councillor Blasts Nuclear Hypocrisy

Dutch activist found guilty for third time this week

Jim Bollan a West Dunbartonshire councillor and Scottish Socialist Party member told Helensburgh District Court today that he felt it was his job to represent the members of his council ward by standing against nuclear weapons.

Appearing to answer a charge of breach of the peace relating to the Big Blockade of Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base on 12th February this year, Mr Bollan argued, "I have a responsibility as a local councillor and a socialist to speak out against the hypocrisy of spending billions maintaining nuclear weapons while people are dying because of underfunding in the NHS."

Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies instantly found Mr Bollan guilty and fined him £175.

Adam Conway creditably argued against Procurator Fiscal Jonathan Kemp's argument that he had acted in a way likely to cause fear and alarm, by pointing out that Trident nuclear weapons are a source of fear and alarm to a majority of Scots.

Referring to recent refinement of how breach of the peace is defined Mr Conway added, "Breach of the peace refers to behaviour serious enough to cause fear or alarm in any reasonable person, not any reasonable person who agrees with the Government's policy on nuclear weapons."

JP Gillies again found Mr Conway guilty and fined him £150.

Mark Akkerman, a student from Holland was found guilty of breach of the peace despite being identified by the court before one of the two police witnesses could provide corroboration of Akkerman's identity. JP Gillies fined him £125.

The crown deserted the case against Tim Hinton when a police witness failed to appear.

10th [Sheridan Acquittal Means Nothing To Dumbarton Sheriff](#)
10th October 2001

Sheridan Acquittal Means Nothing To Dumbarton Sheriff

After the ground-breaking events of Tommy Sheridan's acquittal on Monday, business at Helensburgh District Court returned to normal. Freya Morton, a Scottish CND volunteer appeared on a charge of breach of the peace relating to the Big Blockade at Faslane nuclear submarine base on 12th February.

Justice of the Peace Ian Smythe ruled that by preventing the collapse of a tripod on which people were suspended, Freya was guilty of causing serious alarm, and fined her £100.

John McSweeney (21), a student in Manchester who attended the February 12th Big Blockade dressed as a "Ninja Against Nukes" defended a breach of the peace charge himself. Pointing out glaring discrepancies in the police evidence (they differed on locations of John's arrest by an order of 200 yards!) John argued that there was no case to answer. JP Smythe ruled that there was a case to answer, but duly found McSweeney not guilty.

Afterwards McSweeney said, " The police accounts of what happened were so different. It appeared that they were not treating my arrest seriously."

Darren Jackson (25) an unemployed man from Sheffield pled guilty to breach of the peace relating again to the Big Blockade on 12th February this year. JP Smythe fined Jackson £100.

At Dumbarton Sheriff Court today, Mark Akkerman (22) a student of Government Studies from Holland appeared to answer a charge of breach of the peace relating to a blockade at the Royal Navy Armaments Depot at Coulport on 12th October 1999. Akkerman defended himself, mentioning the argument used by Tommy Sheridan on Monday, that peaceful protest is not a crime. Sheriff Fitzsimmons stated that he had no interest in Tommy Sheridan's case, besides which it has been appealed, found Akkerman guilty and admonished him. The sheriff also warned him that if his anti-nuclear activities continued, Akkerman could face deportation just as Ulla Roder does at this time.

8th

Sheridan Not Guilty

8th October 2001

Sheridan Not Guilty

Right To Blockade Defended By Magistrate

Tommy Sheridan was today found not guilty of breach of the peace for his part in February 12th's Big Blockade of Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base.

Helensburgh District Court Magistrate Tony Stirling agreed with the Scottish Socialist Party MSP's defence that he had not caused serious alarm. Commenting on events such as the Big Blockade, Mr Stirling added, "The policy of mass arrests without justification cannot continue without careful consideration of how far the rights of individuals have been extended by the Human Rights Convention."

The verdict was greeted with applause from the packed courtroom.

When asked soon afterwards how he felt, Tommy answered "I am delighted with this verdict. It puts in question the whole process of mass arrests. Every citizen has a right to protest against these weapons. Considering the barbarism these weapons represent, people should not be arrested for simply being at a protest."

In the case immediately following, Iona Gorringe (21) a student in Edinburgh was also found not guilty by JP Stirling of a breach of the peace relating also to February's Big Blockade. The two remaining cases were adjourned at the request of the Procurator Fiscal Jonathan Kemp. In addition to more closely examining Article 10 of the Human Rights Convention, it is believed that he will be appealing the not guilty verdict handed down to Tommy Sheridan.

In an earlier case before the same magistrate in the same court, with the same Fiscal prosecuting, Mark Akkerman appeared on a charge of breach of the peace for his part in a blockade of the same nuclear submarine base. Despite almost identical evidence to the peacefulness of Akkerman's protest, and despite his solicitor using the same legal defence as Tommy Sheridan and Iona Gorringe, Akkerman was found guilty and fined £100.

8th

Stop Ulla Roder Being Deported

8th October 2001

Angie Zelter In Jail

Stop Ulla Roder Being Deported

Angie Zelter appeared in Harrogate Magistrates Court today for sentencing for the action at Menwith Hill in June 2000. She was sentenced to 2 months (of which she will serve 1 month)

Please send messages of support to:

HMP Low Newton

Durham

DH1 5SD

Peace Activists need to be supported not deported!!

Write to David Blunkett to tell him why Ulla Roder should be allowed to stay in the UK.

Ulla Roder is a Trident Ploughshares activist and she is from Denmark. She is one of the Trident Three who were acquitted at Greenock Sheriff court in 1999 after being on trial for throwing £80,000 of Trident related equipment into Loch Goil. Sheriff Gimblett accepted that they were justified in their action because they had argued that Trident was illegal under international law.

Ulla has been active ever since and has been released on bail many times after actions at the Trident bases at Faslane and Coulport as well as stopping a warhead convoy near Stirling and disrupting the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. In April after 5 hours in the water she swam up to HMS Vengeance and painted 'Useless' on the side of it. She has been on remand in Cornton Vale prison since August 10th and has recently been on trial at Dumbarton Sheriff court. On Oct 5th Sheriff Fitzsimons sentenced her to 3 months for her actions and recommended that she be deported at the end of it. Because they back dated the sentence she could be deported as early as October 29th (unless appeals are lodged).

Please write to the Secretary of State for the Home Office to ask that he ignore the courts recommendation. Some of the points you could make are:-

- ▶ Ulla is not a threat to national security. She may cause embarrassment to the security system at the Trident bases but she does not threaten them. Trident Ploughshares is a nonviolent campaign.
- ▶ We are only engaged in direct peoples disarmament because the Government refuses to carry out it's own commitments to disarm. If they obeyed international law there would be no need for us to come before the courts.
- ▶ Trident is an international issue. If it were used, the consequences will affect people far beyond the UK. Trident is illegal under international law and international citizens are entitled to protest about it.

Write to:

David Blunkett MP, The Home Office, 50 Queen Annes Gate, LONDON SW1H 9AT Fax 0207 273 3965

Send copies to: Lynda Clarke, Advocate General, 70 Dover House, Whitehall, LONDON SW1A 2AU

Or write to your own MP and ask them to take it up with David Blunkett.

Send letters of support to:

Ulla Roder, HMP Cornton Vale, Cornton Road, Stirling FK9 5NY

5th

"Defiant" Disarmer Jailed and Recommended for Deportation

5th October 2001

"Defiant" Disarmer Jailed and Recommended for Deportation

Three Month Sentence for "Alternative Nobel" Prizewinner

Trident Ploughshares activist Ulla Roder was today sent to prison for three months and recommended for deportation by a Sheriff in Dumbarton.

Ulla (46), from Odense in Demark, was found guilty on September 14th on six counts relating to anti-Trident actions and was appearing today for sentence. Sheriff Fitzsimmons admonished her on some of the charges but he gave her three months for a breach of the peace charge involving stopping a nuclear weapons convoy with other activists, saying that that half of that sentence was in respect of an aggravated breach of bail conditions. He also gave her two other month long jail sentences, to run concurrently, one for her celebrated swim to HMS Vanguard in April when she painted USELESS on the hull of the nuclear missile submarine and one for her part in a women's action on a French warship docked at Faslane. He allowed a measure of the time she served on remand to be taken into account and this, together with time off for good behaviour, is likely to mean an actual term of one month.

The Sheriff told Ulla: "I see every likelihood of you continuing to defy the law of this country and I therefore recommend that you be deported at the end of your sentence."

The sentence and recommendation are seen by fellow campaigners as excessive and political. Jane Tallents, who was present in court said: "It's hypocritical for any British court to punish Ulla for "defying" the law. It was the fact that Britain defies the whole fabric of international humanitarian law by actively deploying a murder weapon like Trident that brought her here in the first place. They may send Ulla away but they have not dented the resistance to Trident, which is growing here day by day. Ulla's commitment continues to be a great inspiration for us."

There is additional irony in the fact that yesterday the Trident Ploughshares campaign, represented by Ulla along with Angie Zelter and Ellen Moxley, was awarded the Right Livelihood Prize for 2001 (also known as the "Alternative Nobel Peace Prize"), to be handed over in the Swedish parliament in December.

5th

Big Blockaders Ask Scottish Court to Uphold Justice

5th October 2001

Big Blockaders Ask Scottish Court to Uphold Justice

Two more peace activists appearing on charges relating to the Big Blockade of Faslane in February have challenged the court to show allegiance to truth and justice rather than the state.

Patricia Williamson (54), from Bournemouth, and Helen Steven (58), Coordinator of the Scottish Centre for Nonviolence in Dunblane, were on trial today in Helensburgh District Court for an alleged breach of the peace. Both were found guilty and fined £200 by Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies. This was £50 lower than the usual JP Gillies tariff, perhaps reflecting the fact that earlier this week the Scottish High Court upheld an appeal against a sentence imposed by him on a peace activist. Patricia told him: "You have a wonderful opportunity to show your allegiance. Are you a privileged servant of the Almighty God or are you the lackey of a corrupt state?"

In her plea of mitigation Helen said: "Of course I'm guilty of a breach of the peace. What kind of

peace is it that can say nothing and do nothing in the face of Trident? I want to disturb the peace of the politicians who threaten annihilation, of those who work for Trident without facing the reality of how deadly it is, of the police who are "just doing their job" without realising that that was the defence at Nuremberg, and of the judicial system that is so blinded by petty detail that it loses sight of justice. I want to keep on disturbing my own peace until nuclear weapons are recognised for the total evil they are and eliminated."

The Quaker theologian Alistair McIntosh (45), from Kinghorn, turned up for trial only to be told that his plea of not guilty had now been accepted due to some "trouble with the witnesses". Alistair picked up his impressive pile of legal papers and in his inimitable Lewis accent told JP Gillies: "Well, they will do just fine for the next time."

4th

Activist Wins Appeal Against Maverick Magistrates's Sentence

4th October 2001

Activist Wins Appeal Against Maverick Magistrates's Sentence

A peace activist has won her High Court appeal against a sentence imposed by a local magistrate noted for giving heavy fines to peace protesters.

Anne Kobayashi 60, a social worker from Essex, was found guilty in Helensburgh District Court of breaching the peace on 18th August after taking part in the Big Blockade of Faslane in February this year. She was found guilty and fined £250 by Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies from Rothesay. Yesterday the Scottish High Court agreed that the sentence was excessive and reduced it to £175.

A TP spokesperson said: "While our main beef against the local court is the fact that they continue to punish people who are trying to uphold the law, JP Gillies takes the biscuit for his punitive approach. Following this successful appeal we will be writing to the Argyll and Bute Justice Committee with a plea that they put their house in order."

Two Trident Ploughshares activists were on trial in Helensburgh District Court yesterday. Roz Bullen, from Edinburgh, played her part in a highly successful blockade of Faslane on 13th November last year when both gates to the base were closed for four hours. Security personnel were taken totally by surprise when, with three others, Roz blocked the south gate while the north gate was shut by activists on a tripod made of scaffolding poles. Yesterday Roz told the court that the day before the blockade had been Remembrance Sunday. She had been reflecting on the horrors of wars in the past and on the unimaginable horrors of Trident. She argued that the Crown evidence had been contradictory and inaccurate (witnesses spoke of the activists being locked on with chains though none were used on that day), but Justice of the Peace Nicholson found her guilty and fined her £200.

Morag Balfour from Glenrothes and Janet Fenton from Edinburgh were facing a charge of breach of the peace related to the May Carnival at Faslane last year when they snipped the base fence with bolt-cutters. The JP accepted their submission of No Case To Answer on the basis that breach of the peace was an inappropriate charge for what they had done.

4th

Prestigious Peace Prize For Trident Ploughshares

4th October 2001

Prestigious Peace Prize For Trident Ploughshares

Anti-Trident Campaign Honoured in 2001 Right Livelihood Awards

While the UK courts continue to punish its activists for upholding international law by non-violent direct action against nuclear weapons, the Trident Ploughshares (TP)

campaign has achieved international recognition as one of the four winners of this year's Right Livelihood Awards.

Founded in 1980, The Right Livelihood Awards are presented annually in the Swedish parliament and are usually referred to as "Alternative Nobel Prizes", having been introduced "to honour and support those offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today." The award of SEK 2 million is shared with activists working for peace, social justice and cultural renaissance in Israel/Palestine, Brazil and Venezuela.

The TP campaign is represented for the award by the "Trident Three", Angie Zelter, Ellen Moxley and Ulla Roder, who were famously acquitted in October 1999 in Greenock Sheriff court in Scotland after disarming a Trident-related research barge. Ulla Roder is currently on remand in Cornton Vale Prison in Scotland awaiting sentencing tomorrow for a number of alleged anti-Trident offences. The Right Livelihood Award honours the campaign as "a model of principled, transparent and non-violent direct action dedicated to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Their imaginative campaign highlights the illegality of these weapons."

A delighted Ellen Moxley said: "To receive this prestigious award from the international community means that the hard disarmament work of all the 130 TP pledgers has been vindicated. In contrast to the Opinion of the Scottish High Court which dismissed the Greenock acquittal and thus showed itself to be an instrument of the nuclear state, this award confirms that the TP movement is a key contributor to a non- nuclear future and that Trident is illegal under international law."

The TP campaign was initiated in 1998. Since then there have been 1350 arrests of its activists, 1351 days have been spent in prison, there have been 171 trials and fines totaling £25,274 have been imposed by the courts. The British government has consistently refused to meet the campaigners to discuss the disarmament of Trident.

4th

Trident Disarmers Go Free As Jury Is Hung Again

4th October 2001

Trident Disarmers Go Free As Jury Is Hung Again

Trident disarmers Rosie James and Rachel Wenham were discharged today at Manchester Crown Court when the jury could not reach a verdict on the charge of criminal damage against them and the prosecutor confirmed that the Crown would not seek a retrial.

On 1st February 1999 Rachel and Rosie swam to and boarded the Trident nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vengeance, then docked at Barrow-in-Furness. They draped banners, painted slogans and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower. Their first trial was aborted when the prosecution failed to come up with reasonable estimates of the damage done. The second trial last year ended with acquittal for the women on the minor charge related to painting slogans and the jury was hung on the more serious criminal damage charge. It was admitted by a Crown witness at the trial that their action had delayed HMS Vengeance for a month. Their defence was that they had acted out of necessity due to the threat posed by the Trident nuclear weapon system.

Rachel said: " I feel great - this is an excellent outcome. It's good to know that at least three people -probably more - knew we were justified in our action and held out for that."

Trident Ploughshares member Jane Tallents said: "It has always been hard to imagine any jury convicting Rachel and Rosie. They were so deliberate and single minded in what they did and so transparent about why they acted. Their action back in the early days of the campaign gave us a tremendous lift and was a model of sheer guts and effectiveness. The trials themselves have

exposed the insane violence behind our so-called policy of deterrence a violence so sadly illustrated these days in the unthinking readiness to go for the war option without considering the potential holocaust that may result."

As the trial ended Trident Ploughshares supporters learned that the campaign had been awarded the 2001 Right Livelihood Award (also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize), to be handed over in the Swedish parliament in December. The Award honours the campaign as "a model of principled, transparent and non-violent direct action dedicated to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Their imaginative campaign highlights the illegality of these weapons."

3rd [Trial Of Trident Disarmers Could End Today](#)
3rd October 2001

Trial Of Trident Disarmers Could End Today

Police Witness Describes Lax Security at Barrow Submarine Dock

After a day in which the court heard again about lax security at the dockyard where Trident nuclear submarines were built, the adjourned trial in Manchester Crown Court of Trident submarine disarmers Rosie James and Rachel Wenham could end this afternoon.

On 1st February 1999 Rachel and Rosie swam to and boarded the Trident nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vengeance, then docked at Barrow-in-Furness. They draped banners, painted slogans and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower.

Yesterday, the 2nd October, the Crown case closed with the testimony of Michael Warner, the detective who interviewed the two activists. Under cross-examination from defence barrister Marguerite Russell the officer confirmed that security was so slack on the night in question that any number of people could have slipped away unnoticed. He told Rachel that her dismantling work was on a "more permanent basis than normal".

Giving her testimony Rosie told the court their action had been taken against a backdrop of heightened international tension, with Operation Desert Fox ongoing and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook not ruling out nuclear attacks on Iraq by the UK. February 1999 was the last chance, she believed at the time, to stop HMS Vengeance leaving Barrow. This would have cut the available nuclear strike force 25%. Had she and Rachel had terrorist intentions they could easily have planted mines and slipped away again.

In her testimony Rachel said that Trident was not an ornament, it was there to be used. That is why they had to act. She described how it would be legal to slash the tyres of a car bomb: that was all they had done, they had damaged the transport system of a dreadful weapon before it could be used. When the prosecution suggested that they had acted for publicity, Rachel was adamant. "At the time I did it to stop Vengeance from going out. The action spoke for itself".

It is expected that the defence will call only one more witness, Professor Paul Rogers of Bradford University. Unless the final speeches and the judge's summing up are very long it is likely that the jury will at least begin deliberations today.

3rd [Terrifying Evidence From Defence Expert Witness in Trident Trial](#)
3rd October 2001

Terrifying Evidence From Defence Expert Witness in Trident Trial

Nuclear Attack on Baghdad in NATO Scenario

In the trial of two anti-Trident activists Manchester Crown Court today heard terrifying evidence about the nature and likelihood of nuclear war from a defence expert witness.

On 1st February 1999 defendants Rachel Wenham and Rosie James swam to and boarded the Trident nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vengeance, then docked at Barrow-in-Furness. They draped banners, painted slogans and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower.

This morning defence expert witness Professor Paul Rogers of Bradford University gave disturbing evidence of the dangers of the nuclear age. While the risk of an all-out nuclear war had receded since the end of the Cold War the chances of a "limited" nuclear exchange, causing millions of deaths, had in fact increased. NATO had in constant readiness a nuclear war plan and in the NATO "War Game" paper scenario of 1995 a Middle East crisis had been posited. Against the strategists' prior expectations this led to a nuclear strike on Baghdad in response to a biological attack on US troops. Professor Rogers had also estimated that the explosive power of the combined aircraft fuel and collapsing concrete in Manhattan on September 11th had been roughly equal to 650 tons of high explosive. He pointed out that each of the 48 warheads carried on a Trident submarine had a payload equal to 100,000 tons of high explosive.

Summing up for the Crown prosecutor Dennis Watson acknowledged that the women were sincere in their beliefs but their opinions about the danger of Trident gave them no right to break the law. Cars are, in the opinion of many nasty and dangerous, but that does not give people the right to go about smashing them. For Rosie barrister Marguerite Russell asked the jury to consider the evidence they had heard about the dangers of nuclear weapons. The women had acted in response to a danger that was imminent in the sense that it could happen at any time. Their act had not been a frenzied attack but a brave and deliberate one.

Rachel told the court how the US, with the connivance of the UK and in full knowledge of the short and long term effects, had dropped atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nothing had changed since then except for the names of those in power and the great increase in the destructive power of the bombs.

With only the judge's summing-up to come a verdict is likely tomorrow.

1st [More Trident Resisters in Court as October Blockade of Faslane Looms](#)
1st October 2001

More Trident Resisters in Court as October Blockade of Faslane Looms

Tommy Sheridan on Trial Next Monday

As activists from far and wide get ready for OKBLOK, the next major blockade of the Trident base at Faslane on 22nd October, the local courts are still struggling to deal with the 385 people who were arrested for alleged breach of the peace at the blockade on 12th February.

Witnesses at the trial of Dr. Margaret Jones (52), a freelance writer from Bristol, confirmed that her actions on that day were entirely peaceful. Her "crime" had been to link arms with others and to join the singing of the Red Choir from Wales. There could be no doubt that under the Geneva Protocols the UK's deployment of Trident was illegal and as a responsible citizen she had both a duty and a right to act. She was found guilty by Justice of the Peace John MacPhail, one of the more moderate of the local lay magistrates, and fined £100.

Toby Clarke (26), a voluntary worker from Leeds, is likely to appeal his conviction after a statement he gave to police at the time of his arrest was either not noted or was lost. Again,

witnesses agreed that the atmosphere at the south gate that day had been jovial. Toby asked JP Macphail for a not guilty verdict "in the name of humanity". The JP declined and fined him £100. Toby told him he would not be paying. Any spare money he had went to the community projects he was involved in.

The case against Sheila McKay (50), a nonviolence trainer and community worker from Edinburgh, collapsed when a police witness was unable to identify her.

Next Monday, the 8th October, MSP Tommy Sheridan is due to be tried in Helensburgh for breach of the peace at the Big Blockade in February. Last year Tommy served time in Greenock jail after refusing to pay a fine imposed for his part in the Crimebusters' blockade of Faslane in February 2000.

Activists will again be ready to risk arrest at OKBLOK. David Mackenzie said: "There is a groundswell of revulsion against the warmongering and hypocrisy of our Western leaders and people recognise that states like the UK which actively deploy nuclear weapons are engaged in terrorism. If we are to have any credibility in "war" against terrorism one of the first steps will be to get rid of the weapons we have which can only murder millions of innocent people."

1st [Witness Confirms Trident Disarmers Held Up Submarine For A Month](#)
1st October 2001

Witness Confirms Trident Disarmers Held Up Submarine For A Month

As the adjourned trial of Trident submarine disarmers Rosie James and Rachel Wenham began today in Manchester Crown Court, exactly 30 months after their arrest, a Crown witness admitted that the damage they caused to HMS Vengeance had delayed the vessel for a whole month.

On 1st February 1999 Rachel and Rosie swam to and boarded the Trident nuclear weapon submarine, then docked at Barrow-in-Furness. They draped banners, painted slogans and damaged testing equipment on the conning tower. This is their third trial on the charges arising from that event. At the second trial in Manchester Crown Court in September last year Rosie and Rachel were acquitted by the jury on the charge relating to the painting of slogans, and the jury were hung on the more serious charge relating to the damage of the test equipment. Before Justice Fawcus and a jury, Rosie is represented by barrister Marguerite Russell, instructed by solicitor Gareth Peirce. Rachel is representing herself. It has been agreed that they may bring a defence of necessity or one based on the prevention of damage to property.

In his opening statement for the Crown barrister Dennis Watson claimed that the UK was committing no crime by possessing Trident and that the main aim of the defendants had been to acquire publicity for their cause.

Cross-examination of the three Crown witnesses heard today revealed that the submarine had represented a serious security risk even in its then unarmed state. A naval mechanic admitted that the submarine, if taken over by terrorists, could have been a very dangerous weapon. In the dock in February 1999 it was already producing toxic nuclear waste. In the event of a major leak it would be 200 years before the gardens of the houses close by the dock could safely be used for growing vegetables. The third witness, a project leader, confirmed that Rosie and Rachel's action had delayed the submarine, an admission that will seriously dent the Crown's claim that their motivation was simply to gain publicity.

At the end of this first day supporters in court were encouraged by the expertise of the legal defence, by the way evidence of the dangers posed by the submarines were emerging and by the

acceptance that the women had carried out a very effective disarmament action.

The trial continues.

September Conditional Discharge for Aldermaston Disarmers

28th

28th September 2001

Conditional Discharge for Aldermaston Disarmers

Two Trident Ploughshares activists were yesterday given a conditional discharge at Newbury Magistrates Court after being tried on a charge of criminal damage to the perimeter fence of the nuclear weapons factory at Aldermaston in Berkshire.

Alison Crane (47), from Stafford, and Judith Pritchard (79) from Malvern, took part in a weekend of activities in May this year when a group of activists cut the fence and entered the establishment. Alison told the court her cutting the fence was the same as a fireman breaking down a door to rescue a person. She had intended to ask the workers she met if they knew the facts about nuclear weapons and she pointed out that nuclear attacks would be much worse than the terrorist attacks on New York. The current government strategy constituted a conspiracy and therefore a current crime. Incidental loss of civilian life was against the Geneva Conventions Act and was therefore part of statute law in England. If our nuclear weapons were ever used the UK could be brought to trial, if there were any courts left. This criminal conspiracy gave her the legal justification of necessity. Predictably, the prosecution relied on the Opinion in Hutchinson -v- Newbury Magistrates Court in arguing that she had no justification for her action.

Judith gave a moving and lucid speech from the witness stand. She claimed that she undertook the action from a purely moral position due to the urgency of the threat of

annihilation.

Both were found guilty and given a conditional discharge, Alison for 18 months and Judith for 12. They were ordered to pay £140 compensation and £150 court costs.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "In these days of the 'Global War Against Terrorism' the UK courts still give their full and unthinking support to a major terrorist - the UK state itself with its fearful arsenal of mass murder."

25th

[Activist Uses Police TV Interview in Big Blockade Trial](#)

25th September 2001

Activist Uses Police TV Interview in Big Blockade Trial

Magistrate Told: "Your job is to keep humanity running."

At his trial today in Helensburgh District Court on a breach of the peace charge connected to the Big Blockade of Faslane nuclear weapon base in February, an activist used a network TV clip in which a senior police officer claimed that the base had not been disrupted by the action.

Andrew Gray (33), a librarian from Newcastle and a Green Party candidate in June's general election, said that the Crown had produced no evidence that his action had caused disruption. In the TV clip, shot as part of a newscast on the day, Superintendent Harry Bunch of Strathclyde Police makes the claim that the base was able to continue its work as normal.

Andrew pointed out that the terrorist attack on the US showed that we must consider what the end and outcome is of political ideas and plans for mass murder, like Trident. He told JP Fraser Gillies that while the police were under instruction to keep the base running he, as a Justice of the Peace, had a choice. His job was not to keep the base running but to keep humanity running. Andrew was fined £250 -JP Gillies' standard tariff for such charges. Andrew is considering an appeal.

Teacher Charlie McInally (52), from Glasgow, was given the same treatment for an alleged Big Blockade breach of the peace. Chris Brock (23), a volunteer at the Cyrenian hostel for the homeless near Edinburgh, fared rather better. His fine of £150 took into account the fact that he had no income.

Michael Pettersson (20), had traveled from his home in Sweden to face trial today, also on a Big Blockade charge of breach of the peace. He informed JP Gillies that a Sheriff in Dumbarton had simply admonished an activist on this charge. He was also fined £150.

David Mackenzie said: "In sentencing Chris and Michael JP Gillies has for the first time in our experience taken account of people's means. We are grateful for this small mercy but look forward to the day when he pays real attention to the substance of the defence case. Unlike other local magistrates he does not retire to consider the verdict, nor does he appear to take the Clerk's advice - an essential step for a lay justice dealing with cases that are often legally complex."

20th

[British CND Chair Fined for Blockading Faslane](#)

20th September 2001

British CND Chair Fined for Blockading Faslane

Carol Naughton, who was appointed last weekend as the new Chair of British CND, was fined £100 today in Helensburgh District Court for her part in a blockade of

Faslane.

