



Solidarity demonstration held outside the Ministry of Defence, London.

Photo: Spiral Squat Women

# See you in court!

If you thought you had missed the trial of the millennium – Rosie and Rachel in court – then don't worry – you have another chance! Confused? So are we, but read on.....

Rosie James and Rachel Wenham from the Aldermaston Women Trash Trident TP2000 affinity group were due to appear in court in Lancaster on Monday 24th January. Charged with over £25,000 damage to HMS Vengeance, after their swimming action last February, our brave heroines and their trusty supporters set off for Lancaster.

Due to the last minute appearance of Vera Baird as barrister for Rosie and Rachel, the trial was put back one day so that she could prepare. Meanwhile, the supporters had already gathered in Lancaster, with a peace camp already established a stone's throw from the courtroom by a dozen women. With yurts, benders, a

vegan café and women-only sleeping space, they had already featured in the local press before Rosie and Rachel even appeared in Court.

So on Tuesday the trial started, but even before the case opened the prosecution brought a statement from the Trident Programme Manager at VSEL claiming that the value of the damage had increased to £110,000.

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However, they then had problems producing any evidence to substantiate this statement – and it took until Thursday afternoon to get a list detailing the specific components which were damaged

But eventually, the court was in session, and the jury selected – after several arms traders, bomb-makers and their relatives had been carefully weeded out. With over 30 supporters in the public gallery, Rosie and Rachel were in court..... But then the court decided to take Wednesday off .....

By Thursday everyone was a little bit bored (or nervous, depending on where you were sitting) as the question of the value of the damage remained unresolved, and it became clear that the prosecution had not done their homework. On Thursday alone, the value of the damage fluctuated from £0 (as they never actually replaced the equipment, because they had spares at Faslane) to £1,000,000!!!! Meanwhile the prosecution brought its first witnesses, who described the circumstances when Rachel and Rosie boarded the sub, and talked about the equipment that Rosie and Rachel had disarmed, along with several estimates of its cost. On Friday (a long week), the defence decided to challenge the prosecution's wild estimates and asked for an independent assessment of the value of the damage.

A spokeswoman from Aldermaston Women Trash Trident said "With 11 months to prepare for this case, we are surprised that the prosecution presented the court with such dramatic last minute revisions to its evidence. Given the nature and gravity of the legal issues being discussed in this case, we would expect a more professional and serious approach"



Rachel Wenham



Rosie James

The presiding judge, Justice Slinger, agreed with this, and on that basis discharged the jury – and ordered a retrial. And so Rosie and Rachel, who'd packed their bags ready for prison (just in case), had to go home, and wait for it all to start again.

Maybe next time Rosie and Rachel will get the opportunity to argue their defence, based on the illegality of nuclear weapons under international law.

## Trash Trident Trial Part II

As we go to print, we still have no idea of where and when the trial will start again.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported Rosie and Rachel so far - by post, by phone and at the trial. We hope you will continue to support them.

For news of the new dates, ring awtt on 07808 553778 or e-mail: [awtt@hotmail.com](mailto:awtt@hotmail.com) or see [www.gn.apc.org/tp2000](http://www.gn.apc.org/tp2000)



## Camp news

**C**amp has been extremely busy. Despite the winter weather - from cloudy days to bright frosty mornings and lashing rain for the whole of the December camp - loads of women have been coming to camp. We also seem to be getting more popular with local people. Apart from the good reception for our work around the emissions submission (see elsewhere) - we've had two offers of wood and baths and other forms of help from people living nearby. The number of people tooting their car horns in a cheerful way at us also seems to have increased.

### ● November

On the Saturday we escaped to the comforts of Tadley Community Centre for the Crossing Paths meeting. With the theme, "Expose the Nuclear Chain", the meeting aimed to make links between different types of anti-nuclear campaigns. Rachel Weston from Friends of the Earth presented us with a wide-ranging workshop that covered civil and military nuclear links and direct action networking. The ensuing discussion revolved around some of the more technical aspects of Rachel's presentation, and there were wider ranging discussions on how we could plan future actions, networking and co-operation with other anti-nuclear and environmental activists.

