

# ?????? Why Women Only ????????

Okay, so this is a question some of you have been asked for twenty (or more) years. There are still (surprise, surprise) people around asking it. There are still people around who resent it, or people who support our campaign goals, but avoid open support for the camp simply because it is, uh oh, women only! Dangerous stuff? Not quite respectable? Lesbians, perhaps? (Are women who love women the greatest threat to the patriarchal military-industrial mayhem? Probably.) And anyway, where do they go to the loo?

Why Women Only? Here are some of the reasons - once again. We are not trying to stop men doing anything. We are focused on the fact that women and children are the most severely affected by militaristic and commercial practices on this planet. Women and children now make up 90% of casualties in conflicts and we have a right to speak out about this, a right to try to redress the balance. There are many connections between feminism and anti-nuclear and anti-military work. Men's violence against women happens on an individual and family level, and on a global level. Men's violence against the planet and against whole communities of women and children must and will be stopped. ~~Feminism~~ is the greatest force of this century, and women who make the connections between injustices are some of the most powerful women on the planet. We are making the connections between feminism and the Menwith Hill spy base, and we will continue to do so until the base is shut down. In this process we try to encourage women to make their viewpoints heard. This is not silencing men. Men have

every available channel at their disposal if they wish to use them. We are trying to foster a safe space where women can think and act for peace without having to take men into account. Women are able to encompass groups they have never met or had acquaintance with into their area of concern. This is also a quality we are trying to foster.

There aren't very many women-only spaces, and this one is important, and this one is going somewhere. It is not something we should ever be made to feel guilty about or made to offer apologies to groups or individuals who feel we are excluding them. We are not about stopping men, we are about positively encouraging women to use their many talents which are so often ignored.

In court room situations many women choose to represent themselves because historically men have always spoken for women in courts, and it is only within the last hundred years or so that women have been allowed to speak for themselves in a court of law. If we are to be represented, we will be represented in court by a woman. We choose to be represented by women and we try to deal with women MPs and women Euro-MPs as much as possible, out of the same political principle.

We would, like the women of Greenham, prefer to deal with female journalists and representatives of the media, but also realize this is not always possible.

Some will argue that women are just as capable of violence as men (perhaps, but almost 90% of violent crime is actually committed by men, no matter what women might be "capable of.") Some say that women

in the armed forces now have even more acknowledged equality, but, when it comes to the command decisions of NATO, that "balance" is not maintained. Men are still in charge of the world-wide military and arms establishment. Men are welcome to raise their voices against these things anytime, anywhere. But this camp is a women's space. We know that war is a commercial enterprise, producing vast profits for arms manufacturers who deal in death. Women and children are not their customers, they are their victims. The cost they are paying is too high. As long as Menwith Hill and its related global network exists there will be no end to this horrifying endeavor.

So, women and children are hurt at both ends of the cycle. The billions that are poured into Menwith Hill and other military bases could be better spent on creating lives for women and children that included clean water, education and development of their own choosing. When those billions turn into weapons and covert destabilization of regions, then women and children are the main casualties of these conflicts. "They" tell you there isn't enough money for creches and daycare and women's refuges but this is a lie. There is plenty of money. They - meaning mostly men, are just choosing to spend it on death instead of life. Women choose life. We at Menwith Hill and the other women's peace camps are taking the problem to patriarchy's own doorstep and saying 'no.' The more we resist, the weaker they become, they stronger we become. So let us keep saying 'no' in as many ways as we can think of, wherever we are.