Carol (47), a mother of three from Birmingham, took part in the Big Blockade of Faslane on February 12th this year. Today she told Justice Alexander that humanitarian law over-rode any right to self-defence. She was in tears as she read the testimony of a girl from Hiroshima who had been the sole survivor of her class when the US dropped the atomic bomb on her city and who said it was "like hell on earth." Carol told the court that the UK was ready to spend billions on weapons of mass destruction while two out of every five children in Birmingham were born to a life of poverty. She could not stand by and do nothing. She was found guilty and fined £100.

John Robb (28), a student from Rothesay, was also found guilty and fined the same amount for a Big Blockade charge of breach of the peace. He and his girlfriend had lain in the roadway kissing and cuddling. Procurator Fiscal Diana McConnell acknowledged that kissing was no crime but maintained that he had committed a breach of the peace. John said that it was the base which was causing distress, alarm and nuisance. John's sentence sharply illustrates the vagaries of this particular court. His girlfriend, Patricia O'Reilly, previously pled guilty by letter to the charge and was fined £250 by JP Fraser Gillies.

Tony Davies (67), a prison chaplain and retired doctor from Edinburgh, was found guilty of the same offence and fined £100. Tony said that he had worked with Jubilee 2000 and Drop the Debt and saw the anti-Trident struggle as similar in that both campaigns were backed by the majority of the people of Scotland. Yet, without protest there was no way for the wishes of the majority to be realised. The UK government was committing a continuous crime by actively deploying Trident and Tony asked the magistrate to take account of the statement by the Church of Scotland which encouraged people to resist it by nonviolent action.

For Trident Ploughshares Jane Tallents said: "If anyone doubts the strength of the nuclear disarmament movement today they should come down to the local courts here and listen. The approach of the different activists to these ridiculous charges is so rich and varied and yet they are all absolutely clear in their opposition to this crime and their determination to continue to resist it."

18th

Scottish Parliament Protester Told to Stop Breaching the Peace

18th September 2001

Scottish Parliament Protester Told to Stop Breaching the Peace

When Scottish Parliament protester Jane Tallents appeared in Edinburgh Sheriff Court today the Sheriff deferred sentence for a further nine months in the hope that she could stay out of "trouble".

On 27th August, Jane (43), a peace campaigner from Helensburgh, was found guilty of a breach of the peace after taking part in an anti-Trident demonstration in the Parliament in April. Sentence was deferred until today to allow for Social Enquiry and Community Service reports.

Jane told Sheriff McKinnon that she was proud to have demonstrated in the debating chamber to draw attention to the immorality and illegality of indiscriminate weapons of mass murder. She asked him to put into perspective her protest which at worst had only annoyed Presiding Officer David Steel. If the court still intended to punish her, she asked the Sheriff not to impose a fine or a custodial sentence. She was quite willing to take responsibility herself for her actions but a fine or a prison sentence would impact on her family. She was prepared to do community service but pointed out that trying to rid the world as it stands today of weapons of mass destruction was the greatest service she could give to the world community.

Sheriff McKinnon noted that the Social Enquiry report said that there was a high risk of Jane continuing to offend and deferred sentence until next June. He said that Jane was an "intelligent" woman and could manage not to breach the peace.

Jane said: "It would have been better if the Sheriff had got on with the business and decided on the punishment there and then. It is no use having the intelligence to see what is going on in the world if you don't have the courage to do something about it."

17th

Heavy Fines for Big Blockaders

17th September 2001

Heavy Fines for Big Blockaders

Growing concern about "maverick" JP

As two people who took part in February's Big Blockade of Faslane naval base were given heavy fines in Helensburgh District Court today there is growing concern about the complete inconsistency of the local courts in dealing with comparable anti-Trident actions and in particular about the sentences given out by Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies.

This morning two activists were facing Big Blockade breach of the peace charges - Bob Wallace (39) and Conrad Hughes (30), students at the Centre for Human Ecology in Edinburgh. Both defended themselves and told an unimpressed JP Gillies that the criminality lay in the Trident nuclear weapon system, not in them. Conrad also pointed out that on the day in question the north gate of Faslane had been closed by the base authorities and it was the large number of police present which caused the road to be blocked. JP Gillies found them guilty and fined them each £250. Both will appeal the sentence.

David Mackenzie said:

"There is huge variation in the sentences handed out to people who have been involved in identical actions at Faslane. On Friday Gareth Longford was found guilty and simply admonished by Sheriff Murphy on a charge of breach of the peace relating to the Big Blockade and today JP Gillies, dealing with exactly the same circumstances, dishes out his standard fare. Although individuals can appeal their own cases, the court authorities should be taking action to rescue the reputation of the local justice system. It's bad enough that the courts are punishing people for behaving as responsible citizens - it adds insult to injury when we have this capricious nonsense."

14th

Ulla Roder Convicted for Painting Trident Sub in Faslane

14th September 2001

Ulla Roder Convicted for Painting Trident Sub in Faslane

Sentence Deferred to 5th October

Trident Three member Ulla Roder was today found guilty in Dumbarton Sheriff Court on six charges relating to anti-Trident actions - three for breach of the peace, two for military byelaws and one for criminal damage.

The criminal damage charge related to April 27th when Ulla (45), from Odense in Denmark, swam inside the Trident berths, reached Vanguard and prepared to remove from the boat's hull some of the special tiles which help the sub remain undetected by enemy craft. When interrupted she spray-painted in cellulose letters a metre high the word "USELESS" on the hull. Although activists have on a number of occasions swum close to the Trident submarines

this was the first time that one was reached in Faslane, a feat the MOD police claimed was impossible. According to Ulla it was "Easy-Peasy".

The feat was repeated in August this year by Marcus Armstrong and Rachel Remnant. In June 1999 Ulla was one of the three women who threw laboratory equipment from the Trident research barge Maytime to the bottom of Loch Goil and was subsequently acquitted at Greenock Sheriff Court.

Ulla told the court that that international humanitarian law was a higher law than the Scottish High Court Opinion this year which had criticised the acquittal of the Trident Three at Greenock. Sheriff Fitzsimmons acknowledged that Ulla was sincere in what she did and that she would harm no-one. At the same time she was picking and choosing which laws she would obey. As a "humble sheriff" he was bound by the law as it stood. He deferred sentence until 5th October for Social Enquiry and Community Service reports.

It was also noted that the Crown has served a notice on Ulla that the sheriff could recommend to the Home Office that she be deported. She continues to be on remand in Cornton Vale prison in Stirling.

In the same court today Gareth Longford was found guilty and admonished by Sheriff Murphy on a charge of breach of the peace relating to the blockade of Faslane in February.

13th

In Court Today at Newbury and Helensburgh

13th September 2001

In Court Today at Newbury and Helensburgh

Today a number of activists involved in the blockade of Aldermaston last May were in Newbury Magistrates Court.

Amy Jowett was charged with Failure to Comply with Sec 14 and Willful Obstruction of the Highway. She spoke to the duty solicitor saying that she wanted to plead not guilty to the Sec 14 charge but guilty to the other one. The solicitor spoke to the prosecutor who dropped the Sec 14 as a result she got £50 fine plus £20 costs.

Rachel Smith pleaded guilty to both the same charges and was fined the same plus £30 for the Sec 14 offence.

Nick Lawrence pleaded guilty to the Section 14 charge and was fined £30 plus costs of £20.

All three who pleaded guilty made short but purposeful speeches to the Bench. Rachel told them about her concerns with DU. This is nuclear war she said and she had acted to raise the issues of nuclear weapons and bring them to public attention.

At Helensburgh District Court there were two not guilty verdicts and two convictions of people involved in the Big Blockade. Wendy Lewis, a member of the Red Choir group from Wales, was cleared after it became clear that she was arrested after going to check on her friend Ray Davies. A police witness (again!) failed to identify Morag Balfour and the Crown case collapsed. In spite of making cogent arguments from the Smith v Donnelly appeal case both Jean Oliver and Roz Bullen were found guilty and fined £150

10th

Four Faslane Protesters Acquitted

10th September 2001

Four Faslane Protesters Acquitted

Four anti-Trident activists were today acquitted on a charge of breach of the peace at Helensburgh District Court after the Justice of the Peace queried the quality of the evidence presented by the Crown.

Eric Wallace, a retired boatyard owner from Helensburgh, Brian Quail, a retired teacher from Glasgow, Barbara McGregor, an artist from Glasgow and Jane Tallents, a peace campaigner from Helensburgh, blockaded Faslane naval base with the other members of the Trident Ploughshares "Local Heroes" affinity group in April 1999.

Acting for Jane Tallents solicitor Terry Gallanagh made a submission of "no case to answer" after the Crown case was complete. Quoting from the Law Lords' Opinion given in the case of Smith V Donnelly he argued that the case against the four did not match the useful clarification given in that Opinion. The submission was rejected by JP Viv Dance.

All four accused took the witness stand. Barbara told the court that causing traffic to back up a little was an utterly trivial matter when compared to the threat posed by the nuclear arsenal inside the base. Jane said that there was no evidence anyone had been distressed or alarmed. She had spoken later to a submariner who had been held up in the queue of traffic. His comment had been: "Good for you!" Brian said that it was a funny old world in which people who spat on children as they tried to go to school in Belfast went scot-free while he and his friends were brought to court for such a trivial business. Eric told the court how the great cost of Trident condemned people to lives of poverty. Reverting to Scots dialect he said: "There cannae be any fairness in that!"

The JP said she was finding them not guilty on account of the inconsistencies in and the lack of quality of the Crown evidence.

Jane Tallents said: "It's clear from the recent Law Lords' Opinion that the actions we take are, in a legal sense, at the margins of what can be considered a breach of the peace. Actually our protest is quite reasonable and this Opinion will help give us legal authority to make our case in court."

3rd

Ulla in Court

3rd September 2001

Ulla in Court

Dumbarton Sheriff Court

A difficult and stressful day in Dumbarton. Ulla arrived from Cornton Vale at 10.30am. Her solicitor, Ruben Murdanaigum, only received the witness statements on Friday so needed to talk to her before the trial began.

Eventually Sheriff Fitzsimmons insisted that they start at 11.15am although once everyone was in court the Sheriff kept them waiting. He was rude and bullying all morning, giving the interpreter a hard time, and watching the supporters every move. When he couldn't find anything we were doing wrong he told Alex he couldn't bring his case into court even though it contained a very innocent picnic set (including china plates with forget-me-knots!) and the peace campers tea and sandwiches.

The trial began and witnesses were brought for three different actions:-
▶ The Womens Camp Action in March this year when Ulla got onboard a French Frigate

▶ The Big Blockade in February
▶ The recent swim to HMS Vanguard. The police gave evidence that they saw her painting 'USELESS' on the side of it.

There were still a load of witnesses in the witness room when we adjourned for lunch. When we returned we were told that Ulla was not well and a doctor was being called. At 3.30pm court resumed where it was said that the doctor found nothing seriously wrong but that Ulla was suffering from stress. It was agreed to adjourn the rest of the trial until Friday.

Please send Ulla messages of support to Bodil Ulla Roder, HMP Cornton Vale Cornton Road, STIRLING FK9 5NY.

7 Sep 2001 Update:

Today at Dumbarton Sheriff Court the Prosecution case against Ulla was concluded.

Her solicitor made a motion of no case to answer on three of the charges. The PF accepted a not guilty plea for one of them, the Sheriff ruled no case to answer for one and the third still stands. This leaves 6 charges to be defended: 3 for Breach of the Peace, 2 for military byelaws and one for criminal damage.

Ulla asked for an adjournment to bring expert witnesses on Trident, but the Sheriff made it clear he will rule they are irrelevant. An adjournment was agreed anyway and Ulla is back in jail until the continuation of the trial next Friday on Sept 14th.

3rd

Anti-Trident Scottish Parliament Demonstrator Acquitted

3rd September 2001

Anti-Trident Scottish Parliament Demonstrator Acquitted

Sheriff Accepts Submission of "No Case to Answer"

The second of eleven trials of Scottish Parliament anti-Trident demonstrators collapsed today in Edinburgh Sheriff Court as Crown witnesses failed to identify the accused.

Elinor Mackenzie (58), a retired college lecturer from Cathcart in Glasgow, was charged with a breach of the peace for her part in a Scottish Parliament protest on April 5th when with the eleven others she interrupted First Minister's Questions. Elinor represented herself in court. Parliament security attendants, giving evidence for the prosecution, were asked to identify the accused in the court and pointed out two women in the public seats. Halfway through the Crown case Elinor made a submission of "no case to answer". The Sheriff said he wanted to hear the whole prosecution case. At the end of the Crown case the Sheriff invited Elinor to make her submission again. She did so and this time it was accepted.

During the Crown case it emerged that on the day in question Elinor was about to be released without charge when there was a change of plan and the detaining officers were ordered to arrest her and take her to the police station for charging. It is also understood that by 2.30 that afternoon, before the actual demonstration took place, police in the Lothian Road station were advised that "CND activists were in the public gallery".

Elinor said: "I am delighted at the outcome and hope that this verdict will help the others as they come to trial. It is all wrong that we are brought to court for challenging the Parliament to respond to the Trident when the police and the prosecution services do nothing about that

appalling crime."

The first trial of the demonstrators took place last week when Jane Tallents (43), a peace campaigner from Helensburgh, was found guilty on the same charge. She is to be sentenced on 18th September following social enquiry and community service reports.

August Meanwhile today in Court no 2...

29th August 2001

29th

Meanwhile today in Court no 2...

At Helensburgh Scott Sutherland was acquitted of a Big Blockade breach of the peace. The charge claimed he had been pushing a police cordon. Scott had two witnesses, both social workers specialising in criminal justice and JP Nicholson agreed that there was significant doubt about the facts.

Another Big Blockader, Mark Ruggeri from Kilmarnock, got off when one police witness identified someone else and then changed his mind and the second witness could not identify anyone. Local activist Vincent West was not so lucky. He told the court he had been hemmed into the gateway by the police cordon and could not get away but he did admit he had been sitting down. A hefty £200 fine. This was odd because earlier the JP had only admonished two Big Blockaders, Maria Nikita and Elise Christensen, who had pled guilty by letter.

A warrant was issued for Philip Pritchard from Oxford, who was due to be tried today and who wrote to the Procurator Fiscal: "As much as I would like to be with you and explain my reasons for wanting Faslane to be shut permanently it is a long journey from Oxford and I am very busy. I am writing to say that I intend to be back at the base in October to make a similar protest and would be happy to meet then to discuss the matter further." (Roger Franklin got a same response on Monday to a similar letter.

Over in Edinburgh Sheriff Court Joy Mitchell, who had come all the way from Berwick on Tweed to be tried for the Scottish Parliament demo, was informed that it was being put off until 13th December. She told the Sheriff that as a former headteacher she had expected her school to be run efficiently and she expected the same standards from the courts. The Sheriff said criminal justice was different and it was difficult to plan to cover all eventualities. Things got dafter when Pamela Smith, in the public seats, was told to remove her headband. She understandably demanded a reason for this bizarre request and she was taken out and detained for two hours. Apparently no headgear is allowed in court! The court officers in Edinburgh Sheriff seem to be a law unto themselves and at the earlier plea hearing for the "Democratic Dozen" attempted to ban note-taking in the public seats. Pamela was not charged with anything during this dodgy procedure.

But the accolade of Prize Legal Curiosity of the Day goes to Sheriff Fitzsimmons at Dumbarton Sheriff Court. Ulla Roder had the day out of Cornton vale to attend an Intermediate diet for one of her many cases. She was attended by a Danish interpreter but the Sheriff got it into his mind that this was all a time wasting ploy. He demanded that Ulla speak to him in English so that he could

judge for himself whether an interpreter was necessary. Ulla explained that Scottish accents and legal jargon meant that much of what was said in court went over her head and he grudgingly let the interpreter take part. For many years now training has been available for Scottish sheriffs on the need for fair language access in courts, and a basic part of that training covers the need to understand that a socially functional level of English does not necessarily mean that the person can cope with a hearing on an equal basis. He got shirty again when proceedings were held up as Ulla asked to see the charge sheet, from which one of the charges had been removed. The Sheriff said "I am not used to playing this sort of game." Well, it's not a game to us either but he's going to have to get used to it..."

28th [Dumbarton Sheriff Clears Big Blockader on "Trumped-Up" Charge](#)

28th August 2001

Dumbarton Sheriff Clears Big Blockader on "Trumped-Up" Charge

Today in Dumbarton Sheriff Court an anti-Trident campaigner was found not guilty of a breach of the peace after the Crown had claimed that he been encouraging others to break a police line.

Alan McCombs (46), editor of the Scottish Socialist Voice, was charged with inciting people to push against a police line and causing a breach of the peace at the Big Blockade of Faslane in February. Alan represented himself. His witnesses confirmed that a police cordon was holding up to 200 protesters off the road and when the police tried to push them back people were being crushed against the crash barrier. When Alan remonstrated with the police to make more room he was grabbed and arrested. Throughout his defence Alan made continuous reference to Trident and gave a graphic account of the effects of nuclear weapons. Alan told the court that the protesters had come to have a peaceful protest, not to give the police hassle. Sheriff Vaughan said he was impressed with Alan's arguments, accepted that there was sufficient doubt about the charge and acquitted him.

John Andrew Rossetter (24), a factory worker from Fort William, was charged with pushing violently against police lines and violently resisting arrest. He had been in the same group as Alan McCombs. Sheriff Vaughan did not accept all the Crown evidence but took the view that a breach of the peace had been committed. However, the Sheriff said he recognised that Andrew was a law-abiding person and was content to admonish him.

Alan McCombs said: "We claim the right to protest peacefully at Faslane and we are ready to take responsibility for our actions. At the same time the police and the Crown need to know we will defend ourselves strenuously on any trumped-up charge, like the one I was facing today."

27th [Guilty Verdict in First Trial of Scottish Parliament Trident Demonstrators](#)

27th August 2001

Guilty Verdict in First Trial of Scottish Parliament Trident Demonstrators

In spite of being able to show that her actions had caused no-one any fear, distress or alarm a Trident Ploughshares activist was today found guilty of a breach of the peace by an Edinburgh Sheriff for her part in a Scottish Parliament demonstration.

On 5th April Jane Tallents (43), a peace campaigner from Helensburgh, took part in a demonstration in the chamber with eleven others. They interrupted First Minister's Questions when they dropped banners from the balcony and shouted out "The people of Scotland don't want Trident!" The demonstration followed closely on the heels of the Scottish High Court's

controversial opinion criticising the acquittal of the Trident Three.

Representing herself Jane got prosecution witnesses to admit and defence witnesses (including MSP Margo McDonald) to confirm that the demonstration had been peaceful and that no one had been alarmed by it. She argued that her situation was similar to someone discovering a gas leak and finding that the responsible authorities are dilatory or apathetic about dealing with it. In that context an alarm has to be raised and no-one who raised it would be brought before the courts on a breach of the peace charge. For decades she had attempted to get the authorities to deal with the Trident threat but to no avail.

Sheriff McKinnon said that this was a clear case of breach of the peace. In his view MSPs were entitled to go about their business without disruption. He found Jane guilty and deferred sentence until 18th September, pending a social enquiry and a community service report.

Jane said: " It's disappointing that once again a court has decided to treat us as criminals when we are acting as responsibly as we can. The PF based his case on the perception that Presiding Officer David Steel might have been annoyed. Put that alongside the threat to the future of the world that Trident poses and you see how loopy the Crown case was. " Margo McDonald said: " We are not saying the Sheriff is a fool, merely that the law is an ass."

The 10 other demonstrators are facing separate trials over the next few months.

25th [Scottish Parliament Protester On Trial On Monday](#)
25th August 2001

Scottish Parliament Protester On Trial On Monday

MSP Margo McDonald Expected to Give Evidence

Scottish Parliament protester Jane Tallents will appear for trial on Monday in Edinburgh Sheriff Court following her part in a Scottish Parliament protest on April 5th.

The Crown alleges that Jane (43), a peace campaigner from Helensburgh, committed a breach of the breach when with eleven others she interrupted First Minister's Questions, dropped a banner from the balcony and shouted out "When will you get rid of Trident?". The demonstration followed closely on the heels of the Scottish High Court's controversial opinion criticising the acquittal of the Trident Three.

Jane will represent herself and aims to show that there was no breach of the peace. She will claim that the "Democratic Dozen" were justified in raising the alarm about Trident and the failure of the UK parliaments, government and courts to respond to the threat it posed. It is hoped that the Scottish National Party MSP Margo MacDonald will give evidence for the defence.

Meanwhile Helensburgh District Court has continued to punish anti-Trident activists. Today Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies gave out £250 fines to two Trident Ploughshares pledgers, Ellen Moxley (from Tillicoultry and one of the Trident Three) and Kirsty Gathergood (from Oxford) for their part in the Big Blockade of Faslane in February. Ellen told the JP she had no intention of paying the fine. In a solemn passage Kirsty told the court how she had seen for herself the inside of the Baghdad bunker in which 400 men, women and children had been incinerated by US bombing. The sheer horror of that scene, which would be multiplied many times in an attack by Trident, had made her doubly determined to take action against it. The case against Jean Oliver from Wiston Lodge in Lanarkshire was thrown out when one of the police witnesses made a wrong identification in court.

Twenty more trials of Trident Ploughshares activists are scheduled for next week.

22nd [Louise Refuses To Turn Up; Morag Gets Off](#)
22nd August 2001

Court Update

Louise Refuses To Turn Up; Morag Gets Off

A busy week at Helensburgh District Court for Fife members of the Scottish Socialist Party continued today with two more trials taking place.

In the first, Louise McLeary (23) from Kirkcaldy refused to attend to answer a charge of breach of the peace relating to the Big Blockade at Faslane on February 12th this year. Louise is blind and has not received details of the charge against her in a format which is accessible to her. Under the circumstances, the Justice of the Peace in charge, Viv Dance could have issued a warrant for Miss McLeary's arrest. Instead she asked that inquiries be made into making the relevant information available to Miss McLeary before the next scheduled hearing.

Louise McLeary, a fourth year Dundee University student said, "I have the right to have the same information made available to me as any other accused person in this country. The Procurator Fiscal in Dumbarton would seem to prefer that I am reliant on someone else reading court letters to me. I consider this to be a breach of my human rights."

Miss McLeary intends to defend herself in due course.

In a later trial today, SSP Glenrothes Chair Morag Balfour (28) was acquitted of breach of the peace relating to an incident outside Coulpport Armaments Depot on 4th October 2000. Ms Balfour's solicitor Terry Gallanagh exposed discrepancies in the statements of the two police witnesses and argued that the charge of breach of the peace did not apply because Ms Balfour was acting peacefully and was not placing anyone in a state of fear, alarm or distress. His motion that there was therefore no case for Ms Balfour to answer was upheld by Justice Viv Dance.

The verdict was greeted with applause from Trident Ploughshares supporters in court.

Morag Balfour said afterwards: "I am delighted with this verdict. Though it takes little away from our disappointment over what happened to Dougie Kinnear on Monday, we shall still celebrate. It's hard to believe that non-violent resistance against an installation housing weapons of mass destruction could instill fear and alarm in anyone, least of all those who are trained to defend that installation against terrorist attacks."

18th [Big Blockaders Unbowed as Scottish Court Hands Out Heavy Fines](#)
18th August 2001

Big Blockaders Unbowed as Scottish Court Hands Out Heavy Fines

Three women from the South of England showed their determination to continue their struggle against the UK's Trident nuclear weapon system in spite of getting heavy fines at Helensburgh District Court yesterday.

Anne Kobayashi 60, a social Worker from Essex, Myra Garrett 68, a community worker, and Angela Broome 65, a retired social worker, both from London, were charged with breaching the peace after taking part in the Big Blockade of Faslane in February this year when 1000 people came to the Trident submarine base and 385 were arrested. All three were found guilty and fined £250 by Justice of the Peace Fraser Gillies from Rothesay, a magistrate noted for giving heavy

fines to peace protesters.

All three women stoutly defended their right to take action against the Trident system. Anne told the court: "If voices cannot be heard through normal channels the ultimate act is to put your body where it cannot be ignored." Myra insisted that she had not stopped people going about their lawful business - the work of the base was unlawful under international humanitarian law. Angela said she was promoting the peace, not breaching it.

Anne and Angela told JP Gillies they would not be paying the fine and Myra said she would think about it. In the same court Ian Richardson appeared for a means hearing having refused to pay a £100 fine, also for a Big Blockade "breach of the peace". Ian told the court he had still no intention of paying and JP Gillies gave him another month to consider, with the promise of jail if he did not cough up.

Another 48 trials of Trident Ploughshares activists are scheduled for the remainder of this month as the courts struggle to respond to a growing tide of resistance to Trident. The problem for the courts will continue its exponential increase after the blockade of Faslane on 22nd October unless the authorities revise their attitude to the campaign of peaceful, nonviolent direct action.

Helensburgh resident and TP member Jane Tallents said: "It doesn't matter how often Procurator Fiscal Donnelly tells us that Trident workers are law abiding, or how often the Magistrates tell us we are committing a Breach of the Peace by annoying some theoretical members of the public, people will continue to come here to take action against this horrifying weapons system until it is dismantled."

17th

[Another Peace Activist Sent To Prison As Court Cases Pile Up](#)

17th August 2001

Another Peace Activist Sent To Prison As Court Cases Pile Up

56 Trident Ploughshares Trials Before End of August

Yesterday a Trident Ploughshares activist was sent to prison and another was fined as Scottish courts continued their attempt to contain civil resistance to Trident.

Brian Quail (63), a retired teacher from Glasgow with a long history of direct action against nuclear weapons, was sent to Saughton Prison in Edinburgh yesterday after a warrant was served on him for unpaid fines amounting £365 for two anti-Trident actions. He had gone to Edinburgh Sheriff Court for a hearing in connection with his part in the Trident Ploughshares demonstration in the Scottish Parliament in April.

It is understood that Brian has a fourteen-day sentence. Last month Brian was one of seven people with a history of protest at Faslane who were refused entry to Italy, giving rise to concern about British authorities gathering and passing on to foreign police forces lists of peaceful protesters.

Meanwhile, in Dumbarton Sheriff Court, another TP activist was fined £100 for his part in the Big Blockade of Faslane in February. Allen O'Keefe, from Cromer in Norfolk, told the court that he had been part of a Bicycle Performance Art event, an installation which the police could have easily moved from the roadway if they had wished. Cross-examining the police witnesses Allen was able to show that they had not been alarmed by his action. To establish a conviction of breach of the peace the Crown ought to show that people were or could potentially be alarmed. Sheriff Montgomery prevented Allen from introducing international law as part of his defence and found him guilty.

8 trials of TP activists are scheduled today and no less than 48 further trials are due to take place

before the end of this month.

Trident Ploughshares member David Mackenzie said: "It's high time the Scottish public were made fully aware of the campaign by the authorities to stamp out peaceful dissent. The courts clearly feel they have carte blanche to punish, harass and imprison peaceful protesters after the shameful decision of the High Court earlier this year. The net effect of their repression will be to stiffen our resolve."

14th [Police Witnesses Fail to Identify Accused in Two Trident Cases](#)
14th August 2001

Police Witnesses Fail to Identify Accused in Two Trident Cases

Other Activists Fined Total of £750

Two more cases against Trident Ploughshares activists collapsed yesterday while another was given hefty fines.

In Dumbarton Sheriff Court the case against Morag Balfour for her part in the Big Blockade in February this year was thrown out when a police witness failed to identify her. Morag (28), is from Glenrothes and polled 841 votes in the Central Fife constituency in the general election in June.

Meanwhile. In Helensburgh District Court the case against River met a similar fate when a police witness picked out a fellow campaigner in the public seats. River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, is familiar with acquittals for anti-Trident actions, having been famously acquitted by the jury in Manchester Crown Court this January on charges of conspiring to commit criminal damage. In November 1999 he and Sylvia Boyes attempted to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance when it was undergoing pre-operational testing in Barrow docks. This is the third occasion in the space of a week when police witnesses have either failed to identify or have misidentified accused in Trident Ploughshares trials.

David Mackenzie said: "It's difficult to see what is behind this particular identity crisis. Maybe confusion is more likely because there are more and more of us to deal with. Anyway, it's just one more sign that the courts are not coping with this growing wave of civil resistance. The answer is simple: stop criminalising people who are upholding the law and attempting to prevent crime."