We also watched a video on Uranium mining in Australia, made by Desert Concerns, which included moving personal testimonies of those affected by the mining process on indigenous lands. We then cheered ourselves up by watching a video of the Channel 4 Mark Thomas programme on AWE Aldermaston, in which Robin Bradley was seen to be economical with the truth on several occasions. Sadly, a speaker from Campaign Against Depleted Uranium - who was due to talk about the effects of DU in Iraq, Kosova and Serbia - was unable to turn up.

The highlight of the evening was Ziggy's fire-breathing and swinging fire-clubs, followed by a gate-climbing workshop in which three women managed to get over at least three gates, stunning the MDP, who had been under the illusion that only Juliet could get into AWE without the aid of large holes in the fence. On Remembrance Sunday at 11 am we held a silent Women in Black vigil at the AWE main gate.

### ● December

Apart from the Strategy Meeting - see pages 4-5 - accomplished in record time due to the lashing gales, flapping shelter and enormous hunger pangs, around 20 women came to camp - some coming especially for the meeting, brave heroines! Several women who had enjoyed a gate-climbing workshop at the November camp honed their skills even further and popped in to AWE during the evening.

### ● New Year's Eve Camp

Five women and a dog enjoyed a New Year's Eve camp at Aldermaston...before we deserted it for better things...(just in case they hadn't sorted out their Y2K problems) ...like Green Gate at Greenham and nine firework displays viewed from the silos. Despite a failed attempt to symbolically lock up Aldermaston for the millennium with three D-locks - unfortunately we dropped the keys right into the hands of the MDP - we held a candle-lit vigil and gave the MDP officers on duty something to read (Arundhati Roy's writing on nuclear war, reprinted on page 7). Meanwhile, Juliet made sure the MDP were earning their overtime pay:

"After my third visit inside Aldermaston (on New Year's Eve) the Aldermaston MDP told me that the MDP at Burghfield had said I couldn't get over the fence at Burghfield. I said "Nice try", and so a few hours later a kind friend drove me over from the camp fire at Aldermaston to Burghfield, where I climbed over several fences (being wished a Happy New Year on the last one) before padding off into the relative dark in very wet socks amongst the bunkers in the explosives area (I think). I found a building, couldn't get in (shame) and sat down in a doorway and listened to the MDP organise themselves, and waited...and waited...and waited. Eventually I started to worry that my driver and friend would be extremely fed up with me (in fact they were being hassled and car-door-slammed-on-their-knees by an irate WPC), so I went off in search of the MDP. It was very eerie walking down deserted lit asphalt roadways amongst identical brick huts built on a rectangular plan, and serviced by the ubiquitous silver pipes. I came across emergency phones at regular intervals, but decided against calling for a guide; so I padded wetly on towards the main gate and my lift (passing a gushing pipe which I later reported - I mean, who knows what anyone knows inside there?). After missing, and then meeting, two MDP plus dog, instructions were issued to "eject" and "throw" me out. Ah well, Happy New Year..."

### ● January

Around 25 women and two dogs came to camp this month - some for a couple of hours, which we always welcome - some for longer. The Aldermaston Women Trash Trident affinity group sneaked off to a local pub to get warm, claiming they were having a meeting. Other women went and hid in the caravan, also claiming to have a meeting. Juliet kept popping in and out of AWE, keeping both herself and the MOD warm. It certainly was cold - the washing-up water was nicely frozen - but with lots of walks, hot food, hot-water-bottles and blankets we kept warm. We even managed to sit still long enough to plot and plan, and now have a whole year's plots and plans to keep us busy..

# Annual strategy meeting report

## ● Review of the year 1999

### Information pack

Around 20 packs have gone on stalls, and to libraries. It now needs updating with information about the new AWE management. We will evaluate how useful it is to people.

### Postcards

6400 postcards were produced, about 2000 are left. £252 has been spent on this, with £240 coming from grants. £164 has been received as payment/donations.

### Newsletter

A lot of work has been done updating the mailing list. It's now around 120 groups and individuals, with some of these being new subscriptions! The survey was very positive, with a good response rate (see opposite). We have bought a scanner so we can put in good quality photos and pictures. So send your photos.