## Spring! Wimmin Energy Needed! What Do You Want At Camp?

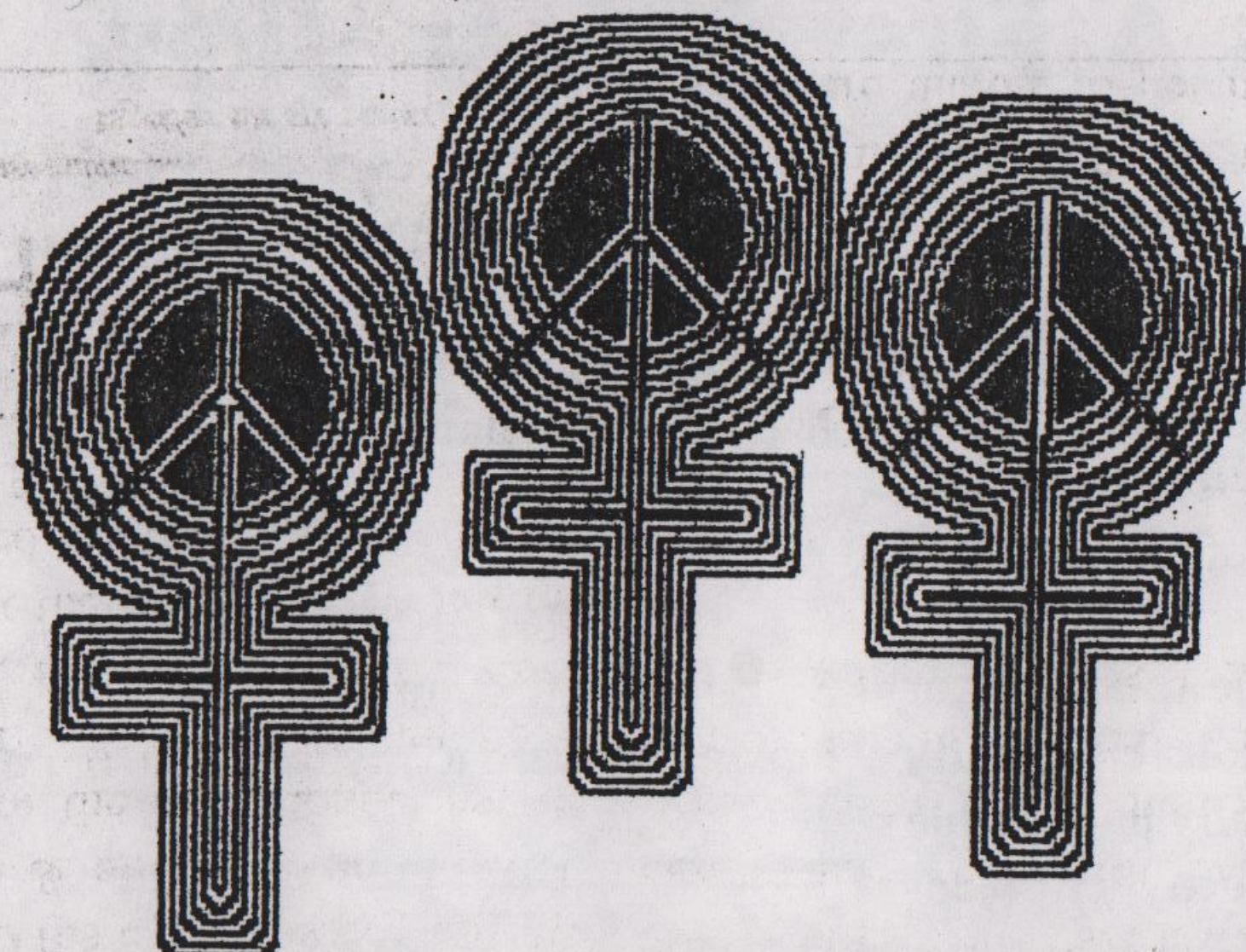
Some wimms have mentioned that they are not sure whether or not to come to camp because a.) they don't know anybody or b.) they are not sure what to do when they get here. The solution to a.) is to bring someone you do know, but hopefully you will feel pretty comfortable with whoever is here fairly quickly. The solution to b.) needs work from both the women already at camp and the women who are the so-called "visitors." Bub has suggested we put up a water-proof notice board letting everyone know exactly where the wood and water are, where the tea and coffee and barleycup are, etc. Some wimms have said they want to do more when they get to camp, not just sit around the fire

(either the inside or the outside fire. Outside is becoming much more possible now, and we had a lovely time around the fire with Mariana, Julie and 18-month old Dennis on the first weekend in March. It was chilly but the fire kept us warm and the wind stayed down. The cakes at Swinsty Tea Room were equally inspiring.) Anyway, there is a lot to do at camp if you are one of the ones who doesn't want to "just" sit around the fire. (Which is also really important, because it lets more people know we are here & you can talk to people who come up & let them know what we are doing here.)

Spring cleaning needs to be done. How do you want the camp to look, be

organized, etc.? One idea was moving the camp fire out into the more open part of the layby so that we are more visible. Another plan was to paint all the caravans anew so that the place looked a bit brighter & more cheerful for Spring. All the old mucky furniture we no longer need will be chucked out, a new loo dug, more daffodils planted, etc. (Anne's already done a lovely women's symbol in daffs on the verge.) But, to get all this done & up the energy at camp, we need.....more women!

So come to the Amazon Festival this year May 24-June 3. That's the best way to make sure this protest lives and grows.