Marcus Armstrong (41), a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes, who on Monday last week spray-painted a Trident submarine in its high security berth at Faslane, appeared in the same court for a blockade of the Coulport armaments depot and for swimming into the Coulport base, both last August. Justice of the Peace Viv Dance found him guilty and fined him £300 on the first charge and £250 on the second. Barbara Maver from Edinburgh was fined £200 for her part in the blockade of Faslane on 1st August 2000.

11th [One More Activist Swims Into Trident Area At Faslane](#)
11th August 2001

One More Activist Swims Into Trident Area At Faslane

Early this morning Trident Ploughshares (TP) campaigner Dave Rolstone swam across the dark and polluted waters of the Gareloch in Scotland right into the high security area where Britain's Trident nuclear missile submarines are berthed.

Dave (55), a boat builder from Pembrokeshire, went into the water from the western shore just after midnight. He negotiated the large boom which protects the Trident berths and swam undetected until he was about 40 metres from one of the Trident submarines. At this point he was spotted by three marines on the jetty. Dave could see the red glow of their infra-red night sights

as they pointed their guns at him. Then the base alarm went off - a loud screeching sound followed by a public address announcement "Bandits in base, bandits in base!" A police inflatable boat picked him up and he was taken into custody. He was charged with being in a prohibited area and released at 5.30 a.m. He was carrying spray-paint and aimed to continue the work of fellow activist Marcus Armstrong who managed to paint the "I" of "Illegal" on a Trident submarine early on Monday morning.

After his release this morning Dave was able to pass on new information about the Trident area and its security arrangements which will be very helpful for future actions. He said: "Close up these subs are sinister machines, especially when you know what they are designed to do."

The TP activists will strike their camp at Coulport today, after 14 days of successful action and 65 arrests. Their next advertised event is the mass blockade of Faslane on 22nd October but as before there will be ongoing action by TP affinity groups.

10th [Crown Appeal Against Bail For Trident Ploughshares Activist](#)
10th August 2001

Crown Appeal Against Bail For Trident Ploughshares Activist

The Crown has appealed against the decision today by Dumbarton Sheriff Court to free on bail Trident Ploughshares activist Ulla Roder, following a series of arrests for anti-Trident actions.

Ulla (47), from Odense in Denmark, appeared today from custody in Dumbarton Sheriff Court after being arrested yesterday during a blockade of the nuclear warhead depot at Coulport. Last week Helensburgh District Court applied a special bail condition forbidding her from being within 25 metres of the Faslane and Coulport bases. In April she spray-painted a Trident submarine in the "high security" berths at Faslane and she was one of the Trident Three famously acquitted in Greenock Sheriff Court after disarming the Trident research barge Maytime in June 1999.

Sheriff Fitzsimmons granted bail on the grounds that Ulla had never failed to appear for any court hearing. Astonishingly, the Crown representative, the Procurator Fiscal, did not raise any objection to bail during the hearing itself but lodged its appeal immediately afterwards. The appeal will be heard in the High Court in Edinburgh on Monday. Meanwhile Ulla is remanded to Cornton Vale Women's Prison in Stirling.

Trident Ploughshares member Marjan Willemsen said: "I am outraged that someone who has not been found guilty, has no previous convictions and poses no danger to the public can be imprisoned for three days without trial."

Meanwhile, in the same court the case against another TP activist was thrown out when a police witness identified the wrong person. Mark Leech (34), from Edinburgh was appearing on a charge of breach of the peace arising from the Big Blockade of Faslane in February. On that occasion Mark's affinity group, the "Ceilidh Creatures" had transformed themselves into a spaceship to block the gateway to the base and there is speculation that the witness expected to see an alien in court, a theory that does not completely please Ludwig Appeltans from Gent in Belgium who was sitting in the public benches and was identified instead.

9th [7 Arrests in Nagasaki Day Blockade of UK Nuke Base](#)
9th August 2001

7 Arrests in Nagasaki Day Blockade of UK Nuke Base

This morning 7 Trident Ploughshares activists were arrested as they blockaded the main gate of the Trident nuclear warhead depot at Coulport in Scotland in

commemoration of those who died and suffered when the US dropped its second atom bomb on Nagasaki on this day in 1945.

Five campaigners locked on to each other with karabiners through metal tubes embedded in drums filled with concrete. It took about 40 minutes for a specially trained police team, using angle grinders and hacksaws, to remove them. It is expected that they will be charged with a breach of the peace. Police were able to keep one side of the gateway clear and base traffic made its way in slowly past a group of campers holding banners and calling on the workers to think about the dreadful purpose of the base and the Trident system.

Those locked on were Dave Rolstone (55), from Wales, Hanna Jarvinen (24) from Finland, Yves Verhasselt (27) and Bernard de Witte (57), both from Belgium and Harriet Jones (20), from London.

Also arrested was veteran Danish campaigner Ulla Roder (45), from Odense. Ulla was attempting to lock on when she was held. She will be held in custody before a court appearance tomorrow. Earlier this week the local court gave her the additional bail condition that she must not go within 25 metres of Coulport and Faslane Bases.

62 two people have now been arrested during the TP camp at Coulport which continues until Saturday. More actions are expected.

Andrew Gray said: "In these days when, quite rightly, war criminals from the Balkans are being tried for their crimes, let's remember that the US personnel responsible for the Hiroshima and Nagasaki outrages have not been brought to book and the UK is allowed to continue its blatantly illegal deployment of Trident."

8th [Resistance to Trident continues with 'disco' action at Faslane](#)

8th August 2001

Resistance to Trident continues with 'disco' action at Faslane

Two Trident Ploughshares activists appeared in Dumbarton Sheriff's court this afternoon, charged with malicious mischief after cutting into the RNAD Coulport nuclear warheads depot. Ludwig Appeltans, from Gent in Belgium, and Harriet Jones (20), from London, cut their way through the perimeter fence at Coulport on Monday night. They remained inside the fence for six hours before the Ministry of Defence police could arrest them on the inside of the base.

Ludwig and Harriet have been charged with cutting the perimeter fence, cutting through an alarm cable, breach of bylaws and breach of the peace. In court, the Procurator Fiscal confirmed that standard practice in Helensburgh District Court was to, in the Sheriff's words, "dispense with the criminal justice system" by not fixing intermediate hearings, and a trial date was set for 29th October.

Ludwig and Harriet made their way to Faslane to join other activists outside the North Gate of Faslane for a "disco" action. After singing and dancing outside the base, with banners saying "Don't glow, sparkle" and "Staying alive, Trash Trident", two activists, Roz Bullen (31), from Edinburgh, and Hanna Järvinen (24), from Finland, blockaded the entrance to the base by locking on to each other. They were briefly arrested but have now been de-arrested and rejoined the protest. The senior police officer present told Roz and Hanna that he was de-arresting them because he recognised their "right to peaceful protest".

"By their continued resistance and partying in the face of the Trident evil, Ludwig and Harriet are

showing the true spirit of hope and resistance," said a Trident Ploughshares spokesperson.

There have now been 55 arrests during the two-week Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport. The camp continues until Saturday 11th August, and further actions are expected.

7th [Ploughshares Activists Pile on the Pressure at UK Nuke Bases](#)

7th August 2001

Ploughshares Activists Pile on the Pressure at UK Nuke Bases

The Trident Ploughshares activists, who are camping at Coulport on Loch Long, last night put the nuclear weapons bases under extra pressure as they cut into high security areas and swam towards the berths where the Trident submarines are docked.

Six activists, working in three teams of two, during the night approached the high security fence at the Coulport base, where the warheads for the Trident missiles are stored. Two of them, Ludwig Appeltans, from Gent in Belgium and Harriet Jones (20), from London, were able to cut their way through the fence and it was six hours before the Ministry of Defence police were able to apprehend them on the inside. The activists, who are still in custody, aimed to explore the high security area with a view to further action.

David Mackenzie said: "In spite of heightened security during our camp, in spite of all the patrols and the high-tech surveillance, we are still able to penetrate the bases' defences. This is down to our determination to expose this country's ongoing nuclear crime."

Meanwhile two campaigners, Ulla Roder (45), from Odense in Denmark and Dave Rolstone (55), a boat builder from Pembrokeshire, set out to swim across the Gareloch towards the Trident berths in Faslane. They were about 200 metres from the boom which protects the berths when they were intercepted by an MOD marine patrol. They were not arrested but told to swim back across the loch.

Yesterday evening the camp commemorated the bombing of Hiroshima in a moving ceremony on the shore of Loch Long. After a vigil they floated candle lanterns out to sea in memory of those who died and suffered. The bobbing lights drifted northward towards the nuclear weapons base.

Today Marcus Armstrong and Rachel Remnant appear in Helensburgh District Court after their dramatic swim into Faslane on Sunday night when they painted on the hull of a Trident submarine. The camp continues until Saturday and has so far led to 53 arrests.

7th [No Vandalism Charge for Nuke Sub Spray-Painter](#)

7th August 2001

No Vandalism Charge for Nuke Sub Spray-Painter

MOD accused of trying to hide embarrassing security breach

It was learned today that the authorities have decided not to charge with vandalism a Trident Ploughshares activist who yesterday spray-painted a Trident nuclear weapon submarine inside its protected berth.

Marcus Armstrong (41), a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes, swam into the base in the early hours of Monday morning with Rachel Remnant (21), a zoology student at Liverpool University. Marcus was held in custody overnight and appeared with Rachel today at Helensburgh District Court on a charge of breaching the byelaws by being inside the protected area at Faslane. In answer to Marcus' query about the absence of a charge relating to the spray-painting Procurator Fiscal Ian McCrae said "No comment." Justice of the Peace John McPhail accepted the

Crown's request for an additional bail condition for Marcus and Rachel - that they must not go within 25 metres of the protected area at Faslane and Coulport.

David Mackenzie said: "It's clear that the MOD cannot stomach a court case in which the chronic inadequacies of base security would be again exposed, so they are pretending that it did not happen."

Marcus said: "We were proud to take this symbolic action on Hiroshima day and again give the UK government the message that we will not tolerate them planning murder on an even greater scale."

Finnish activist Katri Silvonen (23) was also given the same bail conditions when she appeared from custody after failing to appear for a trial on 1st August.

6th

[Activists paint nuclear submarine on Hiroshima anniversary](#)

6th August 2001

Activists paint nuclear submarine on Hiroshima anniversary

Two Trident Ploughshares activists today spraypainted one of Britain's Trident nuclear armed submarines inside the high security area at Faslane Naval Base, a feat that the MOD claimed was impossible until earlier this year. This comes on the anniversary of killing of 140,000 people in Hiroshima.

Rachel Remnant, 21, a zoology student at Liverpool University and Marcus Armstrong, 41, a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes, entered the water near Faslane at midnight. The pair, calling themselves "Subversive Submariners" swam through the protected waters around the base, under the security boom and into the high security area where two Trident submarines were berthed. They remained concealed in this area for 20 minutes, and were arrested whilst painting "ILLEGAL" on the side of one of the submarines. The pair remained jubilant as they were arrested at gunpoint by "surprised and amused" officers at 1:30am.

The MOD claimed that it would be impossible for anyone to enter the high security area at Faslane, until Danish activist Ulla Roder painted "USELESS" on one of the submarines in April this year.

Britain has four Trident submarines, each of which is usually armed with 48 one hundred kiloton warheads, each 7 1/2 times as powerful as the bomb which killed 140,000 in Hiroshima 56 years ago today. One submarine remains on constant patrol on a war footing. The British government has never been able to explain how Trident could be used without breaking international law.

Speaking about action, which was the first that she had participated in, Rachel said: "It was a liberating experience; the fear that nuclear weapons inflict is very real. I hope that my actions have highlighted the risk that Trident poses to life. As we swam to the submarine, our thoughts were for the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We were swimming for peace."

Rachel has been released on police bail, and will be available for interviews all day. Marcus has been detained in custody. The pair are to appear at Dumbarton Sheriff Court tomorrow (though it is thought that this may be changed to Helensburgh District Court).

The action took place during the Trident Ploughshares 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport, which goes on to the 11th August. There have been 36 arrests so far during the camp, and three sea actions against a Trident submarines. Further actions are planned.

6th

Hiroshima anniversary marked with vigils and direct action

6th August 2001

Hiroshima anniversary marked with vigils and direct action

Activists at the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport have marked the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing with a variety of activities, ranging from silent vigils to swimming into the highest security nuclear base in the country and painting on a submarine.

In the early hours of this morning, Rachel Remnant, 21, a zoology student at Liverpool University and Marcus Armstrong, 41, a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes swam into Faslane Naval Base, under the security boom and to the side of one of the Trident submarines. The MOD have previously claimed that this was impossible. They were apprehended whilst painting "ILLEGAL" on the side of the submarine.

Vigils were held at 8:15am, the time that the bomb was dropped. In Glasgow, Trident Ploughshares, Women in Black and Faslane Peace Camp met in George Square, before leading a 'funeral' style procession to Kelvingrove Park in order to replace the plaque marking a commemorative tree planted by Hiroshima victims. Simultaneously, other Trident Ploughshares held a silent vigil at the gates of the Coulport warhead depot, and two arrests were made as activists blockaded the base, attempting to prevent the morning shift entering the base.

During the day, there were three separate fence cutting actions at Faslane and Coulport, leading to nine arrests. Five of those involved at Faslane entered the base and remained at large for up to two hours.

The bombing of Hiroshima by the USA at 8:15am on 6th August 1945 killed 140,000 people, caused horrendous injuries and deformities in survivors and serious congenital damage. The UK maintains an arsenal of about 200 nuclear warheads, each one of these 7 1/2 as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb. Activists make the direct link between active deployment of Trident nuclear armed submarines and the preparedness of the British government and military to commit atrocities worse than the Hiroshima bombing, and that the threat or act of this is criminal under international law.

The Trident Ploughshares 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport runs until the 11th August. There have been 45 arrests so far during the camp, and three sea actions against Trident submarines. Advance notice can be given of an action at **4pm on Wednesday 8th August**. This will be a bright and colourful 'disco' action at Faslane North Gate. Other actions will also take place this week.

5th

Activists hold impromptu carnival outside warhead base

5th August 2001

Activists hold impromptu carnival outside warhead base

Last night, around thirty Trident Ploughshares activists held an impromptu midnight carnival outside the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport, which stores Trident nuclear warheads.

The international group, from England, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, Finland, USA and Canada remained at the gate for about three hours, enjoying the full moon with fire jugglers, musicians and singers. The group, whose ages ranged from 10 to 70, also chalked slogans on the road and ran about playing childrens' games.

The MOD police watched in a rather stony faced manner, occasionally threatening to arrest people

for serious offences such as leaning on the fence, but joined in the games as 'seekers' when people played 'hide and seek'!

Noora Jaakkola, 19, a student from Finland said: "Peace activism must include enjoying ourselves; we want to set an example of how a nuclear free world could be, which must include having fun! It is a shame that the twenty police officers there were not prepared to enjoy themselves more."

The carnival took place during the Trident Ploughshares 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport, which goes on to the 11th August. There have been 32 arrests so far during the camp, and two sea actions against a Trident submarine. Further actions are planned for the coming week.

4th **Anti-nuclear groups sign 'Helensburgh Treaty'**

4th August 2001

Anti-nuclear groups sign 'Helensburgh Treaty'

Ten anti-nuclear groups have today signed the 'Helensburgh Treaty', thought to be the first international treaty between campaigning organisations.

The treaty is billed as 'a people's treaty to disarm nuclear weapons' and stems from a frustration felt by activists at the failure of governments to maintain their obligations under legally binding international treaties. Cited primarily is the Non-Proliferation Treaty; this was reviewed in New York last year and governments made an unequivocal commitment to the elimination of all nuclear arsenals, but no action has been taken. Further, the Helensburgh Treaty makes direct reference to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, given on 8th July 1996, which stated that "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law..." (1). Britain constantly has at least one Trident nuclear armed submarine on patrol.

The treaty commits groups who sign to work in global co-operation for the elimination of nuclear weapons, by pressing governments to abolish these weapons, communicating to those involved that they have a personal responsibility for the criminality of nuclear weapons and by taking nonviolent direct action against nuclear weapons. Furthermore, signatories should never prejudice the wellbeing of humanity as a whole for the advantage of any particular nation, race or religious group. (2)

The initial signatories are: Trident Ploughshares, Scottish Socialist Party, For Mother Earth, Youth and Student CND, Scottish CND, CND Cymru, Helensburgh CND, Women for Peace (Denmark), Faslane Peace Camp and Onkruid Vergaat Neit! (Netherlands). It is hoped that more groups will join the treaty soon. The treaty was signed at a ceremony on the sea front at Helensburgh, a few miles from the British Trident bases. After signing the treaty, the representative of each group symbolically made a cut in a piece of fence taken from Faslane Naval Base.

The signing took place during the Trident Ploughshares 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport, which goes on to the 11th August. There have been 32 arrests so far during the camp, and two sea actions against a Trident submarine.

Notes:

1. Advisory Opinion, Para 105 2E.
2. Copies of the Helensburgh Treaty are available from Trident Ploughshares.

3rd [Ploughshares Activists Buzz Trident Sub](#)
3rd August 2001

Ploughshares Activists Buzz Trident Sub

This morning Trident Ploughshares buzzed one the UK's missile weapon submarines as it left the armaments depot at Coulport in Loch Long where the subs take nuclear warheads on board.

Six swimmers and three activists in canoes spread themselves across the loch as the huge vessel slipped southward well on the western side of the channel to avoid the swimmers. It had to change course again to avoid coming close to one of the canoeists, Marjan Willemsen(24), a Dutch woman from Faslane Peace Camp.

No arrests were made and the MOD boat police were content to keep submarine and activists apart. When the submarine had passed, the boatmen offered the TP swimmers a lift back to shore. One swimmer, Marcus Armstrong (41), from Milton Keynes, had a mild attack of cramp and was given a leg massage by one of the officers.

David Mackenzie said: "We were out in the water today because we just cannot allow such a machine, which is ready to kill and horribly maim millions of people, to sail as if it were an everyday, normal event. Again we take our hats off to the skill and consideration of the MOD boatmen."

The action is part of the 14-day TP disarmament camp at Peaton Wood in Coulport which has so far led to 32 arrests. The camp continues until 11th August and many more actions are expected. Photos of this mornings action from Helensburgh Advertiser on 01436 673434 or from Trident Ploughshares

2nd [Ploughshares activists breach security at nuclear base again](#)
2nd August 2001

Ploughshares activists breach security at nuclear base again

Ploughshares activists breach security at nuclear base again 4 activists arrested and 2 detained during night actions at Clyde Nuclear Submarine base.

Last night six people, in three groups of two, went to Coulport Naval Base. Two activists were detained outside the fence, held for four hours and later released without charge. Both other pairs managed to cut through the perimeter fence and enter the base where they cut into the razor wire. One pair then climbed inside the razor wire where they lay for 6 hours until they were cut free by workers. The activists aimed to cut their way in and make a citizens arrest of the base commander for making preparations for war crimes

The four were arrested and charged with malicious mischief and breach of local bye laws. Alex Cochrane, 32, from Partick, Glasgow commented "I am delighted that yet again we have breached security at this supposedly secure base and disrupted the genocidal work of mass murder going on in there."

The other activists were Ruth Jones, Stephen Thompson, Mark Akkerman, Joss Garman and Ludwig Appeltans.

Inside Coulport the activists were questioned by the MoD police, who attempted to elicit various details about the TP camp and personnel. The MoD also wanted the non-arrested activists to hand in their bolt-cutters so they could destroy them. The activists politely refused, indicating the bolt-cutters would definitely be required on another action.

These actions once more show that citizens will simply not allow the British government to continue

breaking international law and preparing for mass murder and form part of the TP 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport, which goes on until the 11th August. So far there have been 32 arrests in four days of action.

Contacts:Coulport Campsite 0870 458 3116

Mobile 07778267833

(International callers dial ++441436850522)

TP Office 0870 458 3117

July Ploughshares activists' sea action delays submarine patrol

31st July 2001

31st Ploughshares activists' sea action delays submarine patrol

11 arrests in morning of actions at Clyde Nuclear Submarine bases

Three Trident Ploughshares activists attempted to enter protected waters around Faslane Naval Base with a wooden raft this morning, causing a delay in the departure of a Trident submarine from Faslane. The submarine is currently sailing up Loch Long towards Coulport, where it will be loaded with nuclear warheads. At least one activist is currently on the water in Loch Long and will attempt to cause further disruption.

Aboard the colourful raft this morning was a banner stating "There are no hugs with nuclear arms", a model Trident missile and bright yellow CND balloons, as the trio attempted to highlight the continuing inaction of the authorities to fulfil their legal obligations to disarm Britain's nuclear weapons. Ulla Roder, 47, from Denmark, who recently painted "USELESS" on a Trident Submarine within the high security area at Faslane, and Dave Rolestone, 55, a boat builder from Wales, were arrested by MOD Police in inflatables as the raft neared the protected waters around Faslane.

Gillian Sloan, 39, a social worker from Edinburgh was not arrested. Commenting, she said: "The MOD police in the boats seemed very edgy as they apprehended us. It is clear that they were worried by peace activists delaying Trident manoeuvres. Trident is an appalling weapon, capable only of

indiscriminate slaughter, and we are determined to disarm it."

Broadcast quality footage of this action, including close-up footage of arrests, is available from TV2 Denmark.

During the morning, there have been nine other arrests as activists attempted to disrupt the work of the Coulport missile store. In the early hours of this morning, two activists attempted to cut through the fence into the base. During the morning shift change, four activists blockaded Construction Gate by locking themselves together, and a further three activists attempted to lock together at Main Gate.

These actions are part of the TP 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport which goes on to the 11th August. There have been 24 arrests in three days of actions in three days of actions so far.

30th [Ploughshares Activists Blockade Nuke Warhead Base](#)

30th July 2001

Ploughshares Activists Blockade Nuke Warhead Base

10 Arrests as Police Advised to Disobey Unlawful Orders

This morning 10 people were arrested as Trident Ploughshares activists blocked the main gate at Coulport Naval Armaments Depot on Loch Long in Scotland, where warheads for the UK's Trident nuclear missiles are stored.

Three campaigners locked on to each other with D locks across the gateway at 7 a.m. while about 25 others gathered round and displayed placards which read "SHIFT TO PEACE WORK" while two nuns from the Myohoji Buddhist order chanted and beat their peace drums. At about 7.45 a special police team cut the locked-on activists loose and took them into custody. At this point 7 other activists lay down in the gateway. When they refused to move after several police warnings they were arrested. Those arrested were from the Netherlands, Belgium, England and Scotland.

During the blockade activists spoke to the Strathclyde officers policing the event and advised them that under the Nuremberg Principles it was their legal duty to refuse orders from a superior officer which they knew to be unlawful. They were told they should not be arresting people who were actually upholding the law by trying to prevent war crime.

TP pledger David Mackenzie said: "At one point Chief Inspector Bruce told us to get on the pavement and let "normal" people get to their work. Presumably "normal" people are those who tolerate this evil and treat preparations for mass murder as an everyday matter."

Last night Mark Akkerman (21), a student from the Netherlands, was arrested after failing to appear at court. He has been held overnight and will be before the Sheriff in Dumbarton this afternoon.

The action is part of the TP 14-day disarmament camp at Coulport which goes on to the 11th August.

28th [Veteran Campaigner Arrested as Trident Ploughshares Camp Begins](#)

28th July 2001

Veteran Campaigner Arrested as Trident Ploughshares Camp Begins

Veteran peace campaigner Sylvia Boyes was one of two activists arrested yesterday evening at the beginning of the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport in Scotland.

Sylvia (56), from Keighley in Yorkshire, was famously acquitted in January this year at Manchester Crown Court along with Keith Wright (River), on a charge of conspiracy to commit criminal damage following their attempt to disarm Trident submarine HMS Vengeance in November 1999. Last night she refused to leave an area near the security fence at Coulport. She was charged with breaching bye-laws and released within a few hours.

Also arrested last night was Anthony Hannigan from Faslane Peace Camp. He was held while attempting to cut through the perimeter fence at Faslane. He was charged with malicious mischief and released early this morning.

Over thirty activists have now joined the camp, including 10 members of the For Mother Earth peace and environmental campaign in Belgium. Many more people are expected to arrive during the weekend.

TP member David Mackenzie said: "It's been great to feel the energy growing as people arrive from near and far, each one with the same determination to do what they can to disarm Trident."

22nd [Peace Campaigner's Son Subjected to "Terrorist" Treatment by Met](#)

Press Releases & Updates 2001

22nd July 2001

Peace Campaigner's Son Subjected to "Terrorist" Treatment by Met

The son of Scottish Trident Ploughshares campaigner Brian Quail (who was this week prevented from entering Italy due to a Home Office blacklist) was last night subjected to a frightening ordeal when his van was surrounded by Metropolitan Police and he was searched at gunpoint.

Peter Quail (32), a van delivery driver from London with no political associations, had just dropped his father at Victoria bus station in London around 9.30 p.m. when he was stopped by about thirty officers, four of whom were pointing machine guns at him, while a helicopter hovered overhead. An order to leave his vehicle was screamed at him and his van was thoroughly searched. Officers told him their action was justified under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. He was then allowed to go.

Peter said: "When they went away they gave me a note which thanked me 'for my cooperation' as if I had a choice in the matter. These were young lads, really hyped up. My legs were like jelly."

Brian said: "This week I was refused entry to Italy, apparently because British police have put me on a blacklist for protesting, peacefully and nonviolently, at Faslane nuclear weapons base in Scotland. Then Peter, an utterly innocent person, is put through this piece of police terrorism by the Met. It's too much of a coincidence and it is beginning to look as if the British authorities are out to intimidate me."

Brian intends to pursue the matter with elected representatives. There is growing concern that the British authorities, nettled by the recent growth and effectiveness of civil resistance to Trident, wish to treat peaceful and nonviolent protest as a form of terrorism. On Friday Brian intends to join fellow campaigners at Coulport for a 14-day direct disarmament camp focused on the Clyde nuclear weapons bases.

16th [Disarmers Plan 14 Days of Disruption at Clyde Nuke Bases](#)

16th July 2001

Disarmers Plan 14 Days of Disruption at Clyde Nuke Bases

New Book Celebrates Three Years of Campaign Achievement

This summer Trident Ploughshares activists will again gather from far and wide to their campsite on Loch Long in Scotland to cause as much disruption as they can to the Faslane and Coulport bases, which support the UK's four Trident nuclear weapon submarines.

The activists will set up their disarmament camp at Peaton Glen Wood, half-a-mile south of the Coulport base on Loch Long, from 27th July to 11th August. Campaigners will come from all over the UK, from the US and from Belgium and Finland. There will be a variety of actions against the bases. At each of the summer disarmament camps in the campaign's short history activists have breached base security, have swum close to the Trident submarines and have conducted effective blockades of the base entrances.

It was at Coulport in August 1998 that the active part of the Trident Ploughshares campaign began - three years which have seen remarkable achievements, including the damaging of vital testing equipment on Trident sub HMS Vengeance, the putting out of action of the Trident research barge Maytime, the disarming of a nuclear warhead convoy truck and two dramatic acquittals at Sheriff Court/Crown Court level. There have been almost 1300 arrests and activists have spent around 1250 days in prison.

These achievements are celebrated in Angie Zelter's book "Trident on Trial" which tells the story of the whole campaign and the disarmament work and legal struggles of the Trident Three.* ([Trident on Trial - the TP book](#))

Trident Ploughshares member David Mackenzie said: "Every day we get another indication that those in power are critically complacent about the threats to our planet, including the threat from appalling weapons like Trident. In that setting, peaceful and nonviolent intervention by ordinary, responsible people is not merely legitimate, it is vital. We are delighted that more and more people are acting on this conviction."

