

Peace priest held in cells

by Christopher Ralls

A CATHOLIC priest was among four Catholic peace protesters sent to the cells by a Bow Street magistrate last week for contempt, after they tried to make speeches to justify pouring their own blood on the steps of the Ministry of Defence in London.

Later, the magistrate, Mr Ronald Bartle, set the four defendants free by conditionally discharging them for a year. The proceedings ended in uproar, with the defendants protesting that their defence had not been heard, and the clerk of the court explaining that they could not refuse the order.

Mgr Bruce Kent was among the 60 or more supporters who crowded into the court. Most were members of Pax Christi, the Catholic peace organisation, and Christian CND. Some came from Greenham Common.

The four protesters, members of a group called Catholic Peace Action, were arrested on April 14 after they sprinkled their own blood, and ashes, on the windows, floor, and pillars of the entrance to the Ministry of Defence building in Horseguards' Avenue.



CND's Mgr Bruce Kent (right) with other Christian protesters outside Bow Street Magistrates' Court, London, on May 26, when four members of Catholic Peace Action were conditionally discharged after pouring blood and ashes over the Ministry of Defence headquarters.