Wo **Menwith Hill**

**WOMEN'S PEACE CAMP**

**NEWSLETTER**

**YOL. 2 NO. 2 MARCH 1996**

**SHUT DOWN MENWITH HILL US-NSA SPY BASE**

WoMenwith Women's Peace Camp, Outside Menwith Hill U.S. Spy Base, Kettlesing Head Layby, Nr. Harrogate, N. Yorks. HG3 2RA Tel. 01943 468593

## Menwithgate - Europe Wakes Up

Following on from some judicious womens' judicious lobbying at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton, Christine Oddy, Euro-MP for Coventry, tabled a question to the European Commission and Council of Ministers about Menwith Hill's commercial spying operations in Europe. Altogether five Euro-MPs have now tabled similar questions. Tyne-Tees TV followed up with a documentary on 26 Feb. Publicity about the spying operations of the base seems useful. David Bowie, MEP Cleveland & Richmond, has put questions to John Major about whether Menwith Hill takes away European jobs, and labeled Major's answer

as "inadequate and evasive.... My Labour colleagues and I will continue to ask questions at every level until we receive adequate explanations. The whole of Europe is beginning to ask questions about Menwith Hill and it is time some credible response was forthcoming...."

An article in the American-based paper, the *International Herald Tribune*, on October 16, 1995, accused the US-NSA of commercial spying designed to undermine Europe's interests and strengthen those of the USA. A whole series of articles last Autumn in the *Baltimore Sun* and the *Rocky Mountain News* (Colo.) have begun to break

the secrecy surrounding the NSA. American constitutional issues of freedom of speech and the right to privacy have been raised in these articles. Any American reading them will now know the NSA can listen in to their overseas phone calls any time it pleases & do so with the blessing of the government.

## It's Summer in Australia!

On Dec. 3rd we had a solidarity rally supporting the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition's demand for closure of Pine Gap & Nurrungar, the leases of which are up for renewal in 1998.

They peace camped in blistering sunshine outside government HQ in Canberra, where they got sunburnt and peeled.

We peace camped in the freezing fog and pouring rain where we had a huge bonfire and hot soup and tea to stave off hypothermia! About 30 women marched with increasingly soggy banners and placards to the Main Gate and demanded the closure of various NSA bases around the globe. Braver, more dedicated, colder, soggier, (sillier?) women were never met with! It's hard to have fun with icicles dripping off various body parts but we tried.....sort of. The bonfire when we got back was a life-saver! Next time we plan the 'solidarity rally' for July, eh, when there's snow in Canberra?

## "Welcome to RAF Menwith Hill" - New Byelaws for the USA?

The local paper reported that the RAF is now responsible for Menwith Hill Station. Squadron Leader Sumner is to be in charge. The RAF flag now flies with the Stars & Stripes at the Main Gate and a sign announces "Welcome to RAF Menwith Hill."

It is all a legal contrivance for enforcement of the new military byelaws to overcome their problem of who prosecutes for trespass on this U.S. base.

On 24 February Helen and Anne called at the U.S. Base Commander's house (Col. G. Dickson Gribble, Jnr.) to enquire if he had handed over command to Squadron Leader Sumner. The young man who an-

swered the door informed us that he was at the club. Unfortunately the doorkeepers at the club would not allow us to speak to him at the full-dress prestigious military event and we were duly arrested by the MoD police who arrived with flashing blue lights in response to a phone call. (What do they say? 'There are women here! Come quickly and arrest them!' Is it now a criminal offence?!!?)

We have been charged to appear at Ripon Magistrates' Court on April 4th and anticipate lots of fun challenging the validity of the byelaws and proving that the NSA are in control of Menwith Hill.

**Third Amazon Festival 24 May ~ 3 June**



## August Blockade Trial - A First Arrest View

On the 28th of November Tracy, Bub, Helen John and I (Naomi) were on trial at Harrogate Magistrates Court for that old chestnut, "Obstruction of the [Queen's] Highway." It was my first time in court, so I was feeling excited, apprehensive and rather strange indeed. We had had a meeting the night before, but as the meeting had consisted of colouring in and watching the 'X-files,' I for one was not prepared in any big way. (On the bus to Harrogate I scribbled a few notes on an envelope.)

There were lots of people in the courtroom supporting us. (Helen was in a little box with two po-lice, as she was serving a prison sentence at the time.) We deliberated over whether we would admit to 'the facts,' etc., then finally sat down and heard the ploddies' version of the blockade (not very interesting).

Soon the time came to speak our defense. I was last, but I still felt slightly uneasy as I strolled as casually as possible into the witness box clutching my scribbled-

on envelope. However, as soon as I started speaking it all came gabbling out. Democracy, freedom of speech, everything.....Poor old Mr. Magistrate must have found it quite tedious. He certainly didn't find it enlightening as we were found.....