### Grants and fundraising

See the treasurer's report opposite. We started the year with a small negative balance, but are ending with £175. We were quite successful last year in getting grants for specific things. Many thanks to Maypole for their grant.

### Environment Agency consultation

Through stalls and house-to-house leafleting the camp took part in asking local people to make responses to the Environment Agency on AWE's emissions. We also made a submission from the camp.

### The Hague

We fundraised and sent one woman to the Hague, where she distributed information about Aldermaston and reported back on relevant workshops.



AWPC stall outside a local supermarket in Tadley near Aldermaston, talking to local residents about the Environment Agency public consultation exercise. The EA received more than 3000 submissions, including over 1000 NAG postcards, in response to proposals to increase radioactive emissions from AWE. The EA report is due to be published in March.

## Relations with AWE

We are now having annual meetings with AWE management which are quite useful. We hope to have a final meeting with Robin & John before they leave.

### Shareholding campaign

We bought shares in Hunting-Brae - and even made £1.50 profit, but never made the most of this campaign. We planned to get shares in the new consortium, or AWE plc, but none of them are accessible (even AWE plc - wholly government owned).

### Website

Thanks to WILPF for their £50 donation for this. We hope to have a website up and running in 2000.

### Inclusive actions at camp

Last year we agreed to try to do an action that included non-arrestable activities every month. We have done more vigils and stalls, but could put more energy into this.

### Working together

Workshops on meeting skills and conflict resolution haven't happened, but we have had more regular meetings with proper note-taking etc., so that more women know what's going on.

### Activist exchange

Some of us have made it up to Sellafeld once or twice, and more Sellafeld women have come down to Aldermaston.

### Self-education and information

We used the November gathering to focus on information workshops about the nuclear chain. Several women planned to get more information on the new companies

## ● Focus for 2000

### New Management

BNFL, Lockheed Martin and Serco have won the contract to manage AWE. We plan to increase our contacts with people working around "civil" nuclear issues and groups like CAAT - who work on arms companies like Lockheed. We've also heard that BNFL workers are unaware of AWE's role in making nuclear weapons, and plan an information campaign for BNFL workers on the legal aspects. We also plan a big 'Don't be Fooled' event on 1 April to welcome in the new management.

### Environment Agency consultation

This will continue to be a campaigning focus. NAG are calling for a public inquiry.

### TP2000 Camp at Aldermaston 17 - 22 May

Ploughshares will be organising a mixed camp for their disarmament actions. Our camp at Falcon Gate will be a women's gate, and Aldermaston women will be involved in both support and action. We also hope more local people will get involved in both Ploughshares and Aldermaston camp.

### Low Level Radiation Conference

This is being hosted in July (14 - 16) in Reading by NAG. A good opportunity to publicise the camp and join in the conference. We hope to run a stall, offer site visits and give a paper.

### Citizen's Inspection

1 October is Abolition Day. We will do a Weapons' Inspection in solidarity with international actions, followed by a nuclear waste inspection during the October camp.

### Press and publicity

We need to raise the profile of AWPC in the coverage of issues around AWE. We know, from our experience with the 1998 UNWIT action, that we can get the press interested, but need to improve our contacts. Our plans include: one or two women designated as press contacts; a workshop on press work in February; a workshop on using video in March.

# Survey, accounts & Y2K Events Calendar

**T**hanks to everyone who returned the reader survey. We received replies from both new and old readers - over 13% of our mailing list, which isn't bad. If you haven't got round to replying yet, please do, because all the feedback is very useful. Meanwhile, to give you an idea of what Update readers think.:

- 88% were willing to pay a subscription - and most sent cheques as well - with the majority willing to pay between £5 & £10, with unwaged women wanting to pay £2. We'll have to discuss whether we introduce a subscription at camp, but don't let this stop you sending us money.
- Over a third of the women who replied had never been to camp, while 15% had not been for over three years. We were pleased to know that they still found Update useful and relevant.
- On the whole, the feedback was really positive, and the critical suggestions were also really helpful too.
- Over 75% liked the changes to Update, the remainder didn't know whether they did or not.
- 23% wanted more news about camp activities, 21% more information about AWPC Campaigns, 17% wanted more information about AWE, the companies that run it and nuclear information. 15% wanted Update to publicise the camp more, 14% wanted more poetry & creative writing, and 10% wanted more photographs.
- Other suggestions included "what women actually do at camp"; more gossip; a camp diary (we've just started one, so hope to publish printable extracts soon!); campaign news with things to do for women who don't come to camp.
- Some improvements in the lay-out were suggested - making the text less dense, and breaking it up with more pictures, etc. Some women suggested more humour and a lighter tone, though others liked us because we are "deadly serious".
- Women liked the fact that it was informative, and felt that it helped them keep up-to-date with nuclear issues. Others liked the humour, and personal accounts. Our "roving reporter" got a congratulatory mention! One reader wanted more science - help, not our strong point!
- However, women also felt that articles are sometimes too long or too technical - useful for reference, but a bit heavy going & too much to read at once. We'll bear this in mind, and try to get a balance on the information front. One reader also felt we slagged off Aldermaston staff & workers too much (sorry, but we can't resist sometimes).

We'll try to take all this on board in this and the next editions of Update - and please continue to let us know what you think..

## AWPC accounts Jan - Dec 1999

<b>Income</b>	
CND grant	500.00
Maypole grant	260.00
Sellafield camp (postcards)	120.00
Sellafield camp (Hague)	100.00
Commons Again	100.00
Southern Region CND	70.00
WILPF (website)	50.00
Postcard sales	164.80
Donations	124.25
Donations from newsletter	98.00
Stalls & fundraising	32.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1619.55</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Hague	301.25
Newsletter	378.67
Postcards	252.80
Info packs	76.38
phone	61.28
travel	135.24
room hire	58.40
leaflets	56.34
misc (& camp equipment)	55.80
scanner	90.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>1467.12</b>
Brought forward (98)	(19.67)
In	1619.55
Out	1467.12
<b>Balance</b>	<b>172.10</b>

## Y2K Events Calendar

- March 10-12 Camp, with Press workshop
- April 1st Extra event - *Don't be fooled*
- April 7-9 Camp
- May 12-14 Beltane party & preparing for
- May 19-22 TP2000 come to Aldermaston
- June 9-11 just Camp
- July 7-9 Out and about & camping
- August 9 (Weds)-13 Long camp (tbc)
- September 8-10 just Camp
- October 1st International Weapons Inspection
- October 6-8 Camp
- November 10-12 Crossing Paths
- December 8-10 including Strategy Meeting

## A new Evil Empire

From 1 April 2000 a new group will manage AWE Aldermaston. The government awarded the contract to the following consortium:

- BNFL - "major force in decommissioning";
- Lockheed Martin - make Trident missile bodies for the US (which Britain then buys from the US) and will develop weapons technologies for AWE ;
- Serco – take care of management & administration.

The new Chief Executive is John Rae; former head of National Physics Laboratory; with Serco; formerly at Harwell. 100 'advance guard' of the new consortium moved into the old Training Centre by Home Office gate on 4 January. They have already received a visit from a camp woman, who suggested they desist from their illegal activities; no doubt they will receive further visits!

By the way.....Robin Bradley outgoing Chief Executive of AWE plc was awarded a CBE in the New Year's Honours' List for services to defence. for his management skills at AWE Aldermaston (*Gazette*, 7 Jan).

Can it be the same man who has overseen the radioactive contamination of two workers and wilful illegal discharges of tritium into the Aldermaston Stream? Have not Newbury Magistrates imposed several £1000s fines on the management of AWE in the last two years? And were not over 100 failures of health & safety regulations reported last November?

Unfortunately the answer is yes. AWE has been found guilty of failing to keep to the law and of running a lax Health & Safety regime. All at a site which produces nuclear warheads. For this Mr Bradley is to be honoured.



Once again, a meeting between management and the Plutonium Truckers' Union grows tense.

With thanks to Gary Larson

## BNFL

As you all know our lovely friends BNFL (or as they prefer to be known, Big Nasty F\*\*king Liars) are coming to join us on April Fool's Day. Just so that we can make them feel really welcome, here is some news from back home at their country seat at Sellafield in Cumbria.

At Sellafield, BNFL take in waste uranium from power stations that contains plutonium plus other deadly wastes. This contamination means that it is so dangerous it would kill you to just stand next to it.