* Trident on Trial (£9.99), published by Luath Press (ISBN 1 84282 004 4), is available from all good bookshops. An excellent background resource for journalists it is also available directly from Trident Ploughshares. ([Trident on Trial - the TP book](#))

8th [Big Blockade Fines Lottery](#)

8th July 2001

Big Blockade Fines Lottery

Five Big Blockaders were sentenced this week in the local courts after guilty pleas. On Friday at Helensburgh Ruth Moodie, Nicky Hill, Patricia Reilly and James Francis were each given fines of £250 by JP Gillies. He is the high tariff magistrate from Rothesay who disapproves of peace protesters (he fined Jane Tallents £300 for a blockade). Much luckier was John Kennedy who was up before Sheriff Fraser at Dumbarton. The Sheriff said that he had dealt with many such cases over the years and could understand the reasons for John's actions. He fined him £50.

4th [Trident Ploughshares Delight at Menwith Hill Action](#)

4th July 2001

Trident Ploughshares Delight at Menwith Hill Action

The Trident Ploughshares campaign has expressed its delight at the occupation yesterday of the Menwith Hill spy station by Greenpeace activists.

A spokesperson said:

"We congratulate Greenpeace on its brilliant action yesterday. The activists who occupied the base have brought the Star Wars issue to the forefront of public attention. It was thrilling to hear Helen Wallace speaking on the Today programme from inside the spy-base, explaining the preparations that have already been made there to accommodate "Missile Defence", in spite of the UK government claim that no decision has already been made to comply with US plans. The Greenpeace action gives us great encouragement as we continue our own campaign of nonviolent direct action against the illegal Trident nuclear weapon system."

The Trident Ploughshares direct disarmament camp at Coulport on Loch Long in Scotland (close to the Trident warhead store there) takes place from 27th July to 11th August when activists from all over Europe are expected. On October 22nd, with Scottish and British CND, there will be another blockade of Faslane naval base (home to the four Trident submarines) and plans are already being made for a significant escalation of the blockade campaign at Faslane in February 2002.

June Stirling Tolerates Nuclear Bombs But Bans Peace Protesters

22nd June 2001

22nd **Stirling Tolerates Nuclear Bombs But Bans Peace Protesters**

The eleven protesters who were arrested yesterday for halting a convoy carrying nuclear warheads were released on bail from Stirling Sheriff Court this afternoon. Sheriff William Reid agreed to them all being given an extra bail condition of not entering the Stirling Council boundary except to appear for trial on dates in September and October.

The nuclear warhead convoy, meanwhile, was still inside Royal Naval Armaments Depot Coulport where the warheads will be unloaded prior to being fitted onto Trident missiles on a Vanguard class submarine.

The large convoy including the three trucks loaded with warheads passed through Stirling yesterday afternoon. For the last three years every warhead convoy travelling between the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield and RNAD Coulport has entered Stirling. They have not been able to go via Glasgow due to the weight restrictions on the Kingston Bridge.

A Nukewatch spokesperson who was in court to support the activists as they appeared in the dock said: "For years local people have been alerting the police, the council and politicians to the dangers of these weapons of mass destruction and the fact that they regularly pass through Stirling. They have done absolutely nothing. When responsible citizens take action to draw attention to what is going on they are banned from the area. It's the bombs that should be banned!"

The protesters have now all been released and information is being collected about proper procedures not being followed during the arrests and at the police station. Also complaints about violent and unprofessional behaviour from certain officers are being considered.

[Update: The convey left Coulport on Sunday around 11.15am to return to Burghfield. Its unusually late departure may have been due to an hour-long blockade of Coulport's construction gate by three

activists locked to each other through a cast-iron tube.]

The convoy, comprising three trucks loaded with Trident nuclear warheads and a number of support vehicles, was tracked by Nukewatch from the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield (which it left on Tuesday) to RAF Wittering, where it stayed overnight. It was picked up again on the M74 and tracked to Stirling. The activists intercepted it just a mile beyond Stirling, got underneath the vehicles and held it up for between 20 and 30 minutes. Motorists who were detained in the queues were patient and understanding when campaigners explained what was going on.

Among those arrested were Trident Three member Ulla Roder(45), from Denmark, Niels de Boer (27) from the Netherlands, people from Faslane Peace Camp and others from north and south of the border. They are being held in Stirling Police station and are expected to be released later this evening.

Helesburgh Nukewatch member, Eric Wallace, who was present but not arrested said: "It was good that folk held up in the traffic jam were supportive of what we were doing and accepted that the situation was so serious that we had to act. We will continue to take action against these appalling transports until the last warhead is taken back to Aldermaston and safely dismantled."

[Update: All those arrested were kept in police cells until their 2pm appearance at Stirling Sheriff Court the next day. Each of them accepted bail conditions that they would not return to Stirling except for their court diets.]

21st [Crown Abandons Case Against Anti-Trident Activists in Mid Trial](#)
21st June 2001

Crown Abandons Case Against Anti-Trident Activists in Mid Trial

Sentence Deferred for Student Teacher in Second Case

At Helensburgh District Court yesterday (20th June), the case against two Trident Ploughshares activists was abandoned by the Procurator Fiscal in the middle of their trial. In a second case, one accused was heavily fined while another was given a deferred sentence.

Carol Kirby (36), from Oxford, and Niels de Boer (27), from the Netherlands, were charged with a breach of the peace arising from an event during the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp last August. Carol and Niels had attached themselves to each other with chain and tape and sat down on either side of an MOD notice pole a few yards from the perimeter fence on moorland at the Trident base at Coulport. Defending themselves they cross-examined the two MOD police witnesses, questioning the claim that their simple and peaceful protest had caused any alarm to anyone. They then made a motion of "no case to answer" which was rejected by Justice of the Peace John Macphail. After the court adjourned to give the accused time to consider whether they would give evidence Mrs McDermit, the Procurator Fiscal, who would have realised by this time that the charge was ludicrous, told the JP that she was now accepting their not guilty plea.

In the following case student teacher Eleanor Stobo (27) from Lochgoilhead and Frances Howe (21), a student from Brighton, were found guilty of malicious mischief after cutting the perimeter fence of the same base, also in August of last year. Frances, who cut the fence on two occasions, was fined £150 on both counts. Eleanor told the JP that, in spite of the High Court judgment on the Trident Three trial, he could not ignore the principles of international humanitarian law. Trident was illegal and her action against it was justified. In a moving plea of mitigation she told him that she had ended her involvement in direct action to take up teaching but hoped that in her new career she would be able to help youngsters to think for themselves and develop their own ethical codes. JP

Macphail deferred sentence for six months.

Spokesperson David Mackenzie said: "Eleanor is spot on about the need for people to think for themselves. By way of contrast it was so disturbing to hear on TV on Tuesday a Trident submariner saying that if the order to fire the missiles came through training would take over and he would not think of the appalling consequences of his action."

21st [Activists Stop Nuclear Convoy Near Stirling](#)

21st June 2001

Activists Stop Nuclear Convoy Near Stirling

This afternoon an international group of anti-nuclear activists stopped a nuclear weapons convoy on the Stirling/Dumbarton Road, leading to the arrest of 11 people by Strathclyde and Central Scotland Police.

The convoy, comprising three trucks loaded with Trident nuclear warheads and a number of support vehicles, was tracked by Nukewatch from the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Burghfield (which it left on Tuesday) to RAF Wittering, where it stayed overnight. It was picked up again on the M74 and tracked to Stirling. The activists intercepted it just a mile beyond Stirling, got underneath the vehicles and held it up for between 20 and 30 minutes. Motorists who were detained in the queues were patient and understanding when campaigners explained what was going on.

Among those arrested were Trident Three member Ulla Roder(45), from Denmark, Niels de Boer (27) from the Netherlands, people from Faslane Peace Camp and others from north and south of the border. They are being held in Stirling Police station and are expected to be released later this evening.

Helesburgh Nukewatch member, Eric Wallace, who was present but not arrested said: "It was good that folk held up in the traffic jam were supportive of what we were doing and accepted that the situation was so serious that we had to act. We will continue to take action against these appalling transports until the last warhead is taken back to Aldermaston and safely dismantled."

[Update: All those arrested were kept in police cells until their 2pm appearance at Stirling Sheriff Court the next day. Each of them accepted bail conditions that they would not return to Stirling except for their court diets.]

19th [SSP Candidate Admonished at Dumbarton Sheriff Court](#)

19th June 2001

SSP Candidate Admonished at Dumbarton Sheriff Court

Scottish Socialist Party candidate Morag Balfour was today admonished at Dumbarton Sheriff Court after being found guilty of breach of the peace for taking part in a blockade of a nuclear warhead store.

Morag (28), is from Glenrothes and polled 841 votes in the Central Fife constituency in the recent Westminster election. Early on 2nd August last year she blockaded the main gate of Coulport naval arms depot, during the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp. Morag is a wheelchair user with an arthritic condition and she has been arrested many times for anti-Trident actions. Defending herself, she told the court that she identified with those disabled people who had been cynically used as human guinea pigs in the Maralinga nuclear weapon tests. She had not committed any crime - she had come to Coulport that day to bring peace, not to breach it.

Sheriff Tom Scott found her guilty but was content to admonish her since, as he said, the sincerity

of her motivation was apparent.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Unlike the Helensburgh magistrates who routinely dish out punitive fines for peaceful, conscientious actions, Sheriff Scott obviously accepts that these actions are not criminal. Perhaps next time (and there will be many) he will go the whole hog and find activists like Morag not guilty!"

14th [Scottish Court Turns Down Appeal by Activist](#)

14th June 2001

Scottish Court Turns Down Appeal by Activist

Campaigners Say Legal Argument Will Go On

At a hearing in Edinburgh today the Scottish Appeal Court turned down an appeal against conviction by a Trident Ploughshares activist. The decision of the three judges followed from High Court Opinion on the Trident Three Lord Advocate's Reference in March this year.

Brian Quail (63), a retired teacher from Glasgow, was appealing against two convictions for anti - Trident actions dating back to 1998. Representing himself Brian said that he could not accept the High Court's judgment on the Lord Advocate's Reference uncritically. He could only regard that judgment as illogical, perverse and dishonest.

In a telling passage he poured scorn on the statement in the ruling that the laws that apply to war do not apply in times of peace. On that basis it would be legal for the state to build concentration camps and gas chambers and to openly proclaim its willingness and determination to use them if the "need" arose. Presumably one would have to wait till the black smoke was pouring out of the chimneys before any legal challenge could be made.

He said: "The judgment reads throughout as if it were a leisurely theoretical discourse concerning a somewhat unreal future hypothesis. There was no awareness that we are dealing with the ever-present possibility of immediate global destruction." He concluded with an account of the suffering and death that had already happened as a result of the preparation, testing and use of nuclear weapons.

The Crown made a simple reference to the High Court judgment. Lord Coulsfield said that the bench respected sincerely held views but after the High Court judgment there was nothing to be said and such appeals could not be upheld. The other judges were Lord Osborne and Lord Caplan.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "It was great to be in court today hearing Brian talking such sense so powerfully. This was not a surprising outcome but these judges should not imagine that the arguments are over. The straightforward case against Trident and plans for mass murder has to win sooner or later."

11th [Helensburgh District Court](#)

11th June 2001

Helensburgh District Court

Yet another busy day in court.

There were 15 people pleading from the Big Blockade. They all did this by letter. Three people pled guilty because they had left or were leaving the country. All were fined £150. One was continued

without plea and the rest pled not guilty and were set trial dates in August and September.

Mary Millington from Wales was here for a means court for not paying a £100 fine from Feb 2000 blockade. She told the court how angry she was at the way they had made it so difficult for her to appeal her conviction but accepted that as she wasn't paying, it was now time to go to jail. JP Tony Stirling said he couldn't jail her without a social enquiry report. This would involve her having to come back or he could transfer the fine to Wales. She said she didn't want the fine transferred because it could lead to Bailiffs taking her furniture. He adjourned her case until after lunch and then agreed he had made a mistake and that he didn't need a social enquiry report to jail someone for not paying a fine and that although he didn't want to send anyone to jail this seemed the best he could do for her. She was given 7 days.

Jane Tallents from Helensburgh was up for not paying a £300 fine. She explained that it was so high owing to having the misfortune of being before JP Mr Gillies (the expensive one!) and complained about inconsistent sentencing. She also explained that she has appealed and been turned down by Lord Prosser because he agreed with the opinion on the Lord Advocates Reference (given by Lord Prosser!!). Tony Stirling said he was going to 'try something new' and imposed a 'Supervised Attendance Order' of 60hrs. This means Jane will have to attend educational and work activities run by the Social Work dept. including such things as: Money management and budgeting, debt awareness, and employment rights, Health education, Social and life skills (training in things like dealing with authority and social responsibility!!) and unpaid work, for example painting and decorating and work with the elderly and disabled. She asked if she could refuse and was told no. She said that it would no doubt throw up interesting opportunities and of course may result in the local social work dept sitting down at the gates of Faslane at the next blockade!

Anthony Hannigan (Teapot) from Faslane Peace Camp was on trial for a blockade of Coulport on Nov 99. The police evidence was all over the place but in spite of a good defence from Solicitor Clare Ryan he was found guilty and fined £150. He refused to pay and was given 7 days.

Please write to those in jail.

Mary Millington, HMP Cornton Vale, Cornton Road, STIRLING, FK9 5NY.

Anthony Hannigan, HMP Greenock, Gateside, GREENOCK, PA16 9AH.

Both are due out on Thursday.

6th [Peace Activists Disrupt Nuclear Arms Store](#)
6th June 2001

Peace Activists Disrupt Nuclear Arms Store

This morning activists caused significant disruption to the work of the Coulport Arms Depot on Loch Long, where warheads for the UK's Trident missiles are stored, by blockading the main entrance to the base.

The blockade, which is part of Faslane Peace Camp's special Week of Action, began at 7.37 this morning as five activists locked on to each other and to the wheel chair of one of the group. It took police until 9.15 to clear the gateway. The blockade had been timed to prevent day-shift workers entering the base and a long tail back of traffic quickly developed. At 8 a.m. base authorities opened a second gateway to allow access but traffic confusion and snarl-ups persisted.

The five are now in the custody of the Ministry of Defence Police and it is expected that they will be charged with a breach of the peace. They are: Roz Bullen (31), an artist from Edinburgh; Alex Cochrane (26) and Amanda McDonald (20), both from Glasgow, film student Paddy Brown (23) and

Tim Coleman (27), from Faslane Peace Camp.

Campaigners were delighted that they had achieved such an effective blockade with a relatively small group of activists and in the face of heightened police surveillance. A spokesperson said: "Tomorrow people will be voting in the next government. We ask them to consider voting for a party or a candidate that will rid us of Trident - our appalling weapon of mass destruction."

Last night two activists were arrested as they cut into the perimeter fence of the base. The Week of Action continues.

Contact Faslane Peace Camp on 01436 820901

1st **Sheriff Refuses To Recommend Deportation of Peace Activist**

1st June 2001

Sheriff Refuses To Recommend Deportation of Peace Activist

Message of Support From Member of European Parliament

A Scottish Sheriff today refused to recommend the deportation of a Trident Ploughshares activist after her third conviction for direct action against Trident.

Marjan Willemsen (24), a Dutch national who is a full time activist at Faslane Peace Camp, was convicted today in Dumbarton of breach of the peace and breach of bail after taking part in the Crimebusters blockade of Faslane naval base on 14th February 2000.

The citation papers for the case advised Marjan that the court might recommend deportation and today Procurator Fiscal Scott Simpson brought the issue up again when he said that there was no indication that she would not commit further offences. Appearing for Marjan solicitor Andrew Brophy argued that the relevant section of the Immigration Act was not intended to relate to such minor offences. Agreeing that deportation was inappropriate Sheriff Murphy was content to fine Marjan a total of £100 for both charges.

Marjan had entered a guilty plea after reaching agreement with the Procurator Fiscal that the phrases "you did conduct yourself in a disorderly manner" and "to the alarm and annoyance of the lieges" would be removed from the breach of the peace charge.

A spokesperson said: "We are pleased that Sheriff Murphy gave short shrift to the Procurator Fiscal's suggestion. In this shrinking world it is important that we are able to support each other across national boundaries in the struggle for peace and justice. So much of the inspiration and energy for confronting the Scottish Trident bases has come from the active involvement of people like Marjan from the rest of the UK and worldwide."

MEP Caroline Lucas said: "I entirely support and applaud the actions of Marjan Willemsen. The effects of nuclear weapons do not respect borders... that is why the anti-nuclear movement is, at heart, an international movement - and why it is so important that representatives of all nationalities campaign and act together, wherever the threat of nuclear weapons exists."

Contact Faslane Peace Camp: 01436 820901

May Newbury Magistrates Jail Belgian Activist

31st May 2001

31st

Newbury Magistrates Jail Belgian Activist

Yesterday magistrates at Newbury sent a peace activist from Belgium to prison for 14 days after he refused to pay a hefty fine for damage he admitted causing at the nuclear weapons factory at Aldermaston in Berkshire.

Bernard de Witte (57), is a member of Trident Ploughshares and the Brussels-based For Mother Earth campaign. Earlier this month he was arrested twice during the Trident Ploughshares camp at Aldermaston, where the components for the UK's Trident nuclear warheads are manufactured. On the 14th May he cut down two sections of the site's perimeter fence. Bernard said: "I took a bolt cutter and went off exactly to the spot where two days before I had cut myself an entrance into the site and started to cut the fence. To my surprise I could 'work' undisturbed during more than half an hour, so I was able to cut down a whole section and was already like three quarters on my way to cut the next section, when finally the police arrived and arrested me while I was still cutting."

Bernard decided to plead guilty to get the case over as quickly as possible but he had decided before the trial that he would not pay any fine, saying: "I prefer to be sent to prison instead of giving money to a system which maintains nuclear weapons." The magistrates found him guilty of criminal damage and fined him several hundred pounds. When he refused to pay they sent him to Bullingdon Prison*. He will be released on Monday or Tuesday next week.

Bernard is a determined campaigner who has been arrested 13 times on Trident Ploughshares actions. His sentence will bring to 1117 the number of days spent in prison by the campaign's activists.

Additional Contacts: For Mother Earth: 0032 9 242 8752

*HM Prison Bullingdon, P.O. Box 50, Bicester, Oxon, OX6 0PR. Tel 01869 322111

30th Harrogate Court Delays Sentence on Angie Zelter

30th May 2001

Harrogate Court Delays Sentence on Angie Zelter

Magistrates in Harrogate avoided jailing peace activist Angie Zelter when she appeared before them today, after she failed to attend a sentencing diet last Monday.

Angie (49), from Cromer in Norfolk, handed herself into her local police station last night, expecting to face a 3 month jail sentence. In a joint Trident Ploughshares/Menwith Hill Women's Peace Campaign action on 19th June 2000, along with Helen John and Anne Lee, she got through the new high security fence at Menwith Hill in Yorkshire in an attempt to dismantle the inner fence that serves to protect the communications array designed to be part of the US Missile Defence system. The women were found guilty of criminal damage at Harrogate Magistrates Court on 30th April and in the same court on 21st May Helen John was sentenced to three months and Anne Lee to two months.

The Harrogate Magistrates today found her guilty of failing to appear but said they did not have enough information to sentence her. Angie asked them to deal with the matter today and went to the length of informing them of her "record" by narrating her recent campaigning and court history. She was given unconditional bail and asked to return to the court on 13th June. Angie then complained that she had been brought all the way from her home in Norwich and the court was ready to leave

her stranded in Harrogate with no means to pay her fare home. The shamefaced bench said that there was nothing they could do about that.

Angie said: "The magistrates were clearly embarrassed by the whole business and did not want to send me down. I told them that I had been unable to face coming on the 21st June since I was upset at the way the courts are abusing the law by letting this state off the hook on international humanitarian law. I just could not stand making the same arguments all over again with little obvious hope of getting a genuine hearing. They seemed to understand how I felt."

Additional Contact: Menwith Hill Women's Peace Campaign: 01943 468593

30th **Bernard De Witte Sent to Prison**

30th May 2001

Bernard De Witte Sent to Prison

Bernard De Witte was in Newbury Magistrates Court this Morning 30th May.

He pleaded guilty to criminal damage (fence cutting at Aldermaston) and was fined several hundred pounds. He refused to pay and was sentenced to 2 weeks in prison. In practice I understand that he will probably be out on Monday or Tuesday.

He is at: HM Prison Bullingdon, P.O. Box 50, Bicester, Oxon, OX6 0PR. Tel (0)1869 322111

29th **Trident Ploughshares Activist Sent to Jail**

29th May 2001

Trident Ploughshares Activist Sent to Jail

Today a Scottish local magistrate sent a peace activist to prison after he refused to pay fines imposed for taking direct action against Trident.

Marcus Armstrong (40), a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes, was found guilty of two charges of breach of the peace on 22nd January. During the Trident Ploughshares camp last August he took part in two separate blockades of the main gate of Coulport on the same day. He was fined £100 on one charge and £150 on the other. Aware that a warrant had been issued for his arrest Marcus traveled from his home in the south of England to hand himself in at the local police station early this morning. He was then taken to Helensburgh District Court to explain why he had not paid.

Justice of the Peace John MacPhail asked Marcus whether he wanted more time to reconsider his decision not to pay the fine. When Marcus made it clear he would not change his mind MacPhail said he had no option but to send him to prison for 14 days. It is understood that Marcus will in practice serve 7 days and is likely to be released from Greenock Prison* next Monday.

In the last two years Marcus has been arrested 13 times for direct action against Trident. His sentence will bring to 1110 the number of days spent in prison by Trident Ploughshares activists.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "What this court doing in sending activists like Marcus is protecting the British state from being answerable for its crimes. That is a complete betrayal of the trust the public have put in it to uphold the law without fear or favour."

*HMP Greenock 85 Old Inverkip Road Greenock PA16 9AH Telephone 01475 787801

29th **Trident Three Member Faces Three Month Jail Sentence**

29th May 2001

Trident Three Member Faces Three Month Jail Sentence

Tonight Trident Ploughshares activist Angie Zelter will hand herself into her local police station in Cromer, Norfolk, expecting to face a 3 month jail sentence as she appears in Harrogate Magistrates Court tomorrow.

In a joint Trident Ploughshares/Menwith Hill Women's Peace Campaign action on 19th June 2000, Angie Zelter, along with Helen John and Anne Lee, got through the new high security fence at Menwith Hill in Yorkshire in an attempt to dismantle the inner fence that serves to protect the communications array designed to be part of the US Missile Defence system. The Ministry of Defence say the total damage caused was £900. By their action the women were also confronting Trident, the UK's weapon of mass destruction and the Echelon espionage system in which Menwith Hill plays a key role. Echelon has been recently slated for its breach of civil liberties in a leaked European Parliament report. *

The women were found guilty of criminal damage at Harrogate Magistrates Court on 30th April and in the same court on 22nd May Helen John was sentenced to three months and Anne Lee to two months. Angie did not attend court and a warrant was issued for her arrest. Angie (49), was one of the four women acquitted at Liverpool Crown Court in 1996 after damaging a Hawk aircraft bound for Indonesia. She is also a member of the Trident Three who disarmed a Trident -related research barge in 1999 and were acquitted in Greenock Sheriff court.

Angie said: "The mentality that comes with having and threatening nuclear weapons undermines human rights and the law. The US and the UK think they are entitled to do anything, to keep their plans and preparations for mass destruction secret and at the same time spy on their own citizens. By any reasonable definition that makes them terrorist states, rogue states."

Additional Contact: Menwith Hill Women's Peace Campaign: 01943 468593

* See Guardian 26th May 2001 "Leaked spy report names UK"

25th **Sentenced Jubilee Ploughshares Activists Will Carry On**

25th May 2001

Sentenced Jubilee Ploughshares Activists Will Carry On

Jubilee Two Given 12 Months But Walk Free

At Chelmsford Crown Court today the two Jubilee Ploughshares activists were found guilty on all charges against them. Although sentenced to twelve months in prison they are now free since they have already served at least half that time on remand.

Susan van der Hijden (32), from Amsterdam, and Father Martin Newell (33), from Canning Town in London, were charged with criminal damage, totalling £31000, after disarmament work on a nuclear weapon convoy truck at Wittering in November last year.

In passing sentence Justice Darroch advised Susan and Martin that they were technically on parole and could be brought back to complete their sentence if they re-offended during the next six months. He also warned them that they would be facing a more severe sentence if they "committed such an offence" again.

Susan and Martin have been found guilty in the same week that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland not only reaffirmed its implacable opposition to Trident but gave specific encouragement to civil resistance against it.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "It is unfortunate that the jury got it wrong but much more disturbing is the way Justice Darroch ensured they did not have the full facts by blocking expert witnesses and not allowing the jury to hear the defence's legal arguments. He appears to be uncritically supportive of the criminal activities of this nuclear weapon state. We look forward to the day when a genuinely independent judiciary will honestly face the implications of international humanitarian law. In the meantime the campaign continues and we take great encouragement from Susan and Martin's courage, single-mindedness and humanity."

The two Jubilee Ploughshares activists found guilty by a majority verdict today in Chelmsford Crown Court have said that they will carry on their disarmament work in spite of the verdict.

Susan van der Hijden (32), from Amsterdam, and Father Martin Newell (33), from Canning Town in London, were charged with criminal damage, totalling £31000, after disarmament work on a nuclear weapon convoy truck at Wittering in November last year. Although sentenced to twelve months in prison they are now free since they have already served at least half that time on remand. Due either to an administrative shambles or a wish on the part of the authorities to cause the media to lose interest, it took several hours for the necessary paperwork to be completed and for Susan and Martin to be allowed to meet their friends outside the court.

Before a cheering crowd on the steps of the court Susan said: "Nothing that had been said in court has changed my mind. I am happy to be out and I am happy that we managed to convince two of the jurors. My immediate plans are to give talks and workshops but I would do what we did again."

Asked whether he would be willing to break the law again to challenge Trident Martin said that the only lawbreaking in this case was what the UK state was doing in threatening Trident. He had to take responsibility for what his country was doing, providing for his defence at the expense of people's lives worldwide. He thanked his family for their support over the last six months.

The two have no plans at present to appeal the verdict.

24th [Jury Still Out in Jubilee Ploughshares Trial](#)

24th May 2001

Jury Still Out in Jubilee Ploughshares Trial

The fourth day in the trial of the Jubilee Ploughshares activists at Chelmsford Crown Court has ended with the jury still considering their verdict.

Susan van der Hijden (32), from Amsterdam, and Father Martin Newell (33), from Canning Town in London, are charged on two counts of criminal damage, totalling £31000, after disarmament work on a nuclear weapon convoy truck at Wittering in November last year.

Justice Darroch did not allow the defence's legal arguments, based on the illegality of Trident under international humanitarian law, to be put to the jury. Martin's barrister Terry Munyard told the eight men and four women that Martin had acted out of principle - there was nothing criminal in his intentions. History was full of examples of people who had brought about essential change by doing what they knew was right and technically breaking the law, such as the Suffragettes, anti-apartheid activists and Rosa Parks, who had defied segregation laws in Alabama.

In her final speech Susan told the jury that she had no choice but to act as she did. She pointed out that there had already been a number of acquittals of Trident Ploughshares activists. It would be nice if the jury would acquit, but she was only asking them to do what was right according to their own

hearts. Wishing them peace in the jury room she sat down.

In summing up Justice Darroch said there were three possible defences in such cases, the defence of necessity, the commission of a crime to prevent a greater crime and the commission of a crime to protect property. He claimed that that none of these could be applied to this particular case. The jury then had 1 hour and 50 minutes of deliberation but had not reached a verdict by the end of the session.

A verdict is expected tomorrow.

23rd [Jury Likely to Retire Tomorrow in Jubilee Ploughshares Trial](#)

23rd May 2001

Jury Likely to Retire Tomorrow in Jubilee Ploughshares Trial

Expert Witnesses Ruled Out

In the third and possibly penultimate day of the trial of the Jubilee Ploughshares activists the judge has not allowed expert witnesses for the defence and the jury has heard a powerful witness statement from one of the defendants, Susan van der Hijden.

