

**Women Successfully Blockade  
Aldermaston Nuclear Weapons Factory  
15 February 2010, London**

London, 15 February 2010:

Today forty women successfully blockaded one of the main gates of the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston. Vehicles of base employees and police were prevented from entering or leaving the gate from 7 am till 10 am. Our non-violent act of peaceful protest was part of a blockade of all seven gates of this nuclear weapons 'factory' to protest against the Government's plan to renew and modernize the submarines, missiles and warheads of the Trident nuclear weapons system, at an estimated cost of £97 billion.

West Berkshire Council Planning Committee last week approved a proposal for construction at Aldermaston to house AWE's work on a new generation of nuclear warheads. It did so disregarding more than a thousand objections, a survey that shows the majority of local people do not want it, and the fact that Parliament has not yet voted on the development. When democratic process fails, civil disobedience is the only recourse.

The 'Big Blockade' was called by Trident Ploughshares with the support of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and other organizations. Many of the women responsible for closing one of the busiest gates of the base were members of Aldermaston Women's Peace Campaign, Women in Black against War, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women against NATO and the London Feminist Network, among other organizations. They came from all over the UK and from several NATO countries – for Britain's Bomb is part of NATO's arsenal. Two Nobel prize winners joined the action. Jody Williams received the prize for her work towards banning landmines, while Mairead Maguire was honoured for her work for peace in Northern Ireland.

While some women sat or stood, holding banners and placards, and singing peace songs, others organized 'lock-ons', lying on the road with their wrists clasped together inside blocks of concrete or metal pipes, to slow down their removal by police. Six women were arrested. None have been charged with an offence. Two were cautioned. Four however, who are known to local police for their involvement in the Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp, were released on police bail.

The message from the Women's Gate blockade was simple and clear. Renewal of Britain's weapon of mass destruction is illegal, immoral, pointless and profligate. It will be at the cost of services such as housing, education, health and welfare that are crucial to the quality of our everyday lives. And this in a time of financial crisis when all political parties are threatening 'cuts'! Women need more, not less, support from public funding for the care-work so many of us habitually do, paid and unpaid. We need more, not less, spending to protect the environment, the natural world that sustains life.

Secondly, women in every country, in times of peace and war, are the objects of domestic and sexual violence. Nuclear weapons are the extreme manifestation of the endemic violence in our culture that is on a scale from the personal to the international, that stretches from bedroom to battlefield, that is inflicted by fists, boots, knives, guns, fighter aircraft and warships. Nuclear weapons are the ultimate in this obscene continuum of violence. Today at the Women's Gate of the Big Blockade of the Atomic Weapons Establishment in Aldermaston, we were united in saying: 'No to male violence, no to military violence, no to genocidal violence. No to all violence.'

**For further information and photographs contact:**

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*This release and some photos are on-line at:*

<http://www.wloe.org/Women-s-Blockade-at-Alder.564.0.html>