Very sensibly BNFL take this deadly material, chop it into little bits and drop it in nitric acid. In this way, they are able to separate out the bomb material so that it is handy ready for any nuclear terrorist that happens by - and also to leave the deadly wastes liable to boil dry and contaminate the whole of the north of England. At the same time, BNFL produce mountains of radioactive wastes, which they have no idea what to do with and which sends radioactivity directly into the skies and seas around them.

In this way BNFL make the world a safer place for us all.

## Lockheed Martin

Lockheed Martin is one of the biggest arms companies in the world. Therefore it should come as no surprise to us that they are up to their necks in dodgy deals, environmental pollution and the development of some of the nastiest weapons systems in the world.

For example they are involved in making the Stealth bomber, and in 'experimental incineration' in Russia - despite 94% of the local population being opposed to it.

What is perhaps most ironic about awarding Lockheed the Aldermaston contract is that they make Hunting-Brae's Health & Safety record seem squeaky clean. At their Oak Ridge nuclear weapons plant, a government review found 1300 criticality violations. Scary!

Currently there are three legal actions being taken against Lockheed Martin relating to their management of the Paducah nuclear plant in Kentucky USA. Local people are taking a civil action against them for the pollution and contamination of their water supply. Workers from the plant have also taken action against the company for work-related illness following revelations that they were misled as to the danger of the materials they were working with. Finally, the US Justice Department is prosecuting Lockheed for financial irregularities.

So why did they get the contract to run AWE? Lockheed management have claimed "On the business side we have done well for the [US] government... we have reduced overheads by one third". Perhaps that's why the British government are so keen.

### A note about postcards

Keep sending the postcards. If you have any "ICJ judgment" postcards left, you can keep sending them to Robin Bradley, or you can just stick a label over Robin, and send them to the new Chief Executive John Rae. We want Mr Rae to receive as many postcards as possible in April - his first month in his new job. So please, if you don't have any postcards left, send us a donation (preferably 20p a card, or £1 for six cards), and we'll send you your postcards (get your friends to send some too!).

## National Ignition Facility

Under the innocuous-sounding title of Stockpile Stewardship and Management (SSM) a huge sum of money has been dedicated to a National Ignition Facility (NIF) which will enable scientists not only to test weapons for "safety and reliability" (the ostensible purpose) but also to create new ones without resorting to underground tests. In this way the ban on testing is circumvented.

Accustomed as we are to the devious ways of governments, it is nevertheless startling to read that the non-nuclear nations were persuaded to extend the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on the promise of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); the US government then obtained grudging acceptance of the CTBT with the promise of massive funding for the SSM programme. One wonders if the recent refusal to ratify the treaty was in part due to the delays and cost overruns associated with the NIF.

Briefly, the NIF is a target chamber inside which is a pellet of tritium and deuterium on which 192 laser beams are focussed. When they fire, the target heats up to a point where a self-sustained thermonuclear (fusion) reaction occurs. This replicates the temperature and pressures inside an exploding nuclear weapon and enables scientists to study some of the physical processes involved, thereby enabling them to assess whether a new design will meet their requirements without underground tests. However, the Nevada Test Site is to be maintained in a state of readiness, and if it is felt to be "in the supreme national interest" to resume tests there, the President will waive their adherence to the CTBT.

The Lawrence Livermore Laboratory has the task of overseeing the construction of the NIF. Los Alamos and the Sandia laboratories together with university research and development departments have also received massive funding towards this project. Even if disarmament moves succeeded in reducing the nuclear stockpile to zero, the US is confident that it could rapidly manufacture and deploy a new generation of weapons. Oddly, it sees this as a positive inducement to non-nuclear states to adhere to the terms of the NPT. However, as one delegate to the NPT Review and Extension Conference put it, "In order to retain a technological edge in the military system, one major nuclear weapon state (the US) has embarked upon a more sophisticated program to further refine its nuclear weapons designs by using techniques such as.....inertial confinement fusion and computer simulations, which is a conspicuous violation to the spirit of Article VI". It is debatable whether these and also the so-called "sub-critical" tests breach the terms of the CTBT, but there is no doubt that they are contrary to the agreed aims of the NPT.