Susan (32), from Amsterdam, is charged, along with Fr. Martin Newell (33), from Canning Town in London, with two counts of criminal damage, totalling £31000, after disarmament work on a nuclear weapon convoy truck at Wittering in November last year.

As a Catholic Worker her aim had been to put the Sermon on the Mount into action but increasingly she had realised that root causes, among them nuclear weapons, had to be addressed as well as their symptoms in the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people. She had studied the nuclear cycle in detail, from the mining of the minerals to the production of the finished weapon systems, and was fully aware of the great number of people who had died or suffered as a result. Describing the action at Wittering she told how she had used the phone in the vehicle shed after damaging the truck. First she dialled the alarm numbers by mistake and when the operator asked her if there was really an alarm she said no. She then got the internal operator to put her through to a member of her affinity group.

A supporter at Chelmsford Crown Court said: "Susan spoke with great confidence and her integrity shone through clearly. The jury now know that she came to this action after lots of prayerful consideration, as the only possible way to do what she could to disarm Trident."

Justice Alistair Darroch said that the jury did not need expert witnesses to establish the nature and effects of nuclear weapons. The jury would use its common sense on that matter. He is expected to sum up at 11.30. a.m. tomorrow after which the jury will be asked to consider their verdict.

22nd [Heavy Jail Sentences For Missile Defence Activists](#)

22nd May 2001

Heavy Jail Sentences For Missile Defence Activists

Candidate in Blair's Constituency Given Three Months

Two peace activists who last year took part in a direct disarmament action against a UK Star Wars communications facility have been given heavy jail sentences after being found guilty of criminal damage.

In a joint Trident Ploughshares/Menwith Hill Women's Peace Campaign action on 19th June 2000, Helen John, Angie Zelter and Anne Lee got through the new high security fence at Menwith Hill in

Yorkshire in an attempt to dismantle the inner fence that serves to protect the communications array designed to be part of the US Missile Defence system. The Ministry of Defence say the total damage they caused was £900.

They were found guilty of criminal damage at Harrogate Magistrates Court on 30th April and in the same court yesterday Helen John was sentenced to three months and Anne Lee to two months in Low Newton Prison. Helen, who is standing as an independent parliamentary candidate in Tony Blair's Sedgefield constituency on a No Star Wars platform, was given the heavier sentence due to her previous 32 convictions.

The sentences are well above the usual tariff for criminal damage of this order. District Judge Alderson said it was her duty as a magistrate both to protect property and deter the women. Both will serve half their sentences, although the magistrate also made it clear that if they committed any further offences after they were released, they could be brought back to serve the remainder of their term. Angie Zelter did not attend court and was not sentenced. A warrant has been issued for her arrest.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Judge Alderson's justification for her savage and pointless sentencing was her intention to deter the women from further action. For anyone who knows these women this is a comical ambition. Alderson admitted that the women were "valuable members of society" but is still illogically ready to lock them away. It is disappointing that, yet again, the legal system backs up the criminality of the nuclear weapon states."

22nd Nuclear Weapon Security Shambles Exposed at Jubilee Ploughshares Trial

22nd May 2001

Nuclear Weapon Security Shambles Exposed at Jubilee Ploughshares Trial

Jury See Pictures of Hiroshima Injuries

On the second day of the Jubilee Ploughshares trial in Chelmsford Crown Court the jury of eight men and four women have heard of the Ministry of Defence's sloppy approach to the security of nuclear weapons and have been given evidence about the effects of these weapons and the threat of Trident in particular.

Susan van der Hijden (32), from Amsterdam, and Father Martin Newell (33), from Canning Town in London, are charged on two counts of criminal damage, totalling £31000, after disarmament work on a nuclear weapon convoy truck at Wittering in November last year.

Cross-examined by barrister Terry Munyard (for Martin Newell) the MoD officer in charge of security for the Wittering base on the night in question admitted that he had had three cans of lager at a social event in the complex that evening and could not be sure whether the alarms had been set. The crowded public galleries were visibly astonished when prosecution witnesses claimed that the perimeter fence of the base had been regularly patrolled that night and there were no holes or gaps to be seen. It is well known locally that the fence has numerous holes, some of which have been there for years.

Defending herself, Susan van der Hijden, while cross-examining a prosecution witness, was able to show to the jury a booklet entitled Hibakusha which has graphic illustrations of the terrible injuries caused by the bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Barrister Munyard was also able to have passed round the jury the Trident Ploughshares handbook "Tri-denting It", with its description of the power and indiscriminate nature of Trident. The case for the defence began this afternoon as Martin took the witness stand and gave a detailed account of what had happened last November.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "By what they did Susan and Martin have brought again into the light of day the fact that we have these hideous weapons and are criminally careless about ensuring public safety as we move them about the country."

The trial continues.

21st [Focus on Chelmsford as Jubilee Ploughshares Trial Starts](#)

21st May 2001

Focus on Chelmsford as Jubilee Ploughshares Trial Starts

There is already considerable public interest in the Chelmsford Crown Court trial of the Jubilee Ploughshares nuclear disarmers which began today with the selection of the jury and with embarrassing admissions being dragged out of Ministry of Defence prosecution witnesses.

Susan van der Hijden (32), from Amsterdam, and Father Martin Newell (33), from Canning Town in London, are charged with two counts of criminal damage, totalling £31,000, after their disarmament work on a convoy truck used to carry nuclear warheads at Wittering in November last year.

About one hundred people gathered outside the court as the trial began, including Art Laffin, who in 1989 damaged a US Trident submarine. Inside, during cross examination by the defence a MoD police witness, after attempting not to answer the question on the basis of the Official Secrets Act, was eventually compelled to admit that nuclear weapons were kept in Wittering during transportation. Similarly, it was admitted that a Harrier jump jet had crashed at the base in 1997. If a loaded convoy truck was hit during such an accident deadly plutonium could be spread over a huge area. The MoD witnesses contradicted the defendants' statements that they had had to waken up the duty guard to announce their presence.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Susan and Martin's single-mindedness and integrity have already been an inspiration to many people world wide to continue the witness and struggle against weapons of mass destruction."

14th [40 Arrests at Berkshire Nuclear Weapons Factory](#)

14th May 2001

40 Arrests at Berkshire Nuclear Weapons Factory

Heavy-handed Thames Valley Police Ignore Liaison Agreements

As anti-Trident activists blockade the Main Gate and Falcon Gate of the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston Thames Valley Police have already arrested 40 people, including some of the campaigners' legal observers and others simply walking beside the roads round the site.

The blockade of the site, which aims to cause as much disruption as possible to a facility the campaigners see as illegal under international law, began at both gates at 7 a.m. this morning. Some of those arrested were acting as legal observers for the activists. Liaison with the MOD police in advance of the action had indicated that the police would "facilitate lawful and peaceful protest" but a senior source within the MOD police this morning shared his concern that Thames Valley Police had unilaterally decided to enforce the Section 14 Public Order Notices served on activists earlier and to arrest anyone near the action. The MOD police had understood that the event would be policed "with a smile" but it was now clear that Thames Valley had other ideas.

If activists are charged under Section 14 the legitimacy of the charge will be strongly contested in

court. Following the use of that charge at a similar event in May last year activist Andrea Needham successfully argued that the fact that activists had engaged in an extended process of liaison with police beforehand made the order invalid. Again this year there have been extensive and thorough attempts at liaison.

At the Main Gate police are now beginning to clear the activists blocking the roadway though when arrested and set to one side many of them are immediately returning to the roadway and lying down.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Time and time again we have advised Thames Valley to seek advice from Strathclyde Police about how to police such events constructively and safely but the penny hasn't dropped yet. It's obvious too that the MOD police are incensed that their genuine attempts to work with us positively have been undermined. They should have realised by now we will not give in to intimidation. We are not going away"

14th **50 Arrests at Blockade of UK Nuclear Weapons Factory**

14th May 2001

50 Arrests at Blockade of UK Nuclear Weapons Factory

The blockade of AWE Aldermaston by anti-Trident campaigners was finally cleared at 11.30 this morning after a rather disorganised and over-the-top Thames Valley Police had arrested around 50 people.

For five hours the activists defied the terms of Section 14 orders served on them and held up worker traffic entering the site. The police on the ground, working in a confused manner with apparently contradictory orders, arrested not only those who were actually blocking the roadways but also those who were acting as legal observers and press liaison. At one stage they actually forced a group of campers onto the side of the main roadway from which they were banned by bail orders and then arrested them for breach of bail conditions. This morning a senior MOD police source expressed his concern at how the Thames Valley Police seem to have disregarded all the agreements reached during extensive liaison with the activists and have gone their own confrontational way.

Those arrested are being held at four police stations in the area and are likely to be charged with minor public order offences. While the blockade was in progress Bernard de Witte (57) from Belgium, was arrested after cutting down two sections of the site's perimeter fence, his second arrest of the week.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Thames Valley Police (TVP) should know by this time that we will not be discouraged by intimidatory tactics. For months now we have been putting in a considerable effort to liaison with TVP and the MOD police in order to make the blockade as peaceful and safe as possible, but TVP's inability to communicate effectively both internally and externally and their relative lack of expertise in dealing with peaceful and nonviolent civil resistance is causing all sorts of silliness. In spite of this marginal irritation it has been a successful blockade and we have again shown our determination not to tolerate the UK's continuing criminal behaviour over Trident."

The week of direct action continues.

14th **Thames Valley Police Try to Intimidate Anti-Nuclear Protesters**

14th May 2001

Thames Valley Police Try to Intimidate Anti-Nuclear Protesters

Stark Contrast with Professional Handling of Faslane Demonstrations

The anti-nuclear campaign group Trident Ploughshares have issued a strong complaint at

the tactics used by Thames Valley Police (TVP) during their completely nonviolent demonstration at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston today, when 51 activists were arrested.

Trident Ploughshares has a well-known commitment to and proven track record of gentleness and nonviolence. In spite of this the TVP invoked Section 14 of the Public Order Act which is designed to restrict the right to protest in cases of "serious disorder". Despite over two months of liaison, with both Thames Valley and Ministry of Defence Police, the protesters found themselves surrounded by TVP at their campsites at 5.30 this morning. Peaceful protesters found themselves arrested as they attempted to leave their campsites to take part in the planned demonstration at the main gate of the site. The arrests were completed by 11.30 a.m., 45 of them under Section 14 of the Public Order Act.

The MOD and Thames Valley Police had agreed that both camps, sited on MOD land, would be 'safe areas' for protesters, having even provided toilets 'for the use of supporters and members of Trident Ploughshares'. They had agreed that legal observers would not be arrested for simply observing their affinity groups, and they had promised a sensitively policed operation with 'quality control'. In the event TVP and Hampshire Police effectively blockaded the road and paths to the demonstration area and assaulted peaceful protesters and arrested legal observers. Protesters found themselves pushed, shoved and intimidated from their peaceful walk on the footpath. Several protesters were in extreme pain as pressure points were used.

By 5.30 p.m., only 10 people had been released, none of whom have been charged so far with any offence, but merely reported with a view to prosecution. "This act was used merely to remove members of TP and the Aldermaston Women's Campaign from the area and to prevent a demonstration at the UK bomb factory." said a spokesperson.

The intimidation continued as elderly women who had been prevented from attending the demonstration were refused permission to visit and offer their support to the TP camp. Random and intimidatory arrests were made on various people lawfully walking in the area and many protesters were shocked and angry at the treatment they had received, one was even in tears, at what they saw as a breach of trust as the police broke all the agreements they had made with TP.

A spokesperson said: "All this is in stark contrast with the professionalism and humanity with which Strathclyde Police handle the very large demonstrations at Faslane on the Clyde. In that Scottish context the liaison is meaningful and based on mutual trust and respect. When they arrest and remove demonstrators the police do so with considerable skill and gentleness. Thames Valley Police are hoping that their tactics of control, intimidation and provocation will prevent the growth of this highly successful campaign. They are mistaken. We will continue our direct action campaign at Aldermaston and will be considering a case against them under the Human Rights Act, which clearly enshrines the right to peaceful protest."

13th **Aldermaston Security Breached Yet Again**

13th May 2001

Aldermaston Security Breached Yet Again

Five More Arrests as Activists Play Football inside Nuclear Warhead Site

For the third night running the Trident Ploughshares campaigners who are camped outside the nuclear weapons factory at Aldermaston in Berkshire, England, have breached the site's security, bringing the arrest total for the week of disarmament action to 15 so far.

The activists had taken part in fence-climbing workshops during the day, in full view of the police, and when dusk fell yesterday they put their skills to use. Altogether around 15 people climbed into the site overnight as police vans sped hither and thither and officers ran around as they attempted to get the situation under control. Three climbers started an impromptu game of football inside the site

and only climbed out again when police refused to join in the game.

Police arrested five people but only charged three. Released without charge were Milan Rai (35), the author of "Tactical Trident" and prominent campaigner against the Iraq sanctions and Bernard de Witte (57), a peace and environmental campaigner from Belgium. Olivia Agate, from Skipton in Yorkshire, Chris Gwyntopher (59), a refugee care worker from London, and Debbie Mace, were charged with causing criminal damage and then were released. Milan was climbing the inner "super" fence, which is fitted with a special sensor wire, when he was apprehended. He said: "We are all sensor wires and we all ought to be able to detect evil."

Yesterday around 50 campaigners marched through the nearby town of Reading and twice conducted a mock trial of the chief executives of the factory's operators. On both occasions, not surprisingly, there was plenty evidence to convict them of conspiracy to commit murder abroad. Today at 2.30 p.m. there will be a vigil at the main gate of the site and tomorrow many more activists will gather from 7 a.m. to blockade the factory.

13th Disarmament Camp Grows at Aldermaston

13th May 2001

Disarmament Camp Grows at Aldermaston

In the fourth day of the Trident Ploughshares direct disarmament week at Aldermaston the camp beside the site now has almost 100 activists in residence as final planning takes place for the blockade of the nuclear weapons factory from 7 a.m. tomorrow morning.

This afternoon an interfaith vigil was held at the main gate of the factory, followed by a Mozart concert from the famous baroque ensemble Sonnerie, comprising on this occasion Monica Hugget and Emilia Benjamin. There have now been two nonviolence training sessions at the camp and a special singing workshop was provided by Raised Voices, the radical choir from London.

One of the activists arrested and released this morning was re-arrested this afternoon. Chris Gwyntopher (59), a refugee care worker from London, had been given bail conditions to come no nearer to the site than the far side of the roads that encircle it. Chris accepted a lift to take him away from the site. The car was followed by police and he was arrested when he got out at Douai Abbey. He is now in custody and will appear at Reading Magistrates Court tomorrow where he is likely to argue that he was following the spirit of the bail conditions and that the police action was nit-picking. This brings to 16 the number of arrests at the camp to date.

At the time of writing three activists are occupying one of the buildings inside the secure complex.

A spokesperson at the camp said: "This has been a great camp so far. Great weather, plenty activity, a strong sense of a common, serious purpose and lots of good fun."

12th Activists Get Inside Nuke Site Second Night in a Row

12th May 2001

Activists Get Inside Nuke Site Second Night in a Row

Repeated Breaches of Security at AWE Aldermaston

For the second night running Trident Ploughshares activists have got into the Aldermaston nuclear weapon factory in Berkshire, some of them breaching the site's security several times.

Following the action on Friday night which led to 8 arrests for criminal damage, a dozen campaigners last night climbed over or otherwise passed the perimeter fence and conducted explorations of the

site, in order to gain information for future intrusions and direct action. MOD police were content to apprehend and escort them off site without charging them with any offence.

Today at 11.30 a.m. the campaigners will march from Reading Station to Broad Street where they will conduct a mock trial of the chief executives of BNFL, Serco and Lockheed-Martin (which run Aldermaston) for conspiracy to commit murder abroad. Tomorrow at 2.30 p.m. they will hold an interfaith vigil at the main gate of the site.

Around 35 campaigners are camped close to the perimeter fence and many more are expected on Monday when, jointly with London Region CND, Trident Ploughshares will blockade the site, beginning at 7 a.m.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "We are encouraged with how well our disarmament week has gone so far. We are looking forward to causing as much disruption as possible on Monday to the illegal work of this factory for indiscriminate weapons of mass destruction."

The week of action continues.

11th **8 Arrests Overnight at Trident Warhead Factory**

11th May 2001

8 Arrests Overnight at Trident Warhead Factory

Trident Ploughshares campaigners last night began their week of direct action at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston in Berkshire, United Kingdom, by cutting their way into the high security site, leading to 8 arrests so far.

Taking advantage of lax security and working in small groups the activists were able to get through the perimeter fence of the site and in some cases penetrated a fair distance inside. Some are still in custody and the full story has still to emerge but the main charge against them seems to be criminal damage to the fence.

One of those released is Judith Pritchard (79), from Malvern in Worcestershire. Tired but elated she explained how she had cut through the fence and was only held when she was going through a tunnel well inside the site. Judith was also charged with obstructing police after she refused on principle to take a DNA test, saying that she needed to consider the implications of the test before complying. She said: "I am glad to have made one small step in the direction of disarming this monstrous so-called weapon of mass destruction and I hope that thousands more will join us."

Also held were: Margaret Jones (52) a freelance writer from Bristol; David Heller (25) a full time campaigner from Belgium; Sylvia Boyes (57), from Keighley in Yorkshire, who was famously acquitted at Manchester Crown Court in January; Ulla Roder (46), from Odense in Denmark; Allen O'Keefe (39), from Cromer in Norfolk; Alison Crane (47) a local authority officer from Stafford and James Kinnaird from Bristol. Three others were escorted off the site after penetrating the perimeter fence.

The week of action continues.

9th **Direct Action Against Aldermaston This Weekend**

9th May 2001

Direct Action Against Aldermaston This Weekend

As fears grow that the government, if re-elected in June, will give uncritical support to the US Missile defence initiative, activists begin to gather tomorrow at Aldermaston, the UK's

nuclear bomb factory, for six days of direct action against the base.

The campaigners will seek opportunities throughout the weekend to disrupt the work of the factory in a variety of ways and they will take part in a blockade of the site, along with London Region CND, on Monday 14th May, from 7 a.m.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Here's the bottom line for us ► we can't sit back and let this state carry on unimpeded its continuing threat to commit mass murder. The UK shows no sign that it is serious about getting rid of its weapons of mass destruction or that it intends to put serious effort into building real global security based on justice and mutual understanding."

On Saturday 12th May there will be a march through Reading, beginning at 11.30 a.m. from the railway station, and ending with a mock trial of Aldermaston executives in Broad Street at noon. On Sunday 13th May there will be an interfaith vigil at the main gate of the Aldermaston site at 2.30 p.m.

9th [Resistance to Trident Continues in Scottish Courts](#)
9th May 2001

Resistance to Trident Continues in Scottish Courts

First Court Case from Big Blockade

In the three trials of Trident Ploughshares activists which took place today at Helensburgh District Court there were two acquittals and one conviction.

The case against Roz Bullen, Mark Leech, Barbara Maver and Morag Balfour, for a blockade of Coulport Armaments depot in November 1999, was deserted by the Crown after the police witnesses failed to appear. The Justice of the Peace, Viv Dance, then accepted Grace Nicol's plea of "No case to answer". The second police witness could not identify her in the courtroom and was honest enough to say so. Grace had been involved in a lock-on at the August 1st 2000 blockade of Faslane.

Georgina Smith, from Ardnamurchan in Argyll, was charged with breach of the peace for sitting in the roadway at the north gate of Faslane at the Big Blockade on 12th February. JP Dance found her guilty and fined her £150. Georgina was adamant that she would not pay but the JP gave her 28 days to do so.

Meanwhile the Dumbarton Procurator Fiscal has begun to contact the others arrested and charged at the Big Blockade. Among the 27 summoned to court are MSP Tommy Sheridan and MEP Caroline Lucas. Tommy has a pleading diet on 11th June and Caroline on the 20th June. So far 41 others have been offered a fixed penalty fine of £50 and the vast majority of those will not pay. They probably will be brought to court, adding to an already congested court diary.

Tomorrow Brian Quail of Glasgow will appear in Glasgow District Court for a means hearing after refusing to pay fines for anti-Trident actions. It is more than likely that Brian will be given his second prison sentence this year. He intends to fast during his spell in jail, which will probably be for seven days.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "The Procurator Fiscal has now decided to prosecute people after their first arrest at Faslane. If this is aimed at stopping them getting further involved in the campaign it seems to be having the opposite effect."

1st [Activists Set to Confront UK Nuclear Bomb Factory](#)

1st May 2001

Activists Set to Confront UK Nuclear Bomb Factory

Blockade of AWE Aldermaston on 14th May

Anti-nuclear activists will gather in 10 days time at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston in Berkshire, where components for the UK's Trident nuclear warheads are made, and on Monday 14th will nonviolently try to disrupt the work of the site with a blockade.

Encouraged by their success in blockading the Faslane Trident submarine base on the Clyde on February 12th this year when 1000 people came to show their opposition to Trident and 379 activists were arrested, campaigners are keen to apply pressure to the nuclear bomb factory. The blockade, which will begin at 7 a.m., is jointly organised by London Region CND, Trident Ploughshares, the Student CND Network and Aldermaston Women's Camp.

The blockade fits into the Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Aldermaston, which will run from 10th to 15th May, providing activists with an opportunity to carry out a range of direct actions against the site. On Saturday 12th May there will be a march through Reading, beginning at 11.30 a.m. from the railway station, and ending with a mock trial outside Reading Magistrates Court at noon. On Sunday 13th May there will be an interfaith vigil at the main gate of the Aldermaston site at 2.30 p.m.

The Trident Ploughshares campaign will be just three years old as the camp begins. In that time there have been 1211 arrests, 1144 days have been spent in jail and fines totalling £15580 have been imposed. There have been effective and serious disarmament actions and dramatic acquittals at Crown Court or equivalent level. As recently as last Friday morning Danish activist Ulla Roder swam to and spray-painted Trident submarine HMS Vanguard in its high security berth at Faslane.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: " Both the authorities and the public are now beginning to accept that we are not a flash-in-the-pan campaign but one which is serious and determined in its intention to disarm Britain's horrifying and illegal weapons of mass destruction."

April Trident Three Activist Spray-Paints UK Nuclear Weapon Submarine

27th April 2001

27th **Trident Three Activist Spray-Paints UK Nuclear Weapon Submarine**

Danish Campaigner Says Breaching High-Security was "Easy-Peasy"

This morning Trident Three activist Ulla Roder spray-painted Britain's nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vanguard in its special high-security berth at Faslane naval base on the Clyde in Scotland.

Ulla (45), from Odense in Denmark, swam inside the Trident berths, reached Vanguard and prepared to remove from the boat's hull some of the special tiles which help the sub remain undetected by enemy craft. She was immediately challenged by a guard, who pointed a gun at her and demanded that she leave the boat alone. Ulla decided not to risk further work on the tiles and instead spray-painted in cellulose letters a metre high the word "USELESS" on the hull. She was then taken into custody by the marine patrol and charged with three offences: malicious damage (referring to the spray-painting); breach of the by-laws; being inside a prohibited area without authorisation. She was released from custody at 10 a.m. this morning. Although activists have on a number of occasions swum close to the Trident submarines this is the first time that one has been reached in Faslane, a feat the MOD police claimed was impossible. According to Ulla it was "Easy-Peasy".

This is Ulla's 16th arrest for anti-Trident actions. In June 1999 she was one of the three women who threw laboratory equipment from the research barge Maytime to the bottom of Loch Goil. Her acquittal at Greenock Sheriff Court following this action led to the recent High Court Opinion which criticised the judgment of the Sheriff, Margaret Gimblett. Yesterday Ulla appeared in Edinburgh Sheriff Court to plead not guilty on a charge of disrupting the Scottish Parliament on 5th April.

Ulla's determination to continue to try to disarm Trident has not been affected by the High Court's Opinion. Referring to the Opinion she said: "Luckily there is more common sense among ordinary people, who want the lives of future generations and the environment to be protected by the law. As long as the government continues its preparations for war crime by maintaining and deploying Trident, by developing new warheads and by failing to fulfill its obligation to disarm, we in Trident Ploughshares will continue the disarmament ourselves... We do not accept the right of any government or court to keep innocent people in ongoing danger of nuclear annihilation."

Late-night raid on 'useless' nuclear sub

Saturday 28th April 2001

The Scotsman, by John Staples

AN URGENT investigation has been launched after a well-known anti-nuclear activist managed to swim into the Faslane naval base and paint a slogan on the hull of a Trident nuclear submarine.

Yesterday's security breach comes as a severe embarrassment to the Navy, as Military Police have previously said it would be "impossible" for anyone to penetrate as far as the submarine pens.

Ulla Roder, a long-term anti-nuclear campaigner from Denmark, said she had found it "easy" to get inside.

Ms Roder had been dropped into the water outside the base at around midnight on Thursday, kitted in a diver's drysuit, and had swum for six hours.

She was only caught at 6am when an armed guard spotted her attempting to pull anti-radar tiles off the side of HMS Vanguard, Britain's first Trident submarine. When she was confronted she pulled out

a can of spray paint and wrote "Useless" on the hull.

It is the latest in a series of serious breaches at the high-security base at Faslane.

The 45-year-old Dane was detained for four hours before being released. A military spokesman yesterday said damage to the submarine was negligible, but added they would forward details to the Procurator Fiscal, who would decide whether to prosecute.

Miss Roder has been arrested 16 times for protests against Trident.

'What I could have done if I was a suicide bomber is unthinkable... half of Scotland could have been destroyed, over in a flash'

Sunday 29th April 2001

The Sunday Herald, *Stephen Naysmith*

Speaking out for the first time, the woman who last week broke into a high-security nuclear base tells her incredible story to Stephen Naysmith

ULLA RODER could pass for the new James Bond. In the early hours of Friday morning, she slipped into Gare Loch and swam undetected for five hours past police launches, over the floating barrier and into the submarine pen holding Britain's crown nuclear jewels - two Trident submarines each worth £1 billion.

Roder could easily have attached an explosive device and, with the words "goodnight Scotland", blown up both subs. But instead the anti-nuclear campaigner took out her spray can and calmly painted the word "useless" twice before giving herself up.

Talking for the first time about the security breach - which has severely embarrassed both the Royal Navy and Ministry of Defence police at the Clyde Submarine Base, Faslane - Roder said reaching the high security zone where two nuclear-powered submarines were berthed had been "easy-peasy".

"It isn't easy to get into a nuclear base, of course, but it was a lot easier than I had expected," she explained. "If I'd been a terrorist, I could have blown up half the Trident fleet."

The 45 year-old Danish mother-of-two said that her swim under the cover of darkness had been months in preparation. "I had known for a long while that I could get past security," she said.

She spent more than five hours in the cold waters of Gare Loch, concealing herself from police launches and searchlights and penetrating the floating barrier surrounding the berth.

Clad in thermal underwear, a drysuit, flippers and gloves, and wearing weights on her legs and belt, she set off at midnight. She took with her two chisels and a hammer, for prising protective tiles off the submarine's hull, as well as spray paint, superglue and two bottles of "disarmament fluid" - comprising syrup, furniture polish and sand - for clogging up electronic equipment. For sustenance she carried just a packet of dried fruit and nuts.

"The only training I had was swimming in a public baths. I am physically fit and a strong swimmer," she said.

Amazingly, Roder was not noticed until she had reached the high-security berthing area within the base, swum under the floating boom which protects the immediate berth area, and reached the side of HMS Vanguard. "I had two submarines on each side of me. I didn't know which one I would try to

board."

The implications scared her, she added. "It felt very unreal, swimming there. What I could have done if I was a suicide bomber is unthinkable. We were told it was impossible to get so far, but it is possible. I never understood before how dangerous it is - half of Scotland could have been destroyed, over in a flash."

As it was she did not board either submarine but was preparing to prise tiles from the hull of Vanguard when she was spotted. "I was surprised to see that it was already missing several of the tiles. It looked rather miserable close-up.

