

# MoD denies deal over leaking submarine

MADRID

THE government insisted yesterday that it had not struck a secret deal to tow a nuclear-powered submarine back from Gibraltar if repairs were not finished on time.

HMS Tireless docked in the British colony on Spain's southern tip nine months ago after a crack was found in its cooling system.

The Spanish newspaper El Pais claimed that Britain had secretly agreed with Spain to tow the submarine back to Britain if its cooling system could not be repaired by May 19, the anniversary of the submarine's arrival in Gibraltar.

But a Ministry of Defence spokeswoman said repairs to the vessel should be finished at the end of March. She was not aware of any secret deal to tow the submarine back to Britain if repairs were not finished by May 19.

The MoD spokeswoman added: "Repairs to the submarine will start some time this week. If everything goes to time, repairs will be finished at the end of March."

She stated that safety was a paramount issue when deciding whether the vessel should leave.

In demonstrations just across the bay of Gibraltar, protesters, including politicians, union leaders and environmentalists, rallied behind a banner held aloft by

children that read: "For the sake of our future."

On Saturday, tens of thousands of people marched through the southern Spanish town of Algeciras calling for the Tireless to leave at once.

Police said 20,000 people attended the rally, but organisers put the number at 70,000.

The presence of the stricken submarine has provoked concern and anger among Spaniards living near Gibraltar and strained the already sour relations between London and Madrid over the colony.

Spain ceded Gibraltar in 1713 and now reclaims sovereignty but Britain refuses to discuss the issue.—AP

H 22/1/01

Here are some lines from "The Unholy Loch", by Hugh MacDiarmid, published in "Peace Campaign" (Jan. Feb. 1961).

"Can you account for it? The Scottish people  
Are all opposed to the Polaris base, it's said."  
- It must be some sort of half-forgotten  
Self-respect at last raising its ugly head!

Some half-forgotten self-respect? By God,  
It's high time that surged up and prevailed  
Before morons, with none, make the whole world  
Enurn a humanity that has failed.

Nowhere in Scotland, Europe, America even  
Is there a fit place for such a base.  
If it must be located anywhere at all  
Then Hell itself is the only place.

It's nothing, fools think, to destroy  
The population of Glasgow in a second.

That's it - it's nothing they think - that's the fact  
With which it's high time we reckoned.

Nay, Hell itself it would disgrace.  
For a Polaris base there is no place!

38 years after these lines of protest were written we have an  
even more powerful nuclear weapon system a mile or two  
across the water from "the Unholy Loch". And as in 1961,  
the people of Scotland are powerless to remove the evil threat  
even if 100% of them want it removed.

But there is a difference in the psyche, a political difference.  
That "half-forgotten self-respect" has grown in the  
generations since 1961 to the extent that "self government" is  
on the horizon.

And that will mean power to remove TRIDENT and all  
nuclear war weaponry from Scotland.

By chance, on the day that this is being written, the Scottish  
Labour M.P. who is the U.K.'s Minister of Defence, George  
Robertson, gives more credibility to the possibility that the  
Scottish electorate will vote to banish TRIDENT. Mr  
Robertson, who will presumably have to find a seat in  
England, for the English Parliament, says that the bases in  
Scotland which are used for nuclear weapons, could be leased  
to England by the Scottish Government!

All I can say is "We're no that daft!" We can all work  
together and echo Hugh MacDiarmid - "For a Trident base  
there is no place!"

Billy Wolfe

## EVICION MADNESS AT FASLANE PEACE CAMP

The camp won the first round of the proceedings. Thinking  
the council couldn't win an appeal we came off eviction alert.  
The council won the appeal - on a technical point.

After many phone calls we arranged a meeting with Bill Petrie  
and Dick Walsh, something we'd been trying to organise since  
the first eviction papers were served.

We learned that the council's excuse for wanting us gone was  
that no other group would have got permission to set up a  
"caravan site" where we are so it's unfair if we stay.

They say there is no other council land we could have but  
they've given us time to buy some land and will maybe give us  
a "donation".

Now the peace camp is looking for a piece of land near the  
base where we can carry on our valuable work monitoring the  
base, blocking nuclear weapon convoys and raising public  
awareness around nuclear issues. We are also working on  
evolving the peace camp, becoming involved in peer educa-  
tion and conflict resolution.

To help with this we need people to live here, visit us and  
share skills (building, joinery, electrics, etc) and money to  
keep the camp going. We've also set up a land trust fund.  
Please make cheques payable to Faslane Peace Camp.

Jenny