The British government has heavily invested (actual sum undisclosed) in the NIF, and has plans for a second

target chamber at a cost of £100 million, possibly at Aldermaston. The argument that these facilities are only for the necessary up-dating and improvement of existing weapons is a bit like saying that the the new Ford KA is only an up-dated version of the Model T Ford.

France has its own "Projet Megajoule" and it is believed that all the Nuclear Weapons' States are working on similar facilities.

### Sources:

CND Press Briefing "The next Chevaline Scandal?", September 1999

Andrew Lichterman and Jaqueline Cabasso, "A Faustian Bargain", Western States Legal Foundation.

## From our Roving Reporter

On the way to deliver my Christmas cards to the SEG (Special Escort Group) and police ops building (neither of which I reached!) I popped into Building A72...

I was feeling old and tired, so I cheated and climbed Construction Gate, and set off between the fences (sterile zone, MDP jargon). I thought I would wander along to the SEG building which is about half a mile away and just pop the card over the top of the fence. However, having climbed the two gates at 340 I felt a bit more sprightly...so I popped over the "superfence" at a nice looking spot. I watched a dog van arrive smartly in the area, but decided he wasn't sure where I was; on the other hand, the dog was likely to pick up my track if I set off for the SEG...so I put my socks back on and crossed to the nearest building - A72.

Much to my surprise the door wasn't locked and I was half way up the stairs when I thought it might be a good idea to lock the door behind me. I then continued to the offices at the top of the stairs, to be met by a man asking if he could help me. I admit to being nervous, and resorted to my stock in trade, advising him to call the police since I was about to do a citizen's building inspection. A woman sitting at a desk said, "How nice". Oh dea r- nice? I said I didn't think making illegal weapons of mass destruction was very nice; didn't they know that was what they were doing? One of the men agreed, and I started to feel the surreal element, inherent in anything to do with AWE, was taking over....

I then inspected the coffee-making facilities and was told they could show me where the coffee was, and wouldn't I stay and have some? Suspecting this was a ploy to keep me entertained, I said I was sure the police would supply me, and I would move on. A little bit of body-blocking-&-dodging followed, until one man reminded the other, "You mustn't touch her" (quite so). I went back downstairs and met Nick the doghandler minus dog. We did a little dance, and I accepted a lift in an MDP Landrover. During another long wait while my discarded outer garments were kindly fetched, I heard a police radio message "Could someone go to Building A72 and see what's in there?" Indeed!

**16 November** - I had a very informative and pleasant long chat with the Manager, Roger Meekely, during which he explained the workings of the North Ponds in language even I could understand.

**16 December** - During a walk through this area, I met two men and asked if all the water running out of the old tip area was monitored? They assured me it was (weekly), but we did have a little chuckle about the £17,000 fine in Newbury Magistrates the week before.

## Future camp dates

- February 11-13
  - March 10-12
  - April 7-9
  - May 12-14
- Camp mobile phone  
07808 553778

### Contact:

AWPC  
33 Heron Road  
Bristol BS5 0LT  
Tel: 01179 393746  
Email: [sian@aldercamp.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:sian@aldercamp.freereserve.co.uk)

Camps run from around 8pm on Friday, until 2pm on Sunday. All women are welcome; supportive men may visit in daylight hours. The camp is situated near a main road, but is suitable for animals and children when supervised. The camp is fairly accessible, but more information for disabled women is available by contacting awpc. Please bring a sleeping bag and tent to sleep in if you can. Contact us in advance of a camp if you need to borrow these. Vegetarian and vegan food is communal. Either bring food to share or put money in the kitty. If you are coming by train, aim for Mortimer railway station.

We look forward to seeing you

**Don't be fooled!**  
**1st April**  
**2000**

**a day of actions  
and adventures**

Come and welcome BNFL and  
Lockheed Martin to their new site  
This is a women-only event

Coming soon to AWE Aldermaston...

Trident Ploughshares Camp

**19 – 22 May 2000**

Mixed and women-only space

For details: phone 01436 679194  
email [tp2000@gn.apc.org](mailto:tp2000@gn.apc.org)  
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**To:**

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