"Then a guard shouted to me to get away from the submarine and I could hear him load his gun. I swam back because I didn't want to risk my life doing what I was doing. Instead I got my paint out of my belt and sprayed "useless" twice on the side."

The journey to reach HMS Vanguard took a long time because of the care she had taken to remain concealed, Roder said. "I was in the water for most of the night because it takes a long time to keep yourself hidden. I spent a lot of time judging the atmosphere and the whereabouts of guards.

"It is important to use all your senses and not hurry, but there are a lot of places in a base where you can hide in the dark," she added. The only moment when she thought she might be thwarted was as she neared the target, she said. "Before I reached the high-security area a police boat came out of the mist and I thought they had spotted me. I hadn't heard it coming, but I ducked my head down and they passed by."

Roder dismissed claims by the MoD that she had recklessly put her life at risk from drowning or hypothermia as "ridiculous". "I am a brilliant swimmer and I was never cold for a moment. I felt totally safe and wouldn't put myself at risk."

A spokesman at the Clyde Submarine Base confirmed an inquiry would be held into Friday's incident. "There has been a security breach and it will be thoroughly looked into," he said. "We will look to see whether there are ways in which we can further improve security. No system is perfect."

He added that anti-nuclear protesters frequently put not just their own lives but also those of MoD and naval personnel at risk. "This was an irresponsible act which could have endangered her life but also the lives of MoD police."

Officially the MoD will make no further comment about security but, privately, navy sources concede that the activities of groups such as Trident Ploughshares, of which Roder is a member, have frequently embarrassed them. However, they strongly deny that exploits such as Roder's are indicative of a vulnerability to terrorist attack.

Political protesters are deterred without resorting to lethal force, whereas a genuine threat would not be afforded such luxury. "The protesters know this and skillfully take advantage of this," one insider said. "But people are pretty disappointed [Roder] got as far as she did. Obviously it is an embarrassment."

Roder is a veteran of such protests, and argues that nuclear weapons are in breach of international law. On the basis that civilians have a right and a duty to act to prevent war crimes, Roder and other members of Trident Ploughshares undertake direct "disarmament" actions aimed at disrupting the work of Britain's fleet of four Trident-equipped submarines and their infrastructure. They always admit their actions, while denying that they are guilty of a "crime".

In June 1999 Roder was one of the notorious Trident Three, a group of three women who sailed in broad daylight into a floating sub marine research station in Loch Goil and demolished it, throwing

computers, disks, files and other equipment into the water. They were acquitted of charges after presenting arguments that they were acting to prevent a more serious crime. However, that legal argument was dismissed during a Lord Advocate's review of the verdict in Edinburgh last month.

Roder, who has been arrested 16 times for anti-Trident actions, says she will continue to protest. "Trident's very presence constitutes preparation for war crimes. I don't believe we have lost the legal argument.

"The taxpayer pays £1.5 billion a year for the Trident fleet, yet they can't put safety in place. They must be embarrassed. However, I'm not doing this to embarrass the MoD but to disarm Trident for good."

26th [Scottish Parliament Demonstrators Appear in Court](#)

26th April 2001

Scottish Parliament Demonstrators Appear in Court

MSPs to Be Called to Give Evidence

The eleven Trident Ploughshares activists who were arrested after a demonstration in the Scottish Parliament on 5th April appeared today in Edinburgh Sheriff Court and at the same time left at the Parliament a letter for each MSP explaining their action.

The eleven were charged with disrupting the Scottish Parliament and causing a breach of the peace. Eight of the activists were present to give a not guilty plea and three others pled by letter. The Crown applied for a bail condition that the accused should not enter the Parliament building until their trials but Sheriff Charles Stoddart varied this to a commitment not to disrupt the Parliament. The activists were released on bail and given a wide variety of intermediate and trial dates in August and September. All those present asked for their trials to be conjoined but Sheriff Stoddart said he was unable to consider that at this juncture. One of the demonstrators, Morag Balfour, from Glenrothes, who will be a parliamentary candidate in the upcoming general election, told the court that eleven separate trials would in itself be disruptive to the Scottish Parliament since MSPs would likely be called as witnesses. Court officers instructed supporters in the public seats not to take notes but when this was queried by one of the accused, Jane Tallents, from Helensburgh, Sheriff Stoddart made it clear that the hearing was in public and note-taking was quite acceptable.

In their letter to the MSPs the eleven said: "We are writing to you now to explain that we did not take that action lightly, without due consideration or out of a lack of respect for the Parliament and the democratic process. ... An alarm call was needed. The shocking truth is that the Parliament had already been in existence for two years and there had been no debate on Trident, nor to our knowledge any plan to have one ... If the formal democratic processes can amble along like a sleepwalker in the face of such a crime by the state as Trident is, in the interests of the health of our democracy, it needs to be wakened."

26th [Trial of Trident Disarmers Adjourned](#)

26th April 2001

Trial of Trident Disarmers Adjourned

The Trial of Rosie James and Rachel Wenham, which was due to begin on Monday (30th April), has been adjourned, probably until the first week in October.

On 1st February 1999 Rachel and Rosie swam to and boarded the Trident nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vengeance, which was then docked at Barrow-in-Furness. They draped banners, painted slogans and the damage they did to testing equipment on the conning tower probably delayed the submarine for several weeks. The trial that was due to begin this coming Monday would have been

their third on the charges arising from that event. The first trial was in Lancaster Crown Court in January 2000 and this was aborted when the Crown could not come up with credible estimates for the damage done. At the second trial in Manchester Crown Court in September Rosie and Rachel were acquitted by the jury on the charge relating to the painting of slogans and the jury were hung on the more serious charge.

The defence sought the adjournment due to the fact that a defence barrister was unavailable due the run-on of another trial. Whenever the trial takes place the women are confident that they have an excellent chance of a complete acquittal from the jury.

23rd [Trident Ploughshares Activists Reclaim the Law](#)

23rd April 2001

Trident Ploughshares Activists Reclaim the Law

At courts today in Scotland and England Trident Ploughshares campaigners have been re-asserting the primacy of moral and humanitarian law as they defended themselves on charges relating to their disarmament actions at the Clyde nuclear weapons bases.

In Helensburgh District Court Barbara McGregor, an actor and artist from Glasgow, was charged with breach of the peace for her involvement in the "Crimebusters" blockade of Faslane in February 1999. She said that she had been carrying out her duty under the Nuremberg principles. It was Trident which breached the peace. Since the shameful verdict of the High Court in March the law itself was being held hostage to violence. The court might see her action as illegal but she stood by it. One of her witnesses, Morag Balfour from Glenrothes, explained that at the blockade they were placing their bodies as a physical objection to the tyranny of Trident. Before the court could intervene Morag sang a verse of the song they were singing on the day and supporters in the public benches joined in.

Barbara Maver, from Edinburgh, claimed that her action at the same blockade had caused no distress to anyone -the atmosphere had been one of fun and frivolity. Both were found guilty and fined £100. At the end of the proceedings the supporters graced the exit of the court officials with more of Morag's song.

Earlier, charges against Grace Nicol, from Edinburgh, and Warren Canham from Lanarkshire, relating to the disarmament camp in August 1999, were dropped. In Warren's case this was due to the complete lack of any prosecution case and in Grace's because of the poor and contradictory quality of the police evidence.

Meanwhile, veteran campaigner Joy Mitchell of Berwick appeared in her local Magistrates' Court to account for unpaid fine incurred for cutting the perimeter fence at Coulport. She was sentenced to 24 hours in police custody but when she was sent down the police queried the precise nature of the sentence and eventually some higher authority authorised her immediate release.

A supporter at the Helensburgh Court said: "It's thrilling to see the increasing confidence of these Trident resisters as they argue against their case in court. They have the court visibly wilting as they bring in common sense, morality and humanitarian law and refuse to be fobbed off with nonsense."

20th [High Court Upholds Aldermaston Bar on Activist](#)

20th April 2001

High Court Upholds Aldermaston Bar on Activist

A High Court judge today refused a bid by a peace activist to change his bail conditions which prevent him from going near the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston.

Peter Lanyon, a retired teacher from Leiston in Suffolk, wanted to attend the Trident Ploughshares

camp next month at the Berkshire site. The bail conditions were imposed after Peter, with three other activists, cut through the perimeter fence at a disarmament camp there last November. Peter argued that it was his human right to protest and he explained how the Trident Ploughshares campaign was founded on openness and accountability.

Refusing the bid Mr. Justice Crane said: "Mr Lanyon has explained to me that at the forthcoming protest he would not be doing an act likely to get himself arrested. The crucial question for me is whether that assurance is enough. With regret I refuse the variation. Mr Lanyon accepts that his principles on occasion do permit him to go contrary to English law. I cannot ignore English law, nor can I subordinate it to moral principles. Mr Lanyon's principles do permit and sometimes require him to carry out acts of protest. In refusing his application I am in no way questioning his good faith."

The hearing was delayed since the prosecution failed to appear to contest the application. Within moments of the hearing being postponed, a slightly breathless barrister, frantically recruited by the CPS arrived from the Middle Temple. In the spirit of openness typical of Trident Ploughshares Peter briefed her on the case to enable the appeal to be heard.

After the hearing Peter said: "It is gratifying that his Lordship so readily accepted that our campaign is principled. However, isn't morality supposed to be the basis of the English law, not subordinate to it?"

Note: The Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Aldermaston is from 10th to 15th May, with a blockade of the site on Monday 14th May.

18th [Norfolk Anti-Trident Activist Fined in Scottish Court](#)

18th April 2001

Norfolk Anti-Trident Activist Fined in Scottish Court

Fines imposed on Trident Ploughshares activists have now reached total of £15390 after a campaigner was fined £100 today in Helensburgh District Court for breach of the peace.

Rupert Eris, a nature conservation warden from Norfolk, had taken part in the "Crimebusters" blockade of Faslane naval base on 14th February 2000. He said that there had been no breach of the peace. He had been sitting in the road for less than a minute before being removed by the police. Workers had been advised of the event in advance and a number had got into the base by ship. The base itself had claimed that it had not been inconvenienced by the blockade. He pointed out that although the recently delivered opinion of the Scottish High Court had gone against the campaigners, even those judges had admitted that international law applied in Scotland. Under that law any weapon used must be capable of discriminating between military and civilian targets. The MOD itself had recently admitted that nuclear weapons were indiscriminate.* Trident was clearly illegal.

Rupert said: "However much this government claims that murdering innocent people is legal, many people disagree with them, and I am one of them."

*Rupert was referring to a letter to MP Kim Howells from junior defence minister Lewis Moonie on the subject of depleted uranium. At one place he says: "In particular, International Humanitarian Law requires that weapons be used during armed conflict in a discriminate manner." And in another: "Nuclear, biological and chemical weapons are indiscriminate weapons of mass destruction specifically designed to incapacitate or kill large numbers of people;"

7th [16 Arrests at Faslane as Anti-Trident Campaign Continues](#)

7th April 2001

16 Arrests at Faslane as Anti-Trident Campaign Continues

Sixteen activists were arrested today at Faslane naval base, home to the UK's nuclear weapon submarines, as around 150 campaigners, among them Tommy Sheridan MSP, gathered at the base to restate the moral and legal case against Trident and to continue the campaign of direct action.

The event began with a number of short speeches. Angie Zelter (45), from Cromer in Norfolk and one of the Trident Three, expressed the disgust that people were feeling at the abject failure of the Scottish High court to be independent from the state and admit that Trident is an illegal weapon of mass destruction. Tommy Sheridan gave his strong support for the activists who had put the Trident question on the Scottish Parliament agenda last Thursday and pointed out that a majority people in Scotland were behind the direct action campaign.

Meanwhile activists were cutting through the perimeter fence of the base and some succeeded in getting inside, setting off the "bandit" alarm. At the north gate of the base, in front of the crowd and the police, Angie Zelter went to the fence and began to cut it with bolt-cutters. It took the police some time to arrest her and the police van she was put in was held up for an hour as campaigners crowded in front of it.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "We were delighted that so many people came down to Faslane at short notice. People know the judges had a chance to do the right thing and blew it. Its up to all of us now to step up the campaign."

5th [Dramatic Banner-Drop in Scottish Parliament](#)
5th April 2001

Dramatic Banner-Drop in Scottish Parliament

Campaigners Put Trident on Holyrood Agenda

Today, during a crowded First Minister's question time at the Scottish Parliament, Trident Ploughshares campaigners dramatically interrupted normal business by dropping a banner and demanding that the Parliament face up to the Trident question.

The 12 activists, including all of the Trident Three, draped from the public gallery a banner which read: "COMPASSION, INTEGRITY, WISDOM = NO TRIDENT. WHERE'S THE JUSTICE?" quoting the words on the Parliament mace. Some of the activists shouted out: "The people of Scotland want rid of Trident. What will you do about it?" Others tied themselves to the barrier at the front of the public gallery. Their action drew applause from some members of the Parliament and held up business for about 15 minutes before they were removed by police and taken to an Edinburgh police station, apart from one who was released immediately.

Campaigners are incensed at what they see as the supine failure of the Scottish High Court to challenge the illegality of Trident in responding to the Lord Advocate's Reference on the trial of the Trident Three.

One of the activists, Barbara McGregor (33), an artist and warehouse worker from Glasgow, said: "As a Scot I am horrified that our highest court has said that threatening mass murder is OK. It's now up to Parliament and the Scottish people as a whole to show its revulsion for a state that practices terrorism and a dodgy legal system that backs it up."

The activists were Elinor Mackenzie, Barbara McGregor, Jane Tallents, Joy Mitchell, Brian Quail, Marjan Willemsen, Ellen Moxley, Ulla Roder, Angie Zelter, Leesa French, Morag Balfour and Maire-Colette Wilkie. Ellen was not arrested. The others were held by the police until the evening when all but one were released and bailed to appear at Edinburgh Sheriff Court. Brian was held overnight to

appear in a Glasgow Court since there was an outstanding warrant against him.

People will gather at the north gate of the Faslane naval base, home to the Trident submarine fleet, this Saturday at 11 a.m., to restate the case against Trident and to continue the work of direct disarmament.

[Update: Brian was transferred to Glasgow to appear in the District Court for an unpaid fine and has been sent to prison until Monday. The Magistrate was awful and Alex Cochrane was arrested with Contempt of Court for saying so!]

March 31st Campaigners Slam "Shabby" High Court Judgement

31st March 2001

Campaigners Slam "Shabby" High Court Judgement

In a statement today Trident Ploughshares campaigners have described yesterday's Scottish High Court judgement on the Trident Three Lord Advocate's Reference as a shabby and incompetent piece of work, full of muddle and misrepresentation.

"A clear example of the lack of reasoning in the document is the claim that the question of Trident's legality can only be considered in time of war. Common sense demands that if we are concerned at all about the legality of our weapons we examine that question as we prepare and deploy them - not wait until it is too late.

The judges also claim that the Respondents did not suggest '..that what the Government were doing with Trident would be illegal or criminal apart from international customary law. ..' The transcript shows that the Respondents clearly argued that Trident was illegal under conventional UK law and Scots law. The judgement completely ignores the submissions made on the basis of the Geneva Convention and the Nuremburg Principles. They have failed to answer the basic question: how could a 100 kiloton warhead could ever be used against a military target without unlawfully affecting protected citizens?

This perverse ruling follows Ministry of Defence policy very closely and is what one might generally expect from the judiciary in a nuclear weapon state. It was our hope that the Scottish High Court might be different and take the independent stance the citizens of Scotland expect. Under the aegis of such judges Scotland would be a safe haven for Slobodan Milosovic and the Nazi war criminals."

30th Scottish High Court Ducks Trident Issue

30th March 2001

Scottish High Court Ducks Trident Issue

Today the High Court of Justiciary in Scotland appears to have failed to take a good opportunity to challenge the illegality of the UK's Trident nuclear weapon system when it answered in the negative four questions set by the Lord Advocate in relation to the acquittal of the "Trident Three" by Margaret Gimblett.

The chair of the panel of three judges, Lord Prosser, gave a summary of the court's judgement in a

few curt sentences and then hurried out. On the face of it the judgement undermines the reasoning of the Sheriff in making the original acquittal but the full 76-page text of the judgement has still to be studied in depth. A preliminary scan suggests they have ducked the issue and have advanced a range of spurious arguments in defence of their position.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "It was noticeable that Lord Prosser would not meet the eyes of the respondents as he gave his statement. His demeanour was in marked contrast to that he showed during the hearing itself. This may be because he knows in his heart of hearts that he has let the people of Scotland down. This week a System Three poll showed that a majority of the people of Scotland support the direct action campaign against Trident. The legal system has some catching up to do. Trident is still out there and still threatening mass murder. We will be back at Faslane on the 7th April at 11.a.m. to get on with the work."

Member of the Scottish Parliament Tommy Sheridan said: "Every progressive change in history has been brought about by the people. Nonviolent and peaceful civil resistance must be renewed."

28th **POLL BACKS BIG BLOCKADERS**
28th March 2001

POLL BACKS BIG BLOCKADERS

The Trident Ploughshares campaign has welcomed the result of a System 3 opinion poll commissioned by Scottish CND which showed that 51% of those questioned in Scotland supported the action taken by people who took part in a blockade of Faslane last month.

385 people, including George Galloway MP, Tommy Sheridan MSP and seventeen religious ministers and priests were arrested at the Big Blockade of Faslane on 12th February. Around 1000 people from 11 countries took part in the event and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland was present to give his support. Only 24% of those questioned in the poll were opposed to the action. The question was part of a poll of 977 adults on nuclear weapon issues conducted between 22 February and 4 March by NFO System Three on behalf of Scottish CND.

The result of the poll has an added significance as the judgment of the High Court on the Lord Advocate's Reference relating to the trial and acquittal of the "Trident Three" will be given in the Court this Friday 30th March at 10 am. The hearing of the Reference took place last year when the historic debate centred largely on the issue of the legality or otherwise of the UK's Trident nuclear weapon system and on the rights of ordinary citizens to intervene to uphold international law. The Lord Advocate made his Reference at the beginning of 2000 following the acquittal by Sheriff Margaret Gimblett in Greenock Sheriff Court of three women activists, Angie Zelter, Ulla Roder and Ellen Moxley, who in June 1999 damaged a Trident-related research barge in Loch Long.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "There is significant support in Scotland not only for those who demonstrate against Trident but also for those willing to risk arrest by blocking Faslane. We have been aware of this but the confirmation which the poll brings is very encouraging. How can Strathclyde Police continue with any confidence to arrest peaceful anti-Trident activists? How can the courts continue to pretend that people who act to uphold international law can be dealt with as criminals?"

A vigil will be held outside the High Court from 5pm on Thursday (29th March) until the judgment is delivered.

On Saturday 7th April at 11 am campaigners will gather at the North gate of Faslane naval base to respond to the High Court judgment and to carry out direct disarmament action.

27th [Seven Days in Jail For Determined Activist](#)
27th March 2001

Seven Days in Jail For Determined Activist

Will Pay Fine When Hell Freezes Over

Today a Scottish court gave an activist his fifth jail sentence for direct action against the UK's Trident nuclear weapon system.

Ian Thomson (58), from Douglas Water in Lanarkshire, a long term activist for peace, the environment and Scottish independence, was appearing at Helensburgh District Court for failing to pay a fine imposed for an anti-Trident action in which he cut a perimeter fence at Coulport armaments depot.

Ian told Justice of the Peace John McPhail that he was refusing on principle to pay the fine and added: "With respect to the Court, I have to say that hell will freeze over before I pay it." After consideration JP McPhail sent him to Greenock prison for seven days.

His sentence will bring the total of days spent in jail by Trident Ploughshares activists to 1070 and comes as the campaign looks forward to Friday 30th March when the High Court will deliver its judgment on the Lord Advocate's Reference related to the trial and acquittal of the "Trident Three" in Greenock Sheriff Court in October 1999.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "Ian's tenacity reminds us that the core of this campaign is not complex political or legal arguments but a straightforward determination to do whatever we can with the tools to hand to disarm this awful weapon."

26th [Jubilee Ploughshares Update](#)
26th March 2001

Jubilee Ploughshares Update

Father Martin Newell and Susan van der Hijden are due to appear at Basildon Crown Court on Tuesday March 27 2001 at 10:30am.

They have now been in custody for 90 days and are facing the following charges:

Trespass

Criminal Damage to four vehicles set at £27,000

Criminal Damage to buildings set at £4,000

Martin was moved from Bedford Prison to the Category A Belmarsh Prison in London today.

In the early hours of November 3 2000 Martin and Susan entered RAF Wittering in Cambridgeshire and disarmed the convoy truck being prepared to carry nuclear warheads to Faslane, Scotland for Trident nuclear submarines.

There will be a peaceful vigil outside the Crown Court starting at 10am including Buddhist monks/nuns and local and national Catholics and peace supporters.

22nd [Trident Three High Court Judgement On 30th March](#)
22nd March 2001

Trident Three High Court Judgement On 30th March

Today the High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh announced that the Court's judgement on the Lord Advocate's Reference relating to the trial and acquittal of the "Trident Three" will be given in the Court on Friday 30th March at 10 a.m.

The hearing of the Reference took place last year when the historic debate centred largely on the issue of the legality or otherwise of the UK's Trident nuclear weapon system and on the rights of ordinary citizens to intervene to uphold international law.

The Lord Advocate made his Reference at the beginning of 2000 following the acquittal by Sheriff Margaret Gimblett in Greenock Sheriff Court of three women activists, Angie Zelter, Ulla Roder and Ellen Moxley who in June 1999 damaged a Trident-related research barge in Loch Long.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "The hearing of the Reference last year was the first time that nuclear weapons have been examined by a court at this level in a nuclear weapons state. We look forward to discover at long last to what extent their Lordships have risen to this historic challenge. Will they match the standards set by Margaret Gimblett for insight, openness of mind, and willingness to face squarely and honestly the implications of international law?"

The peace community in Scotland will hold a vigil outside the High Court from 5pm on the Thursday 29th until the judgement is delivered.

11th [Faslane Peace Camp Press Release](#)
11th March 2001

Faslane Peace Camp Press Release

Womens Peace Camp Occupy French Warship

A group of seven women occupied a French destroyer today to protest against war. They used D-locks to lock-on to the ships superstructure and fixed a banner to railings on gantry 50 feet from the deck saying "Women Unite for a World Without War".

The warship which was docked at the Garelochhead fuel depot adjacent to the Faslane Naval base had been taking part in exercises with the Royal Navy. The women gained access through a hole in the perimeter fence and ran up the gangplank onto the ship. It took almost 5 hours to remove all the women, some of them having to be lowered on ropes from the superstructure.

The international group of peace women spanning generations from 10 days to grandmother gathered at Faslane Peace Camp this week-end to mark International Womens Day. They said "We welcome women to unite and take action as we feel this is a time when the global military machine is conspiring to spread their power through fear and violence and we reject this as a future."

Contact Faslane Peace Camp 01436 820901

Women unite for a world without war... The first women's weekend organised in Scotland for over two years has taken place this last weekend at Faslane Peace Camp, to celebrate International Woman's Day.

Originally planned for Coulport, plans had to be changed due to foot and mouth disease and after some intense talks it was agreed we could have a woman's space here at Faslane.

Saturday saw us going on subwatches; driving to the other side of the Gareloch and spotting the 1 Trident, 1 foreign, and 3 Hunterkiller submarines. Later on all of us had a great time weaving our 3

feet high slogan: "women unite for a world without war", into the fence.

Tabitha, this being her first women's weekend at only 10 days old joined in as well. Then in the evening we discussed our plans for the next day.

Getting up early in the morning, nine of us managed to drive off without the police noticing. After cutting a hole in the fence, seven women ran for the jetty where -as we knew- a French Destroyer was berthed. A surprised engineer and some sailors saw us boarding and tried to stop us; some woman were held, others were able to start climbing the first ladders, and two of us actually managed to pull loose and started climbing as well.

After the first exciting minutes, the balance was that 3 of us were arrested quite soon; leaving the other four to place themselves strategically high up on the Destroyer. Two women were on the central part of the ship and managed to unfold and hang the banner, that was ripped off after only a few minutes by some MoD policemen that had followed them up.

Refusing to then move all four could breath a little and enjoy the beautiful hills on the background.

By this time at least a hundred or so sailors had gathered around and were watching interestedly. One woman who cleverly negotiated to come down by herself after a certain time, climbed down. And then there was only three...

But these three had already locked themselves on and were refusing to move, so some tactics were tried by the French: bringing out watercanons, waving tranquillisers, coming up to one woman and wanting to lower her by a rope around the waist!

The MoD then talked to the captain, and made clear they didn't agree on the methods and that it would have to be either them or the French, running the operation of getting us down. Luckily for us it was the MoD, who actually had a newly trained team of climbers ready to take us down.

But first there were still the D-locks! Sending up a WPC to search us for the keys, two of us both threw away the keys; one bouncing into the Loch, the other falling on another ship. This meant one of the women was "de D-locked", but still refusing to move, with the other two still in position as well.

Then slowly but gradually work was started on the first woman: cutting her D-lock, putting her in a climbing harness, lowering her down three ladders, carrying her into a police van... The same procedure was then done to the last two remaining on the 50 feet high middle part of the Destroyer.

We were all charged with Breach of Peace and Byelaws, the 3 locked on were also charged with resisting arrest. After a few hours spent in custody inside Faslane all of us were released and driven back to camp.

All Stars:

* for continuous support outside: Jane,

* for driving back the van: Olivia,,

* for media work: Roz and Fungus,

* for minding camp and all the left behind dogs: Wendy and Laura,

* for making us food: Lynn

* for boarding the ship: Ulla, Anna and Barbara,

* for climbing somewhere high up: Sylvia, Jenny, Mary and Marjan.

And everyone for painting the banner, and everyone for the action!

And for once a special mention for the way the MoD dealt with us, and especially a thank you to the climbing team!

7th **Helensburgh District Court - A New Record for the lowest fine!**

7th March 2001

Helensburgh District Court - A New Record for the lowest fine!

Warren Canham was on trial today for last February's blockade. He gave a straight forward defence after getting one of the police officers to say that if he knew someone had a lethal weapon he would do something about it and that he agreed that nuclear weapons were lethal! Joe Scullion the Magistrate seemed to have taken over the PF's job and cross questioned Warren!

Several times Warren pointed out that he was locked to Mark Leech whose not guilty plea had been accepted by the court.

He was found guilty and then fined £20!

Fungus had a couple of appearances to set other dates, while 7 day old daughter Tabatha slept soundly in her Dads arms. One more deficiency in the facilities in the court became obvious as Fungus fed the hungry babe on the stairs!

Four police witnesses gave evidence that they saw Ian cut the fence on the two occasions. On the second time he was seen cutting a few strands of fence and even though he asked the police about the 12 sections of fence completely cut down round the corner the Judge said that this would be ignored because no-one saw it being done and it wasn't in the charge.

Ian said that he had intentionally cut the fence, he was starting to dismantle the base.

Sheriff Fitzsimons found him guilty of all charges. Ian admitted previous convictions. The damage was £200 in each case. Ian had appeared 5 times for this case and spent 2 weeks on remand at the time.

He said he had spent his life constructing things. He detailed some of the voluntary projects he had been involved in but said that the most rewarding project was his present one of restoring beauty to Faslane/Coulport by dismantling the bases. Trident is illegal and immoral... at this point the Sheriff stopped him and said "You said you didn't want to use that as your defence, it's in front of the High Court at the moment." Ian asked why possession of a life was illegal but possessions of weapons of mass destruction is not considered a threat?

The Sheriff then said that other judges have been "pretty fair to your colleagues over the years". Referring to the Greenock decision, he disagreed with this - he expects the LAR to say it's no defence and then these offences will be dealt with much more severely, sentences will be much more substantial. In the meantime he admonished Ian.

Other Legal News

Marilyn Croser spent two days at Cornton Vale last week for an unpaid fine after handing herself in. Marlene Yeo was told to remain within the court precincts until the end of court which turned out to be 1pm for an unpaid fine of £541.