GUILTY!

WITH £105 FINE!

So now my first time in court is over, I'm looking forward to my first time in prison.

## Here We Come A Wassailing...

The object of the wassailers was to breathe the peace at the Base Commanders house. However, the sober wimmin got lost & couldn't find it & had to be content with caroling lesser mortals with "God rest ye gerry mentalmen, let nothing you dismay, for all the women of WoMenwith Hill, will smash the NSA. We shall not move from this roadside 'til you have gone away, oh tidings... v. 2.: We'll climb the fence, unpick the fence, we'll cut the fence in two. For all your talk of our defence that simply isn't

true. When Amazons get going there's nothing we can't do, oh tidings.....v. 3 We'll gloop the balls, we'll paint the balls, and maybe one fine day, you'll wake up & look out & see the balls have gone away. Don't come to us for sympathy 'cos 'balls' is all we'll say, oh tidings....." (Composed by Naomi.) While some living in the American housing cheerily waved to us, one MoD officer tried to squash the spirit of seasonal good cheer by merrily announcing: "Knock on one more door & you're nicked!"

## Atomic Mirror Pilgrims Arrive 16 April - Please Come Out to Greet Them!

The Atomic Mirror Pilgrimage is a group of men and women visiting unholy nuclear and holy sites around Britain. They will be at Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp 6-7 April, and at Menwith Hill on Tuesday April 16th. Everyone is welcome at camp to help us welcome them. Does anyone have some cakes or food they could bring up that day to share?

## Star Wars Lives!

Has the Strategic Defense Initiative been dropped? NO! The funding, estimated at \$4 billion a year, is now buried in the "black budget." The research continues. Spy satellites are an essential element in the strategy to establish "American mastery of space." We have affiliated to the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and hope we'll be able to send a delegate to the Conference in Florida 25-27 May. Donations???

## Those Lights

The base authorities have withdrawn their planning application for flood-lighting their sewage works. Wonder why? (See last issue.)

## Plastic Fatigue

The giant rabbits in the base have gnawed a huge hole in golf ball Antenna 'L', which is still decorated with "PEACE, TRUTH, FREEDOM, 0" but is now minus a smiley face.

We observe that the giant rabbits have been inside the golf ball, switched on the internal lights & switched off the lights 'round its protective security fence.

An emergency planning application for rabbit-proof weld-mesh fence has been submitted to the Harrogate District Council. Meanwhile the fence is going up anyway (under emergency legislation of 1884 for the protection of garrisons.) The applications states that £1/4 million of "vandalism" has been done at MHS recently.

Can you please send a donation to camp?

## Sister Peace Camps

(Who's she?)

See insert for info. on the special Beltane Celebration of Life at Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp, 10-12 May. Other Aldermaston 1996 dates for your diary: 6-7 April (to meet Atomic Mirror Pilgrims), 12-14 April, 7-9 June, 12-14 July, 9-11 August (Remember Hiroshima), 6-8 September, 11-13 Octo-

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Remember Chernobyl - 26 April 1986: Women Speak Out Against the Nuclear Military Chain on the Tenth Anniversary of the World's Worst Nuclear Disaster -

See insert for info. about the events in Lancaster 19-21 April 1996 organised by the Sellafield Women's Peace Camp. The weekend will include workshops, speakers, videos, stalls, exhibitions, street events and actions in Lancaster. Find out more from Women Speak Out, 21 DeVitre Street, Lancaster LA1 1QU.

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Wherever you live, put candles in your window Friday night 26 April to remember the people of Chernobyl.

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Sellafield  
Women's Peace Camp  
28-31 March  
.....  
Beltane  
Celebration of Life  
Aldermaston  
Women's Peace Camp  
10-12 May

## It's The Thought That Counts

The spies driving in to work on the base now have to pass the line of large rocks dumped on the corner to prevent our re-occupation of the camp site from which we were evicted.

Empowered by the appearance of "US SPY BASE" in large red letters on the rocks at the left of the junction, two intrepid heroines set out in the early hours of a dark and foggy night to decorate the line of rocks on the right. In the morning, when they go to inspect their handiwork, they discover that they've painted white limestone rocks with white paint.

Meanwhile the spies' bus is now inscribed "US SPY BUS."

