

## Two from Yorkshire among Nine Medics arrested in nuke protest at Faslane

**Julia Mercer, Occupational Therapist, and Lesley Hedges, a Public Health Specialist (both from Huddersfield), were among those arrested this morning during the Health Professionals Blockade of the Faslane Trident Submarine Base at Faslane in Scotland.**

Julia Mercer and Lesley Hedges were part of a trio from Yorkshire who took part in the Health Professionals Blockade. Also with them was Newcastle GP Dr Elizabeth Waterston.

General press release below

Nine doctors & other health professionals were arrested this morning outside the Trident Submarine Base at Faslane in Scotland. Together with about thirty supporters they held a rally with speeches and then walked out onto the road leading to the gates just after eight o'clock this morning. Dressed in paramedic-style day-glow yellow tops bearing the slogan TRIDENT HEALTH WARNING, with some in white coats, plastic aprons, and wearing stethoscopes, they lay down on the road and blocked the rush-hour traffic into the base. When Police warned them to move, they explained they were upholding international law, which prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons. They were subsequently arrested, carried away, and taken to Dumbarton and Clydebank Police stations. (See below for names and contact details of those arrested.) They are likely to be released later on this afternoon.

Dr Diana Warner, a GP from Bristol, and Dr Lesley Morrison, a GP from the Scottish borders, who were the main organisers of the Blockade were among those arrested. Both are members of MEDACT, the UK charity for global health.

Dr Diana Warner says, *"There is no justification, on either ethical or legal grounds, for Britain to maintain nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons are also a huge drain on our resources and can take part responsibility for the fact that this, one of the richest countries in Europe, has one of the highest levels of child poverty."*

Dr Lesley Morrison says, *"I strongly believe that the prevention of nuclear war and the proliferation of nuclear weapons are, and should be, a matter of concern to all health professionals. The money would be better used to tackle the causes of the climate chaos which is posing such a threat to the health of our planet; Trident shouldn't be replaced, it should be scrapped."*

Among those speaking at the rally at the gates before the arrests was Duncan Macintyre, Consultant Physician from the Victoria Infirmary in Glasgow. In his speech he said *"I have taken time off from my work today to come out to Faslane to support my medical colleagues in their blockade. All of us health professionals should be so concerned about the health of the nation that we are prepared to speak out and take action to prevent the immorality and absurdity of deploying nuclear weapons and even planning to replace Trident."*

The remainder of the group continued to vigil at the gates with banners and placards for the rest of the

day. The arrests came on the second day of the Health Professionals action on the Faslane365 protest against the Trident submarine base at Faslane. On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January the group held a TREATMENT NOT TRIDENT clinic outside the Buchanan Shopping Centre in central Glasgow. A team of Doctors, Nurses, and other Health Professionals were offering shoppers special health checks, taking blood-pressure measurements and handing prescriptions to shoppers for the prevention of nuclear war; prescribing dialogue for disarmament - to be taken regularly. In the afternoon they also celebrated Burns Night at the gates of the Faslane Base, with haggis, a piper, and Highland dancing.

Those taking part in the protest are from Devon, London, Southampton, Bristol, the Midlands, the North of England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, and Sweden.

They firmly believe that it is not only illegal but also immoral and unethical to possess and develop weapons of mass destruction. As health professionals they wish to take a stand against a government whose policy is in contravention of their professional Hippocratic code, "*First do no harm*".

**Those arrested in the Health Professionals Blockade are joining the almost five hundred people already arrested at the Faslane365 continuous blockade. These have included elected representatives, church ministers, academics & scholars, lawyers, a Nobel Peace Laureate, plus many campaigners and individuals from all over the UK and abroad.**

ENDS

## **Note to Editors**

### **Faslane 365**

Faslane 365 is a civil resistance project applying public pressure for the disarmament of Britain's nuclear weapons. It began a one-year blockade of the Trident base at Faslane on October 1, 2006. Groups from around the country, organised on a geographic, campaign, or professional basis, pledge to blockade the base for two days each. There have been almost five hundred arrests so far, further details available on [www.faslane365.org](http://www.faslane365.org)

### **MEDACT**

Several members of the Health Professionals blockade are members of MEDACT, the UK charity for global health. Last December MEDACT published a damning report on the devastating health effects of nuclear weapons, which may be used as part of a new Trident system. Entitled *Britain's New Nuclear Weapons – Illegal, Indiscriminate and Catastrophic for Health* it challenged any notion that 'low-yield' warheads could ever be 'discriminate' or have 'surgical' use and concluded they are illegal under international law. ([www.medact.org](http://www.medact.org)).

## **Contacts**

Those arrested were:-

Dr Sue Black, a GP from Bristol, 0117-942-6303/07887-967-301

Dr Trevor Trueman, a GP from Malvern, 01684-573722

Dr John Anderson, a GP from Taunton, 01823-274629

Kristin Barrett, a foster carer from Blairgowrie, in Perthshire, 01250-872634

Julia Mercer, an Occupational Therapist from Huddersfield, 01484-647229/07979-27894

Lesley Hedges, a Public Health Specialist from Huddersfield, 01484-652932/0793-947-3269

Gill Reeve, from London, who is a WMD consultant for MEDACT, 020-7485-3067/07791 470-486

Also arrested were the two main organizers of the Health Professionals Blockade

Dr Diana Warner, a GP from Bristol, 0117-942-6303 / 07887-967-301

Dr Lesley Morrison, a GP from the Scottish Borders town of Peebles, 01721-721-703 / 07792-932-406

Duncan Macintyre, Consultant Physician from the Victoria Infirmary in Glasgow, 01355-302884

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