February Ian Thomson in Dumbarton Sheriff Court

27th February 2001

27th

Ian Thomson in Dumbarton Sheriff Court

Ian Thomson was in Dumbarton Sheriff Court today. Ian had two charges of maliciously damaging the fence at Coulport on 14th December 1999 and 20th January 2000 and one of breach of bail.

Four police witnesses gave evidence that they saw Ian cut the fence on the two occasions. On the second time he was seen cutting a few strands of fence and even though he asked the police about the 12 sections of fence completely cut down round the corner the Judge said that this would be ignored because no-one saw it being done and it wasn't in the charge.

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23rd

For Mother Earth: Faslane Adventure 12th/13th Feb

23rd February 2001

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With ten people from For Mother Earth we left to Scotland to participate in the Big Blockade of the Faslane Trident base on Feb 12th. David Heller took off on his own on Friday evening, the others went together in a nine-seater minibus from Gent (Julien Vacher and Regis Lequin from France, Katri Silvonon, Eveliina Lundqvist and Hanna Järvinen from Finland, Krista Van Velzen from the Netherlands, Pol Dhuyvetter, Iwan Meerhaeghe and Bernard De Witte from Belgium).

After a long ride we arrived at the meeting place in Glasgow and took part in the last briefings and an action training. Next morning we drove to the base, to find the entrance already blocked on our arrival, with hundreds of participants and also hundreds of policemen.

Early during the blockade Julien Vacher and Regis Lequin were arrested and brought to the Glasgow police station.

With the others of our group we had convened not to be arrested during the blockade itself, but to try to get inside the base, in order to trigger the 'bandit-alert' which means that, as soon as someone gets arrested inside the base, the work on the base has to be stopped and everyone on the base is supposed to go and look for eventual other 'invaders'. (Since at the peace camp they managed to get hold of documents which describe this emergency scenario, we know exactly how this alert works);. This alert lasts for at least half an hour, during which the whole base is inoperative.

About 12h30 Krista Van Velzen, Iwan Meerhaeghe, David Heller and Eveliina Lundqvist actually managed to cut through the fence, but they were discovered while getting inside the base and arrested, which of course triggered the 'bandit alert'. Meanwhile Katri Silvonon and Bernard De Witte tried to get into the base north from the main entrance, but since they operated just alongside the main road, they were discovered before they could cut sufficiently. They got also arrested, and both groups were held for about three hours at the police station inside the Faslane base, while getting through the normal procedures (identification, photos, fingerprinting and so on). About four in the afternoon we were all released and brought to Faslane peace camp.

After some rest at the peace camp we decided to try once again to get inside the base, so we could stop them for some time more. But from a first reconnaissance it appeared that there were too many police cars patrolling still, and we postponed our plan for an hour. But at nightfall we got into our minibus, and somewhere in the beginning of the fence, Krista, Katri and Bernard got out and climbed the slope up to the fence, where we started cutting. It took a long time, cause every time a car passed we ducked down so we could not be seen by an eventual police patrol.

Once inside things got smoother, we cut a passage through the rolls of razor wire and took off behind some administrative buildings. After a while we got on the main road which connects the South gate with the North gate. There were still workers passing on this road, and several cars drove by, but no one took attention of our presence. So we kind of sauntered further on that road, it was a queer feeling, walking in the middle of that military base, being seen by passers-by and still not being embarrassed.

After a walk of some twenty minutes we got at the back side of the first berth (where Trident and other submarines are inspected), but there we were seen by two policemen, Katri being recognised by one of them.

"Can we see your passes" - well of course, we could not show anything of that kind, and we got

arrested immediately, while the 'bandit alert' sounded from loudspeakers all around, so we blocked once more the whole system for some time.

We got taken to the police station inside the base, but only a few minutes after we arrived there, Pol Dhuyvetter, Hanna Järvinen and Martin Kelly (from Ireland , who joined us for this action). They had managed to cut through a first fence but were arrested while trying to cut through a second fence.

This time we were held about six hours, until four in the morning, and then we got brought back to Faslane peace camp.

Bernard De Witte

Angie Zelter (49), from Cromer in Norfolk, one of the Trident Three, appeared today in Helensburgh District Court after being arrested yesterday. Angie had an outstanding warrant against her because she had refused to attend for trial on the grounds that the district court should wait for the High Court judgment on the Lord Advocate's Reference which will be sharply relevant to her defence.

Justice of the Peace Joe Scullion offered Angie a new date for the missed trial. Angie then told him that a senior Scottish lawyer, Ian Hamilton QC, had accepted the campaign's case that Trident is illegal under international law and had been arrested at Faslane yesterday. She then invited the JP to join Trident Ploughshares. Mr. Scullion declined. Also released from custody by the court were Georgina Smith and Tiff Clelland who had initially refused to give arresting police the full personal details required.

Jenny Gaiawyn, a student at Bangor University, was sent to Cornton Vale women's prison in Stirling this morning. When they arrested her yesterday the police acted on an outstanding warrant against her for non-payment of a fine. Jenny also served time at Cornton Vale last August for non-payment of a fine.

Today Armed Forces Minister John Spellar stated: "HMS Vengeance and the officers and men who serve in her will now begin to play their part in the maintenance of deterrent patrols in future decades."

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "John Spellar's statement today confirms our suspicion that this government's paper commitment to rid us of its nuclear arsenal is just so much window dressing. The civil resistance to Trident must continue and intensify. Yesterday's blockade shows that the number of people ready and willing to share in this urgent disarmament task is growing all the time."

13th

FASLANE ARRESTS REACH 385

13th February 2001

FASLANE ARRESTS REACH 385

Accused Activist Invites Magistrate To Join the Campaign

With the exception of one activist who has been sent to prison all the 385 people arrested at yesterday's blockade of Faslane naval base have now been released. The arrest count included six members of the Belgium-based affinity group Titanic Trident who last night were arrested while attempting to cut their way through the perimeter fence of the base.

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Helensburgh District Court after being arrested yesterday. Angie had an outstanding warrant against her because she had refused to attend for trial on the grounds that the district court should wait for the High Court judgment on the Lord Advocate's Reference which will be sharply relevant to her defence.

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12th

HUNDREDS OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AT FASLANE

12th February 2001

HUNDREDS OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AT FASLANE

Senior Scots Lawyer Among Those Held

Around 350 people taking part in today's blockade of Faslane naval base have already been held by police, including MP George Galloway, Caroline Lucas, Member of the European Parliament, Tommy Sheridan, Member of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish author Alisdair Gray and Ian Hamilton Q.C., the senior Scottish lawyer who brought back the Stone of Destiny to Scotland in the early fifties.

The activists at Faslane today came from England, Wales, Ireland, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Spain, South Korea, Belgium, Holland, Australia and Columbia as well as in considerable numbers from Scotland itself.

The blockade began at 7 a.m. Activists tied on to each other with chains and other ingenious contraptions, or simply linked arms or sat down in the road. A number of ministers of religion, including Norman Shanks, leader of the Iona Community, have been arrested. Scottish church leaders held a service of worship in the middle of the event and made strong statements of support for the campaign of civil resistance to Trident.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"We are delighted that so many came from far and wide and put themselves on the line. The fact that parliamentarians, ministers of religion, a senior lawyer and a prominent author are

among those arrested shows that this campaign is not restricted to a few activists but is beginning to engage civic society, especially in Scotland. Following on our recent court successes this is a great boost for the campaign."

12th

Big Blockade Media Reports

12th February 2001

Big Blockade Media Reports

BBC Online

Politicians arrested at nuclear protest

Monday, 12 February, 2001

Politicians and church ministers were among 379 people arrested during a protest at the home of Britain's Trident nuclear submarine fleet. Labour MP George Galloway, Socialist MSP Tommy Sheridan and Green Party MEP Caroline Lucas were arrested during the demonstration at Faslane.

Mr Galloway, the MP for Glasgow Kelvin and Scottish Socialist Party Leader and Glasgow MSP Mr Sheridan shouted defiance as police removed them from the protest.

Fifteen churchmen were also arrested as demonstrators launched the biggest anti-nuclear protest seen in Scotland since the early 1960s. A spokesman for Strathclyde Police said it arrested 195 women and 178 men, mainly on breach of the peace charges, while military police arrested a further six people.

By Monday night almost all those arrested had been released. They will still be the subject of reports to the Procurator Fiscal. Mr Sheridan served five days of a 14-day jail sentence for non-payment of a fine in relation to a demonstration last February. The latest demonstration, which was designed to close the base for the day, began at 0700GMT and was organised by anti-nuclear weapons group Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND.

Banners of support

A number of protesters formed a human chain at the north gate entrance to the base at Helensburgh and they were cheered on by crowds on either side of the main gate who waved banners of support.

Before being led away by police, Mr Sheridan, said: "The world is against nuclear weapons and today proves that the time for talking is over and demonstrations throughout the world should start against nuclear weapons."

Mr Galloway said: "We are worried about how to pay for care of the elderly and reducing class sizes in schools. "However, we are spending millions on weapons of mass destruction that will never be used."

Some of the estimated 500 demonstrators unfurled banners at the base, including a red flag and a depiction of a child maimed by nuclear weapons. Protesters banged on drums, while others chanted slogans.

Police used power tools to cut through tubing which protesters had used to tie themselves together. They also had to dismantle the costume of a woman dressed as a silver nuclear

missile before they could arrest her.

Author Alasdair Gray, who joined CND in 1958, called on MSPs to take action against the presence of nuclear weapons in Scotland. He said: "Scotland now has her own parliament and hopefully this may lead to something being done about nuclear weapons."

Depth of feeling

Mr Sheridan's wife Gail defended her husband's actions and said: "I have taken the mince out and I will have it ready as he should be home for his tea. I am very proud of him and I know he will continue to protest unless these evil weapons are taken away from us."

Scottish National Party MSP Linda Fabiani said the demonstration showed the depth of feeling against nuclear weapons.

A spokeswoman for Faslane said staff were still managing to get into work despite the protest. She said: "We knew this was going to happen so we made sure we got people onto the site before it started. "We are managing to get people in and out although both entrances are booked so access is very difficult. Non essential staff have been advised to stay at home or work from home."

Faslane is home to the four-strong Trident submarine fleet. Each vessel has 16 missile tubes and the weapons are said to be accurate to within 100 yards. Hundreds have been arrested in previous protests over several years. Trident Ploughshares predicted that up to 1,000 activists would be present from countries across Europe.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Right Reverend Andrew McLellan, joined the action and took part in an ecumenical service at the protest site. Mr McLellan said: "I am here to demonstrate the Church of Scotland's long-standing opposition to nuclear weapons in general and Trident in particular. "I am very impressed with the atmosphere and both the police and the protesters have been both cordial and courteous. I am not going to be arrested but some of my best friends have been."

The protesters received a message of support from Sir Sean Connery.

New Trident submarine in service

Tuesday, 13 February, 2001

The MoD has confirmed a new submarine is operational. The Ministry of Defence has confirmed the latest addition to the Trident submarine fleet has entered full service at Faslane. A spokesman for the MoD said HMS Vengeance was now part of Britain's nuclear deterrent.

Tuesday's announcement came less than 24 hours after an estimated 1000 people gathered outside the Clyde facility to voice their opposition to the Trident system. Armed forces minister John Spellar also underlined the government's commitment to Trident and the maintenance of nuclear deterrent patrols "in future decades". Police arrested more than 370 people during the demonstration which was attended by leading churchmen and politicians.

Church of Scotland Minister, Reverend Norman Shanks, the leader of the Iona Community, was among those arrested. He also suffered a similar fate at a Trident protest a year earlier. But he told BBC Newsnight Scotland on Monday, the protest was not something he entered into lightly. "What is happening at Faslane is a clear attempt on the part of those of us who are there from within the church to make a statement against violence, and to say that weapons of war - particularly the kinds of weapons that are represented by Trident missiles - are contrary to

God's purpose for humanity," he said.

Speaking out

He said that being arrested was an ordeal, but part of the Christian faith involved putting yourself on the line. "There is clear justification, both within the traditions of the church and on the basis of scripture, for people - whether ministers or lay people who have Christian convictions - to stand up and speak out for what they believe, even if that involves civil disobedience," he said. "We believe that Trident represents something that is so significantly wrong and offensive, and such a huge waste of Britain's money in today's world, that this is justified.

"The position of the church in Scotland is clearly against Trident. We are embodying the views within churches in Scotland today." He said the UK Government had shown that it was not prepared to move on the issue. "We have gone a long way down the road with all the alternatives," he said. "The government refuses to talk to the people who are prominently involved with the Trident Ploughshares campaign." He added that the level of support at the demonstration had been "tremendously encouraging".

'Nuisance' factor

Police have estimated the number of protesters at about 500, although he thought the figure was closer to the 1000 predicted by campaign organisers.

However, Conservative MSP Ben Wallace said the British people had been given the chance to vote for disarmament back in 1983 and had chosen not to do so. And he said that blocking the road into Faslane amounted to "nuisance" rather than disobedience. "If he is protesting to stop nuclear submarines you don't sit on the road. Nuclear submarines leave by the loch," he said. He said the Rev Shanks did not speak for the whole church, pointing out that there were ministers and padres in the armed forces. And he said nuclear weapons were cheaper when compared to conventional armed forces - and stressed that there was still a need for such a deterrent.

The biggest anti-nuclear protest seen in Scotland since the early 1960s was organised by anti-nuclear weapons group Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND. A number of protesters formed a human chain at the north gate entrance to the base at Helensburgh and they were cheered on by crowds on either side of the main gate who waved banners of support.

ITN Online

Nuclear weapons protesters arrested

"I am with you in spirit and give you best wishes for your demonstration and your just cause" - Sir Sean Connery in a message to protesters

Police have arrested ten people protesting outside the home of Britain's nuclear deterrent. The arrests were made at a protest organised by Scottish CND outside Faslane Royal Navy base where Trident submarines are maintained.

Protesters said about 1000 people had joined the demonstration. Labour MP George Galloway was among those arrested. Scottish CND administrator John Ainslie said: "This is the biggest protest in Scotland since 1961 and it is the biggest ever held at Faslane."

Strathclyde police said five men and five women were arrested for breach of the peace at the naval base on the River Clyde.

The demonstration, which aims to close the base for the day, began at 7am and has been

organised by anti-nuclear weapons group Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND. The protesters claim the weapons breach international law because they cannot distinguish between civilian and military targets. Those joining the crowds included Scottish Socialist MSP Tommy Sheridan, who was jailed after taking part in a similar protest at the base last year, and the moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, the Rt Rev Andrew McLellan.

Mr McLellan said: "I am here to demonstrate the Church of Scotland's long-standing opposition to nuclear weapons in general and Trident in particular. I am not going to be arrested but some of my best friends have been."

Sir Sean Connery has backed the mass demonstration, though he was unable to attend the protest because of other commitments. In a phone call to the former leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party, Alex Salmond, Sir Sean said: "I cannot be with you in person because of filming commitments. "But be assured that I am with you in spirit and give you best wishes for your demonstration and your just cause."

Author Alasdair Gray, who joined CND in 1958, called on MSPs to take action against the presence of nuclear weapons in Scotland, saying: "Scotland now has her own Parliament and hopefully this may lead to something being done about nuclear weapons."

Scottish CND administrator John Ainslie said people had come from as far afield as France, Denmark and the United States to join the demonstration.

SNP Linda Fabiani, MSP for Central Scotland, said the demonstration showed the depth of feeling against nuclear weapons. She said: "There was a view that last year's protests were a one-off and that the momentum of the campaign would not be maintained but today has proved that wrong."

Britain's independent nuclear deterrent
‡ Each Trident submarine weighs 15,900 tons and has a crew of 135.
‡ It carries 16 Lockheed Trident II nuclear missiles.
‡ Each of these can carry 12 multiple independent re-entry vehicles.
‡ The Government has put a limit of 48 warheads which can be carried on each Trident submarine.
‡ There are four submarines - Vanguard, Victorious, Vigilant and Vengeance.
‡ The order for the boats - costing £14 billion - was the biggest order made by the Ministry of Defence.

Edinburgh Evening News Online

200 held in nuke demo

Chris Marks

POLITICIANS Tommy Sheridan and George Galloway were among at least 200 protesters arrested at a demonstration at Faslane naval base today. Strathclyde Police said a total of 200 people had been arrested by 11am today.

The politicians joined more than a thousand people at the base on the Clyde calling for the removal of nuclear weapons. The moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, the Rt Rev Andrew McLellan, Green MSP Robin Harper and the SNP's Fiona Hyslop were also present.

Sir Sean Connery sent word of his support for the demonstration at the home of Britain's Trident nuclear submarines.

Scottish Socialist MSP Mr Sheridan and Labour MP Mr Galloway were among ten people - five

men and five women - arrested for breach of the peace within the first hour of the demonstration. The two politicians linked arms as they walked towards the gates of the base to join scores of protesters already there. They sat beside a model of a Trident missile and were surrounded by other protesters who linked arms to prevent themselves being dragged away by the police. Officers waded through the crowds to warn Mr Sheridan and Mr Galloway that they could be committing a breach of the peace but the two refused to move. Speaking to the crowd before his arrest, Mr Sheridan said: "Nuclear weapons are illegal and inhumane and we have to decommission them. If we want to decommission them around the world we have to start here. "The time for talking is over. We need to take direct action. We are here for peace, against war and against nuclear weapons." Mr Galloway added: "Nuclear weapons are an increasing threat, particularly following the election of George W Bush, who supports the strategic defence initiative which will require the participation of Great Britain." The pair were led away by police to massive cheers from the crowd. Mr Sheridan was jailed after taking part in a similar protest at the base last year.

He served five days of a 14-day jail sentence for non-payment of a £250 fine in relation to a demonstration last February.

The demonstration, which aims to close the base for the day, began at 7am and has been organised by anti-nuclear weapons group Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND. Scottish CND administrator John Ainslie said people had come from as far afield as the US to join the demonstration. "This is the biggest protest in Scotland since 1961 and it is the biggest ever held at Faslane," he said.

The protesters claim the weapons breach international law because they cannot distinguish between civilian and military targets. Sir Sean is backing the mass demonstration, though he was said to be unable to attend the protest because of other commitments.

In a phone call to the former leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party, Alex Salmond, the actor said: "I cannot be with you in person because of filming commitments. But be assured that I am with you in spirit."

Mr McLellan said: "I am here to demonstrate the Church of Scotland's long-standing opposition to nuclear weapons in general and Trident in particular. "I am very impressed with the atmosphere and both the police and the protesters have been both cordial and courteous. I am not going to be arrested but some of my best friends have been."

A spokeswoman for Faslane said staff were still managing to get into work despite the protest. She said: "We knew this was going to happen so we made sure we got people on to the site before it started. "We are managing to get people in and out although both entrances are blocked so access is very difficult. Non-essential staff have been advised to stay at home or work from home."

Each of the four Trident subs at the base has 16 missile tubes. The missiles have a range of up to 6000 miles and are said to be accurate to within 100 yards.

SNP Linda Fabiani, MSP for Central Scotland, said the demonstration showed the depth of feeling against nuclear weapons. She said: "There was a view that last year's protests were a one-off and that the momentum of the campaign would not be maintained but today has proved that wrong."

Among the protesters were a number of clergymen including the Rev David Platt, 70, a retired Church of England vicar from Oxford. He travelled to Faslane by coach along with two other vicars, a Roman Catholic priest and 25 students. Mr Platt said: "I am here today because I think Trident is immoral, illegal, irresponsible and irrelevant." Hundreds have been arrested in

previous protests over several years.

Campaigners were expected from all over the UK, as well as Ireland, Belgium, Holland and Denmark with first estimates claiming around 1200 people were at the base.

A spokesman for organisers Trident Ploughshares said: "The blockade will widen still further the cracks that are showing in public and official complacency about Trident. There is a growing recognition that it is illegal and an acceptance that ordinary citizens have a right and a duty to intervene where they can." Following his arrest, Mr Sheridan's wife Gail said: "I have taken the mince out and I will have it ready as he should be home for his tea. I am really proud of Tommy standing up like this even after he was jailed last year. I think he's a real example to the other MSPs. I know he will continue to protest unless these evil weapons are taken away from us."

Scottish National Party defence spokesman Colin Campbell MSP said: "The churches in Scotland oppose it, as does the SNP, the trade unions, Scottish CND and Labour in Scotland. Monday, 12th February 2001

The Scotsman Online

MSP and MP among 400 arrested at Faslane

Tom Gordon

ALMOST 400 people, including 15 members of the clergy, were arrested for blocking the entrance to the Faslane naval base yesterday, in the biggest ever demonstration against nuclear weapons at the site.

George Galloway, Labour MP for Glasgow Kelvin, and Tommy Sheridan MSP, the leader of the Scottish Socialist Party, were among those arrested.

Strathclyde Police last night put the total number of arrests at 373 - made up of 195 women and 179 men - twice the total arrested at a similar demonstration last February. Organisers claimed that 1,000 demonstrators gathered at the north and south gates of the Helensburgh base for the annual Big Blockade, aimed at preventing workers entering the site.

They said the protest, which began at 7am, had snowballed since the first three years ago because the Scottish parliament and the anti-capitalist demonstrations in Seattle had revived the confidence of the protest movement.

The author Alasdair Gray, Ian Hamilton, QC, William Wolf, former leader of the SNP, and the Green Party MEP Caroline Lucas were among those arrested - along with the Rev Flora Munro, the minister of Cults East church in Aberdeen. Gray, the author of Lanark, was arrested after an hour of sitting in the road. Minutes before her arrest, Ms Munro, 55, said: "I am quite prepared for this, even though it will be the first time. "It is being done for our future and unborn generations in the hope that we can stop this abomination which is doing untold damage to humanity and creation."

The demonstration was organised by the anti-nuclear groups Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND. They claim the nuclear weapons carried by the four Trident submarines at the base breach international law because they cannot distinguish between civilian and military targets.

The Scottish CND administrator John Ainslie said: "This is the biggest protest in Scotland since 1961 and it is the biggest ever held at Faslane."

The Rev Norman Shanks, leader of the Iona Community, and one of the clergy arrested, said: "The

church ministers are here to show their opposition to Trident and that's a Christian opposition. There's a strong Christian tradition of civil disobedience." Other clergy arrested included Norman Shanks, leader of the Iona Community, Griff Dines, the provost of Glasgow's Episcopal St Mary's Cathedral, and Gilbert Markus, the Catholic Chaplain to Glasgow University.

More than 300 police officers were drafted in from around the Strathclyde area. Chief Superintendent Harry Bunch said the day had passed peacefully.

7th [Faslane: The Really Big Blockade](#)

7th February 2001

Faslane: The Really Big Blockade

Trident Ploughshares and Scottish CND are now confident that Monday's Big Blockade of Faslane naval base will live up to its name and will be the biggest direct action at a UK nuclear weapons base since the "Reclaim the Hills" mass action in October 1986 at Coulport. The aim is to close the base for a day. The blockade begins at 7 a.m.

Faslane is the base for the UK's four Trident nuclear weapon submarines, each of which has enough firepower to kill many millions of innocent civilians. These submarines maintain a 24-hour patrol, in a state of constant readiness to fire. Weapons such as Trident, which cannot distinguish between civilian and military targets, are barred by international law. The British government continues to defy international law by refusing to take practical steps to decommission its weapons of mass destruction.

Activists are coming from all over the UK and from Ireland, Belgium, Holland and Denmark. They will be joined by church leaders, including the Moderator of the Church of Scotland and representatives from a number of denominations along with 50 ministers of religion from Scotland, many of whom have indicated their willingness to be arrested. Also ready to face arrest are Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) Tommy Sheridan and MEP Caroline Lucas. Other MSPs will be there, including Sandra White, Robin Harper, John McAllion, Bruce Crawford, Dorothy-Grace Elder and Fiona Hyslop, while other parliamentarians have pledged their support. Also coming are writer AL Kennedy and sculptor George Wylie.

[People visiting by car should be aware that Argyll and Bute Council have imposed a temporary "clearway" on the roads at the base. This means that vehicles stopping on the roadway or verges may be towed away. You are likely to have to park well away from the base, in Garelochhead for instance. TP/Scottish CND is arranging for buses to drop people off - please phone the Big Blockade Action line on 0141 433 2859.]

2nd [Support Grows for Faslane Blockade](#)

2nd February 2001

Support Grows for Faslane Blockade

Total Backing from Emma Thompson

Oscar winning actress Emma Thompson is among the many public figures giving their support to the blockade of Faslane on February 12th, which is expected to bring 1000 people to the Trident submarine base, 30 miles from Glasgow.

She said: "For a long time I have known - not just thought, but known in my heart of hearts that nuclear weapons are the useless, dangerous, paranoid and wasteful product of a society mired in its incapacity to commit to peace. The action in Faslane will be a real contribution to a safe, nuclear-free world and I support it entirely. Let the world listen and learn from this protest. We don't want nuclear weapons on our

soil. Get rid of them."

Campaigners are intrigued that one of Emma Thompson's roles was as solicitor Gareth Pierce in *In the Name of the Father*. Three weeks ago Gareth was defence solicitor for Trident Ploughshares activist Sylvia Boyes, when she was acquitted at Manchester Crown on charges of criminal conspiracy after attempting to disarm the Trident submarine Vengeance.

Among those joining activists at Faslane on the 12th will be a group of church leaders, including the Moderator of the Church of Scotland and representatives from a number of denominations. They will be accompanied by 50 ministers of religion from Scotland, many of whom have indicated their willingness to be arrested. Also ready to face arrest are Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) Tommy Sheridan and MEP Caroline Lucas. Other MSPs will be there, including Sandra White, Robin Harper, John McAllion, Bruce Crawford, Dorothy-Grace Elder and Fiona Hyslop, while other parliamentarians have pledged their support. Also coming are writer AL Kennedy and sculptor George Wylie.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "The blockade will widen still further the cracks that are showing in public and official complacency about Trident. There is a growing recognition that it is illegal and an acceptance that ordinary citizens have a right and a duty to intervene where they can."

January Expert Witnesses Back Anti-Trident Activists at Newbury

30th
30th January 2001

Expert Witnesses Back Anti-Trident Activists at Newbury

Yesterday at Newbury Magistrates Court prominent academics and a Greenpeace activist gave evidence for the defence in the trial of three Trident Ploughshares pledgers.

Roger Franklin (72), from Horsley, Gloucestershire, Joan Meredith, aged 71 from Alnwick in Northumberland and Ulla Roder (45), from Odense in Denmark, are charged with causing criminal damage. Ulla is one of the "Trident Three" famously acquitted in October 1999 by a Scottish Sheriff Court after damaging a Trident research facility. Last May Roger, Joan and Ulla cut through the perimeter fence at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, where the components of Trident nuclear warheads are made.

Three expert witnesses yesterday gave testimony for the defence. Professor Frank Barnaby, a nuclear physicist who worked at Aldermaston in the 1950s, gave evidence about international law and the destructive power of Trident missiles. Professor Nick Grief, a barrister and Professor of Law at Bournemouth University, argued that UK courts had to take account of international humanitarian law and its applicability to Trident. William Peden, International Disarmament Campaigner for Greenpeace, gave evidence about the dangerous nature of the Aldermaston site.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"This was an encouraging day. Once again the legal spotlight is not on the defendants but on Trident, the real culprit."

The trial is expected to finish today.

30th **Cross-Party MSPs Back Faslane Blockade**
30th January 2001

Cross-Party MSPs Back Faslane Blockade

Press Conference Tomorrow

A cross-party group of members of the Scottish Parliament has given its support to the Big Blockade of Faslane naval base on 12th February, organised jointly by Trident Ploughshares, Scottish and British CND.

A number of these MSPs, including Tommy Sheridan and Gil Paterson, will take part in a press conference on the event. The conference will be held in a Scottish Parliament Committee room on Wednesday 31st January at 1 pm. The MSPs will underline the significance of the Blockade and will argue that it deserves the support of all parliamentarians.

