

Protesters facing Christmas in gaol

Two peace protesters who chained themselves to pillars outside the Ministry of Defence in London face Christmas behind bars.

Former magistrate Sarah Hipperson, aged 55, and Dr Ray Towey, 39, members of Catholic Peace Action, both refused to be bound over to keep the peace after being found guilty at Bow Street magistrate's court yesterday of behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace.

They were clapped and cheered by supporters packing the courtroom as they left to start seven-day sentences imposed for their defiance.

Mrs Hipperson, now a full-time peace worker at Greenham Common, told the court she could not be bound over because by the nature of her work she would continue to protest against nuclear weapons.

"The courts are now part of the nuclear industry," said Mrs Hipperson, a mother of five grown-up children.

Dr Towey, who practises at a London hospital and lives in Clapham, London, said nothing.

Mrs Carmel Martin, 30, of Wandsworth, London, a mother



Sarah Hipperson: seven days for defiance

of two young children, and Mr Patrick Harty, 20, of West Drayton, Middlesex, who were found guilty of the same offence, consented to be bound over in the sum of £50 for 12 months.

Police said their action had angered and annoyed members of the public and Ministry of Defence employees. Mr Jerry Martin, defending, said there was no real evidence that the four, who were praying at the time, would have provoked any breach.

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Peace woman jailed

PEACE protester Sarah Hipperson was sentenced yesterday to spend Christmas in jail.

The mother of five and a former magistrate got seven days at London's Bow Street court for refusing to be bound over to keep the peace.

Sarah, a Greenham Common peace woman, chained herself to a pillar outside the Defence Ministry.

Dr Raymond Towey, who did the same, also got seven days. Two other protesters were bound over.

Greenham protest

CND calls off demonstrations

By David Cross

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has promised that it will not demonstrate in London during Christmas or new year so that the police can concentrate on hunting IRA terrorists.

CND said yesterday that the decision to postpone any demonstration had been taken after last week's Harrod's bombing, in which five people had died. Senior CND officials will meet next month, however, to plan continued protests.

In a statement issued on Tuesday after a CND protest in Trafalgar Square, Mrs Joan Ruddock, the organization's chairman, said that the small demonstration had been a

spontaneous reaction to a rumour that a cruise missile was to be taken out of Greenham Common Air base. "We would not have called any major demonstration at this time and we fully support police effort to find the perpetrators of Saturday's appalling crime."

Mrs Ruddock was commenting on a statement by a police officer at the protest complaining that police resources were being diverted from the hunt for the IRA bombers.

In the Commons yesterday, Mrs Thatcher criticized the protest and said that it would have been "nice gesture" if the organisers had called off Tuesday's demonstration.

The Prime Minister was replying to a question from Mr Tim Eggar, Conservative MP for Enfield North, who had condemned the protest for taking police officers away from street patrol duties.

● Two members of Catholic Peace Action, Mrs Sara Hipperson, aged 55, and Dr Ray Towey, aged 39, were jailed for seven days yesterday after refusing to be bound over by Bow Street Magistrates' Court to keep the peace (the Press Association reports).

They had chained themselves to pillars outside the Ministry of Defence building in London on October 11.

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