Over 1000 people from all over the UK, from Belgium, Denmark and Eire will gather at the Trident submarine base at 7 am on the 12th and will attempt to close it down for the day.

The supporting MSPs are: Sandra White, Robin Harper, John McAllion, Nicola Sturgeon, Bruce Crawford, Dorothy-Grace Elder, Fiona Hyslop, Winifred Ewing, Dennis Canavan, Margo McDonald, Gil Paterson, Donald Gorrie, Irene McGugan, Tommy Sheridan, Lloyd Quinan and Adam Ingram.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"The brute fact that your own country is wielding an indiscriminate, illegal and wasteful weapon of mass destruction like Trident should be an urgent concern for anyone elected to public office, whether at Westminster, Holyrood or in our local councils. We are delighted that these MSPs are willing to confront Trident and we hope that many others will follow their lead."

30th **Anti-Nuclear Activists "Sincere but Guilty"**
30th January 2001

Anti-Nuclear Activists "Sincere but Guilty"

While recognizing that their motives were sincere and honest, the stipendiary magistrate at Newbury Magistrates Court today found three Trident Ploughshares activists guilty of causing criminal damage. The verdict comes just twelve days after a jury at Manchester Crown Court found two other activists, Sylvia Boyes and River, not guilty of criminal conspiracy.

Roger Franklin (72), from Horsley, Gloucestershire, Joan Meredith, aged 71 from Alnwick in Northumberland and Ulla Roder (45), from Odense in Denmark, were charged with causing criminal damage. Ulla is one of the "Trident Three" famously acquitted in October 1999 by a Scottish Sheriff Court after damaging a Trident research facility. Last May Roger, Joan and Ulla cut through the perimeter fence at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, where the components of Trident nuclear warheads are made.

Following a long judgment in which he argued that their defence was invalid in law, the magistrate did not impose any "criminal sanction" (i.e. a fine or imprisonment), in view of their honesty and sincerity. He imposed on each court costs of £150 and a £200 compensation order for the damage done. The task of collecting these payments has been transferred to the activists' local courts.

Both Roger and Joan have an established record of refusing to pay fines imposed for what they see as their crime prevention work. Last August Joan was asked to sit at the back of her local

court for a day for refusing a previous fine.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"In spite of three significant not guilty verdicts for Trident Ploughshares activists at Crown Court or equivalent level the lower courts in Britain continue to defend the indefensible Trident status quo. These magistrates should get out more."

26th

Disarmers Challenge Chief Constable not to Arrest Blockaders

26th January 2001

Disarmers Challenge Chief Constable not to Arrest Blockaders

The Trident Ploughshares campaign has urged the Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police not to arrest people blockading Faslane naval base on 12th February this year.

In their letter to John Orr they say that "the prima facie evidence for Trident's unlawfulness is now ever more firmly in the public domain. This means further that a civil police force, especially one in whose area the operations under question are being conducted, has even less excuse than before for failing to engage in at least preliminary investigations on its own behalf, or for failing to review and revise its current policy of impeding and arresting those who are acting to uphold the law."

The letter notes that the case against Trident has been implicitly accepted by the government in its recent statement on the new thermobaric weapon: "... we do not wish to have a weapon which is indiscriminate and causes excessive collateral damage." Yet the same Government continues to keep in a state of constant readiness a weapon which everyone acknowledges is massively indiscriminate. The weapon in question is being deployed on your patch. At the very least you should be asking the Government to explain this blatant contradiction."

It is clear from correspondence last year between the campaign and Mr. Orr that he has given thought to the issue of Trident's illegality. The campaigners hope that he will move from a "What's official must be legal" stance and allow the activists on February 12th to carry out their peaceful crime prevention unimpeded.

Trident Ploughshares activists have been greatly cheered by the acquittal last week in Manchester Crown Court of Sylvia Boyes and River, on charges of conspiracy to commit criminal damage. In November 1999 Sylvia and River had attempted to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance in its dock in Barrow. They claimed that their action was justified since Trident was illegal and immoral. The jury agreed.

It is now expected that the Big Blockade will attract around 1000 people to Faslane, from as far as Belgium and Denmark.

24th

Another Peace Activist Goes to Prison

24th January 2001

Another Peace Activist Goes to Prison

Another Trident Ploughshares activist has been sent to jail by Helensburgh District Court after refusing to pay fines imposed for anti-Trident actions.

Marcus Armstrong (40), a community worker from Milton Keynes, had a Means Hearing today to deal with unpaid fines amounting to £275. Justice of the Peace Joe Scullion sentenced him to three seven-day sentences, to be served concurrently. Marcus will serve his time in Greenock

prison. His sentence will bring to 939 the number of days spent in prison by the campaign's activists.

Later, in the same court, Rowan Burrough (31), a care worker from Stroud in Gloucester-shire, appeared on a charge of breach of the peace. He was part of the "Crimebusters" blockade of Faslane last February. JP Scullion prevented him from questioning Crown witnesses about their understanding of the illegality of Trident in spite of Rowan's assertion that it was relevant to his defence to give the context for his conduct. In finishing his simple and dignified defence he asked the magistrate whether he had questioned his superiors about the propriety of such proceedings taken against people who were upholding the law. Rowan was fined £100.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"As the courts are still struggling to clear the backlog of cases from last February they should be aware that they will again be inundated after the Big Blockade on February 12th this year, unless Strathclyde Police come to their senses and join the crime prevention process instead of arresting us."

22nd [Helensburgh Court gets Even More Loopy](#)

22nd January 2001

Helensburgh Court gets Even More Loopy

The Vital Difference Between "Jumping" and "Crouching"

Just four days after the historic not guilty verdict in the Manchester Crown Court trial of two Trident Ploughshares activists a magistrate in Helensburgh District Court has re-inforced the local routine by fining yet another activist for anti-Trident action.

Marcus Armstrong (40), a peace and community worker from Milton Keynes, was up for two charges of breach of the peace. During the Trident Ploughshares camp last August he took part in two separate blockades of the main gate of Coulport on the same day. In the morning he attracted police attention for leafleting in too energetic a manner. A police witness claimed he "kept on jumping about in front of the traffic". At the afternoon blockade he crouched down in the roadway with other activists.

As Justice of the Peace Viv Dance was about to give her verdict the lights flickered dramatically, causing her to question aloud whether this was significant. The accused advised her that it was a sign. It is not known how she interpreted this portent but she certainly found him guilty, fining him £100 on the first charge and £150 on the second. Difficult as it is to find any rationale for the wild variations in sentences dished out in Helensburgh, court watchers felt that the reason on this occasion was the subtle distinction made between "jumping around" and "crouching", the latter being deemed to be more likely to cause alarm to the "lieges", those invisible but delicate and ever-present creatures mentioned in the breach of the peace charge.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "This court is constantly finding new ways of being absolutely loopy. Here's the picture: a court spends a farcical morning weighing up the difference between jumping around and crouching while, behind the gate where all this jumping and/or crouching went on, the machinery of genocide grinds on and is of no interest to the local justice system."

19th [Trident Three Member Does it Again](#)

19th January 2001

Trident Three Member Does it Again

12th Arrest for Danish Peace Activist

Trident Three member Ulla Roder was arrested this morning at the Coulport Armaments Depot where the warheads for Britain's Trident nuclear missiles are stored.

Ulla (45), from Odense in Denmark, was apprehended at 8.30 a.m. while cutting her way through the security fence after wriggling underneath a gateway on the south side of the complex. At about midnight she had attempted to penetrate the base at the point where the fence meets the water, while fellow activist Ian Thomson distracted the security forces by cutting the fence near the main gate. Ian was also arrested. Both were released this afternoon.

Ulla was one of the three women who in June 1999 disarmed the Trident-related research barge Maytime in Loch Goil and were acquitted by Sheriff Margaret Gimblett in October of the same year. Today's was Ulla's 12th arrest. She said: "Words without actions are not good enough to prevent a nuclear catastrophe. Our only real option is to protect ourselves from the danger of nuclear weapons and protect the environment the best we can, so that we can have a world in peace without the constant threat of nuclear annihilation."

Ulla and her fellow Trident Ploughshares pledgers have been greatly cheered by the acquittal yesterday in Manchester Crown Court of Sylvia Boyes and River, on charges of conspiracy to commit criminal damage. In November 1999 Sylvia and River had attempted to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance in its dock in Barrow.

18th **DISARMERS NOT GUILTY**
18th January 2001

DISARMERS NOT GUILTY

Victory in Trident Conspiracy Trial

At Manchester Crown Court today two Trident Ploughshares activists were found not guilty on a charge of conspiracy to commit criminal damage.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, attempted in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance when it was undergoing pre-operational testing in Barrow docks.

After five hours deliberation the jury were unable to reach a unanimous verdict. They were then asked by Judge Rhys Davies to try for a majority verdict which they very quickly did.

The verdict was greeted with delight by activists. Rachel Wenham, who is herself waiting retrial after disarming the same submarine in February 1999, said: "At long last we have got justice from the English courts. The verdict shows that when ordinary British people are given the chance to decide on Trident and the rights of activist to intervene they are willing to be led by their conscience."

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson added: "This is a great encouragement to us all and will convince yet more people that they too can have a part to play in getting rid of Trident. There's no doubt that Trident's embattled defenders will be feeling even more unsure of their legal position. The disarming work goes on!"

18th **Aldermaston blockaders found guilty and one case thrown out at Newbury Magistrates**
18th January 2001

Aldermaston blockaders found guilty and one case thrown out at

Newbury Magistrates

On Thursday 18th January 2001 - the same day River and Sylvia were acquitted at Manchester Crown Court - four activists - some from Trident Ploughshares and others from Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp, were found guilty of obstructing the highway immediately outside the Trident production site during the May 2000 blockades.

After a truly pathetic prosecution case - with lost exhibits, useless witnesses and questions over the validity of police statements, Andrea Needham, Helen Harris and Ganesh were all fined £50 and ordered to pay £100 court costs. In her absence, Helen John was also given the same verdict, fine and costs.

One positive outcome of this case however, was the Stipendary Magistrate's agreement that there was no case to answer on a further charge of breaking the section 14 order (directions/restrictions for/on lawful assembly, under the 1986 Public Order Act), a charge which - out of all 40+ arrestees from the May 2000 blockades - only Andrea Needham received. The magistrate said he threw out the case because he felt the prosecution had brought insufficient evidence to prove that Andrea had received a copy of the order. He also seemed unhappy that she was the only person to be charged with an offence which stipulates that at least 20 other people be present (why weren't they charged too?). He further agreed with the defendants that even though he had read the ICJ decision, he was essentially "working to a script" on the charge of obstruction because he didn't believe that within English domestic law, this kind of "crime prevention" provides a legal defence for obstruction. Unsurprisingly, he took relatively short time in reaching a guilty verdict on all four activists.

17th [Jury Out in Trident Conspiracy Trial](#)
17th January 2001

Jury Out in Trident Conspiracy Trial

The jury in the Manchester Crown Court trial of two Trident Ploughshares activists retired for an hour this afternoon to consider its verdict, which it is expected to deliver tomorrow.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, are facing charges of conspiring to commit criminal damage after their attempt in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance.

In his final speech to the jury on behalf of Sylvia, barrister Terry Munyard said that Sylvia was like the suffragettes and civil rights activist Rosa Parks, who had challenged through their actions the illegal stance of the state. Rosa Parks had taken her stand against an unjust law supporting bus segregation which was on the statutes of one of the world's leading democracies as recently as the 1960s. He asked the jury to consider whether they would have convicted Parks. Sylvia's position was exactly the same.

In his speech River listed recent trials of a similar nature in which the jury had either returned a not guilty verdict or had failed to reach one, such as the 1996 not guilty verdict on the four women who disarmed a Hawk aircraft and the trial last September of Rosie James and Rachel Wenham, who had damaged HMS Vengeance in the docks at Barrow.

Judge Rhys Davies then gave a relatively fair and open summing up, though he did raise eyebrows in the court when he suggested that the jury "might well blanch at the thought of two middle-aged people blundering about inside a multi-million pound submarine."

The verdict is expected tomorrow.

16th [Trident Conspiracy Verdict Expected Tomorrow or Thursday](#)
16th January 2001

Trident Conspiracy Verdict Expected Tomorrow or Thursday

Today the Manchester Crown Court trial of two Trident Ploughshares activists has been taken up entirely with legal arguments. These took place with the jury absent and cannot be reported at this stage.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire, and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, are facing charges of conspiring to commit criminal damage after their attempt in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance.

It is expected that the final speeches to the jury will be made tomorrow. The verdict could be delivered tomorrow, or on Thursday.

16th [Nuclear Convoy Disarmers in Court at Peterborough this Friday](#)
16th January 2001

Nuclear Convoy Disarmers in Court at Peterborough this Friday

A Catholic priest and a peace activist from the Netherlands who damaged a British nuclear warhead transport vehicle in November last year will appear from remand in a Peterborough court this Friday 19 Jan 2001.

Father Martin Newell and Susan van der Hidjen are due for a directions hearing in Peterborough Crown Court on Friday at 10am facing charges of trespass, criminal damage to four vehicles set at £327,000 and criminal damage to buildings set at £34,000. In the early hours of 3rd November 2000 they entered RAF Wittering in Cambridgeshire and disarmed a convoy truck being prepared to carry nuclear warheads to Coulport in Scotland, for Trident nuclear submarines.

Martin and Susan are being held on remand in Bedford prison and Holloway prison respectively. Susan has been living and working in the Catholic Worker Community in Amsterdam since 1993 and became a Trident Ploughshares pledger in January 2000. Martin is a parish priest, based in Canning Town, in London's east end. He has worked with the Ashram Community in Birmingham and with London's street homeless through the Simon Community.

Supporters will gather outside Peterborough cathedral at 9:30am on Friday and proceed to the Crown Court for a peaceful demonstration at 10am.

15th [We Really Mean to Disarm Trident, Claims Defence Witness](#)
15th January 2001

We Really Mean to Disarm Trident, Claims Defence Witness

Day Five of Trident Conspiracy Trial

On the fifth day of the Trident conspiracy trial in Manchester Crown Court the jury have heard about the destructive power of the UK's Trident system and how direct action to disarm it is part of the democratic process.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, are facing charges of conspiring to commit criminal damage after their attempt in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance.

Professor Rogers of the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University, an expert witness for the defence, said there was evidence that Trident had been specifically deployed as a threat in recent conflicts. Even in its so-called "sub-strategic" role the destructive power of one warhead would cause massive "collateral" damage. The distinction between strategic and sub-strategic role would be lost on a targeted nuclear weapon state, which would in any case retaliate with nuclear weapons.

Angie Zelter, founder of Trident Ploughshares and a member of the Trident Three, gave evidence as to River's state of mind. She explained the Trident Ploughshares approach - safe, open accountable and nonviolent direct disarmament. Actions taken by Trident Ploughshares members were not to gain publicity - they were genuine attempts to disarm Trident. It was however important that these actions and their results were accurately reported in the media since it was essential that the people as a whole knew what was going on. Trident Ploughshares actions were not running counter to the democratic process but were strengthening it.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"It has been a good day. We had two very strong and authoritative witnesses and River, who is representing himself, was excellent in leading them."

12th

[Second Defendant Testifies in Trident Conspiracy Trial](#)

12th January 2001

Second Defendant Testifies in Trident Conspiracy Trial

Local Court Sets Bailiffs on Angie Zelter

Today in Manchester Crown Court the second defendant in the Trident conspiracy trial has been giving evidence and stressing that his action was a deliberate attempt to disarm a vital part of the UK's illegal nuclear arsenal.

River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, is jointly charged with Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire, with conspiring to commit criminal damage after their attempt in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance.

River said that there had been nothing merely symbolic about his attempt to disarm the submarine. His action had been based on his belief that Trident breached international humanitarian law. He produced a map showing the devastation and slaughter that would be caused by a strike by a single Trident warhead on the city of Manchester and recalled his own terror as a child at the real possibility of nuclear annihilation.

He told the court that his entire Trident Ploughshares affinity group had previously gone to their local police and informed them of their intention to engage in direct disarmament. On that occasion they had been told to go away. If a charge of conspiracy was to be brought, surely that should have been done as soon as the group had announced its intentions?

Meanwhile Trident Three member Angie Zelter appeared today in Cromer Magistrates Court about outstanding fines of £375.00 transferred from Helensburgh District Court and relating to direct action at the Clyde nuclear weapon bases. The Court appeared nonplussed by her insistence that on principle she would not pay up. A "distress" warrant was issued which authorises bailiffs to recover the value of the fines from Angie's property.

11th

["Direct Action Has Been Effective" Says International Expert](#)

11th January 2001

"Direct Action Has Been Effective" Says International Expert

Day Three of Trident Conspiracy Trial

An international expert on nuclear disarmament today told Manchester Crown Court that direct action against nuclear weapon policy can be effective.

Rebecca Johnson, director of the Acronym Defense Institute and a nuclear disarmament adviser to government officials worldwide, explained that she had campaigned at Greenham Common along with one of the defendants, Sylvia Boyes. Rebecca said that she has since been told by US Air Force personnel that the women's direct action there was an important reason for the withdrawal of Cruise missiles from British soil.

Sylvia (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, are facing charges of conspiring to commit criminal damage after their attempt in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance.

Earlier today Sylvia concluded her testimony, giving more evidence on the ever-present danger of Trident. A Barrow woman had told her how residents were given iodine tablets and a leaflet explaining what to do in case of a nuclear accident in the dockyard. As a mother Sylvia identified totally with this woman's distress at having to bring up a family in such perilous circumstances. She was asked why a BBC film crew had been present to film the action and she explained that the crew had come entirely of their own accord, without any invitation from her. She further explained that she had taken extensive documentation with her on the action to make it clear that what she did was not as a result of some whim, but only undertaken after the most serious and thorough consideration, and as the last resort.

A Trident spokesperson said:

"When Sylvia is in the witness box it's really hard to remember that she is the one who is supposed to be on trial. The focus is instead on the criminality of Trident, the nuclear chain, the government leaders who make sure it continues to threaten mass murder and the complacency of the rest of us who shrug our shoulders and refuse to take responsibility."

The trial continues.

10th [Activist Attacks Nuclear Chain in Trident Conspiracy Trial](#)

10th January 2001

Activist Attacks Nuclear Chain in Trident Conspiracy Trial

No Training at VSEL Barrow for Nuclear Accidents

On the second day of the Manchester trial of two Trident Ploughshares activists who in November 1999 attempted to decommission the Trident nuclear weapon submarine Vengeance at Barrow, the first defendant has given a devastating critique of Britain's nuclear weapons policy.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a veteran peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire, is jointly charged with and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, with conspiring to commit criminal damage. From the witness stand she explained what motivated her action at Barrow when she had gone into the secure dockyard to do what she could to disarm the submarine. She gave an account of her many years of campaigning, including being a signatory to the plea to the International Court of Justice for a review of the legality of nuclear weapons, which led to the

ICJ's landmark Advisory Opinion delivered in 1996.

From the witness stand she told the court that Trident Ploughshares had been set up because of the lack of success in conventional means of campaigning and the urgent need to respond to the threat from Trident. She explained the inextricable links between nuclear weapons and the so-called "civil" use of nuclear power. To illustrate the urgency of the threat from Trident she told the court about the time the early warning system at Fylingdales was triggered by a flock of geese and how, in more recent times, a rocket carrying a Norwegian weather satellite had been mistaken by the Russians for a nuclear missile attack.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said: "It's really hard to imagine anyone listening to Sylvia's passion, coherence and downright common sense without admitting that she was right to do what she did."

Earlier, during the Crown case, a security officer at Barrow under cross examination made the astonishing admission that the security personnel there received no training whatsoever about how to respond to a nuclear accident in the dockyard.

9th [Trident Criminal Conspiracy Trial Begins at Manchester](#)

9th January 2001

Trident Criminal Conspiracy Trial Begins at Manchester

The trial began today in Manchester Crown court of two peace activists who in November 1999 attempted to decommission the Trident nuclear weapon submarine Vengeance when it was undergoing pre-operational testing in Barrow docks.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire, and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, are charged with conspiracy to cause criminal damage. Sylvia is represented by solicitor Gareth Peirce and Barrister Terry Manyard while River is defending himself. Armed with various handtools and spray varnish, and carrying documents relating to the illegality of Trident and the damage already done by nuclear weapons, they had entered the water of the docks, but were intercepted by a patrol boat before they could swim to the submarine.

In her opening remarks for the Crown, the prosecuting barrister said that the jury would have every respect for the sincerity of the defendants but claimed that since Trident was not a crime the pair had no excuse for their actions. So far only two Crown witnesses, security guards at the Barrow site, have been heard.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"The prosecuting barrister has helpfully indicated that the legal status of Trident is central to this trial. Whenever the facts about this awful weapon are measured against international humanitarian law the case against it is unanswerable."

The trial continues tomorrow.

5th [Manchester Trial Will Put Trident on the Spot](#)

5th January 2001

Manchester Trial Will Put Trident on the Spot

The legality of the British nuclear weapons system will be challenged in court once again when the trial of two Trident Ploughshares activists begins in Manchester Crown

Court on 8th January 2001.

Sylvia Boyes (57), a peace campaigner from Keighley in Yorkshire and River, an Open University tutor from Manchester, are facing charges of conspiring to commit criminal damage after their attempt in November 1999 to decommission the Trident submarine Vengeance when it was undergoing pre-operational testing in Barrow docks. Armed with various handtools and spray varnish, and carrying documents relating to the illegality of Trident and the damage already done by nuclear weapons, they had entered the water of the docks, but were intercepted by a patrol boat before they could swim to the submarine.

Sylvia's solicitor is Gareth Peirce, while River will be presenting his own defence. Using expert witnesses, the two hope to bring the widest possible range of evidence to expose the criminality of Trident. They see their action and the trial as part of their Quaker witness to peace. Sylvia says, "This country is guilty of threatened mass murder and destruction, with its deployment of Trident nuclear weapons. I will not run away from this crime."

River says "Our country, with the other three victors of world war two, actively pursued Nazi war criminals at Nuremburg and so re-affirmed Britain's support for international humanitarian law. At the same time we were actively planning to commit similar crimes by developing nuclear weapons. This double standard, which has now lasted 55 years, is completely unacceptable for a civilised nation"

In another recent trial in the same court, the jury showed they were convinced by legal and moral arguments justifying peaceful direct action. They found Trident Ploughshares activists Rachel Wenham and Rosie and Rosie James not guilty of criminal damage after they had they spray-painted slogans on Vengeance. They failed to reach a verdict on another charge of damaging test equipment. Rosie and Rachel are awaiting retrial in April.

5th

Jubilee Ploughshares Appear in Peterborough Crown Court

5th January 2001

Jubilee Ploughshares Appear in Peterborough Crown Court

Fr. Martin Newell and Susan van der Hijden appeared in Peterborough Crown Court for a directions hearing today. They have been charged with burglary, and two counts of criminal damage totalling £32,000 (4 trucks and 2 buildings). These charges arise out of the Jubilee 2000 disarmament of a nuclear convoy vehicle at RAF Wittering on November 3rd. 2000.

The Judge postponed the directions hearing until Friday Jan. 19th. Susan is likely to be moved to Holloway Prison in north London this evening. Martin will apply to be moved to Brixton Prison, South London, within the next few weeks.

Approx. 20 supporters from Trident Ploughshares 2000, Fellowship of Reconciliation, London Catholic Worker proceeded single file from the historic Peterborough Cathedral to the Court. The procession was lead on this Feast of the Epiphany by 3 magi bearing gifts of life, peace and love. Media coverage included radio, television and local press. Gareth Pierce represented both defendants.

The defendants plead not guilty to the three charges. A support meeting was held after the hearing in which a London campaign is now planned that will regular include vigilling at the jails and public meetings.

A vigil was also held today outside the British Embassy in The Hague, Holland.

[More information on Jubilee Ploughshares](#)

3rd

[Magistrate Avoids Jailing Activist Who Will Not Pay Fines](#)

3rd January 2001

Magistrate Avoids Jailing Activist Who Will Not Pay Fines

Today a Scottish magistrate went to considerable lengths to avoid sending a Trident Ploughshares activist to jail, in spite of the fact that she has refused in the past to pay fines imposed for anti-Trident actions and will continue to do so.

Jenny Gaiawyn, a student in her mid-twenties formerly resident at Faslane Peace Camp, still bedecked in festive glitter, was appearing in Helensburgh District Court before Justice of the Peace Tony Stirling on a charge of breach of the peace. In November 1999, during a Trident Ploughshares blockade of Coulport Armaments depot, where Trident warheads are stored, she had locked on to the underside of a workers' bus at one of the depot's entrances. Jenny told the court that people were still dying and suffering severe birth defects due to the testing of nuclear bombs. Her justification for her action was her right to protest against the immorality of these weapons.

The standard of prosecution evidence was even lower than is usual in such cases. Police testified that Jenny had locked on to the first bus in the queue at the main entrance to the depot, at the Kibble roundabout. She was in fact locked on to the second bus in the queue at another gate to the depot, about half a mile away. Jenny did not make an issue of this since she was ready to admit the basic facts of the case and to take responsibility for her actions.

When found guilty she told JP Stirling she would not pay the £50 fine he imposed. She had not and would not pay the last fine she had had from the court. She suggested he send her to jail and get the business over with. The JP said he would stick with the £50 fine but give her seven days to pay.

A Trident Ploughshares spokesperson said:

"2001 begins familiarly enough in Helensburgh. On the one hand the usual sloppiness and muddle from the court and the prosecution and on the other Jenny's clarity, spirit and determination. Trident's jacket is on a shaky nail and we are looking forward to another great year for disarmament."

2nd

[A Jubilee Ploughshares Update](#)

2nd January 2001

[Jubilee Ploughshares Press Briefing](#)

A Jubilee Ploughshares Update

Father Martin Newell and Susan van der Hidjen are due to appear at Peterborough Crown Court on Friday 5 January 2001 at 10am facing the following charges:

- ▶ Trespass
- ▶ Criminal Damage to four vehicles set at £27,000
- ▶ Criminal Damage to buildings set at £4,000

In the early hours of November 3rd 2000, Martin and Susan entered RAF Wittering in Cambridgeshire and disarmed the convoy truck being prepared to carry nuclear warheads to

Faslane, Scotland for Trident nuclear submarines.

Both Martin and Susan are still in prison and are reported to be having regular visits and to be in good spirits.

It being the day before the Epiphany, three kings and other supporters will gather outside Peterborough cathedral at 9:30am on January 5 and proceed to the crown court for a peaceful demonstration at 10am. The Kings will be bearing gifts of life, love and peace as opposed to Trident's gifts of death and destruction.

David Heller (24), a university lecturer from Hull who is currently working in Belgium with the For Mother Earth campaign, was one of ten activists who cut their way into the base on Wednesday 27th December. They were able to take photographs of the section of the base used by the US nuclear weapons personnel before being arrested. Also arrested was Mark Akkerman (20), a student from the Netherlands who is, like David Heller, a member of the Trident Ploughshares campaign. Mark has had a number of arrests in the UK for actions against the Trident bases on the Clyde.

Earlier the activists had gone to the local police to report a breach of the law by Netherlands government leaders - their involvement in a criminal conspiracy to commit genocide through the use of nuclear weapons. The police refused to take immediate action and the activists then saw it as their duty to undertake the crime prevention themselves. It is an open secret in the Netherlands that there are US nuclear weapons in the Volkel base. Over the years activists have collected documentary and visual evidence of this covert deployment.

David Heller said:

"They have accused the wrong people. They should have arrested the Prime Minister and Foreign minister of the Netherlands. I'm being deported because I am a threat to public order when the real threat is the nuclear weapons at Volkel."

Ironically, a Trident Ploughshares activist from the Netherlands is due to face trial at Dumbarton Sheriff Court next Thursday (4th January) for taking part in a blockade of Faslane naval base last February. In the papers calling her to court Marjan Willemsen (23), currently at Faslane Peace Camp, has been advised that if she is found guilty the court may recommend to the Home Secretary that she be deported.