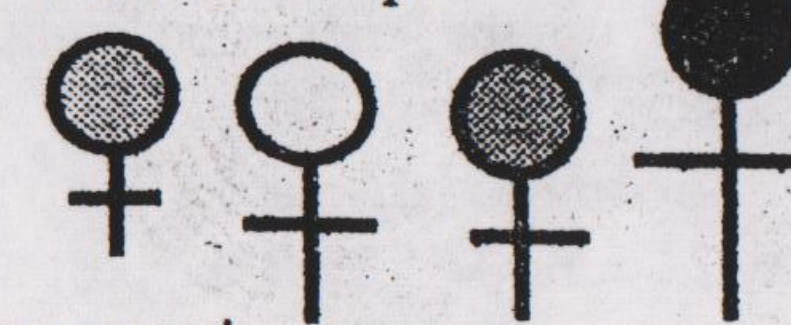
## Wanted: More Painting

In December a call went out for wimmin to decorate the rocks on the site of the old camp on the corner of Slack Lane. A simple design was suggested - "US SPY BASE -->" which soon appeared in fresh red paint! Good work Amazon QQ!! Maybe this should be an extended "wanted" 'cos there's still masses of space left on those rocks if you've got any little problems to share (or giant big ones!), any messages for the spies or general words of wisdom.

Of course, we all know the spies hate Amazon painters. Kate is going to be in York Crown Court accused of exactly this. All the more reason to get out there with a whole lot of creativity and a little (or not little!) pot of paint. There will be a prize for the best work, even if it is only the warm glow you get every time you go past it. We could have a challenge - who can paint in the best place. But I think Kate might have beaten us hands down on that one.....or has she? - Di

## Supporters' Thankyous !!!!!

Thankyou to the Todmorden Women's Disco; Ealing CND; Thirsk Labour Party; Greater London Peace Council; Leicester CND (as usual!) & Merseyside CND (as usual) & all those individual women. Thanks for the cash donations since last newsletter. We're still struggling, though, so, again, if you can send even a small donation to the campaign, it would be greatly appreciated. Cheques to WoMenwith Women's Peace Camp.



Women are magic.....  
together we are powerful

## Arrests, Courts, Trials & Suchlike Frippery

**Bub Mackie:** Appeared at Leeds Magistrates' Court on Feb. 16th for non-payment of blockading fines & was sentenced to one day in prison. As she had waited four hours to appear the beaks let her go there and then!

Bub appeared at Ripon Magistrates' Court on Feb. 7th and was found "guilty" of "aggravated trespass" under the 1994 Criminal Justice & Public Order Act. This was for shouting "NSA murdering spies" & other similarly appropriate greetings to the speakers' platform on 4 July American Independence Day celebrations inside the base. This was after the Chief of Station had stated how ironic it was that there was a peace camp outside the base when they too were fighting for peace & freedom, but that everybody should be entitled to free speech....which is precisely what Bub did. The trial raised the issue of who should bring the case to court, the British MoD who own the land or the US-NSA who occupy it. It also raised the question of whether "aggravation/obstruction" can consist merely of speech. If so, people could be imprisoned under the Criminal Justice Bill for speaking out anywhere. Her appeal will be heard at York Crown Court 10.30 am 15 April. Please come and support her even if you don't know her!

### BROWN OWL SPEAKS:

## Helpful Brownies Gather Their Points

**Brownies Help the MoD Police -** When it's a foggy night & our noble police officers are searching for intruders with their torches, it's a nice gesture to take your torch and join them in their search, even if it takes them a long time to realise how helpful you are being.

**Brownies Help American Security Guards -** It's a beautifully sunny day & Di & Anne are walking up through the base enjoying the snow, when a security alert brings U.S. security guards rushing to the "pusher" area. We walk towards them grinning and greet them with "Good Morning!!" "Afternoon!!" They respond cordially and rush past us to search for the intruders. We're within 20 yards of the Main Gate exit before they realise!

**Brownies Lend a Hand -** If you discover open gates and an unlocked padlock, somebody must have carelessly left them open. Always willing to be helpful our brownies carefully lock them. They do not wait around for the thanks of the spies who are unable to get in or out at 3 am shift

**Helen John:** Has been banned from the City of Leeds for a week after painting "Shut Menwith Hill US-NSA Spy Base," "Scrap Trident" and "Stop Wars" on the wall of the new £42 million Armouries Museum two days before the Queen's official visit. Bail conditions have been imposed. She is due to appear at Leeds Magistrates Court 11 April. She used blue hammerite paint as a solidarity action with

**Kate Witham,** whose Crown Court date for allegedly causing £21,000 of damage to the spy balls has been set or sometime the week of 15 April at York. Please come and support her even if you don't know her! Ring for the exact date.

**Tracy (Tee Jay):** In the High Court, London, 8 March. The MoD, seeking to keep T.J. out of Menwith Hill Station, have been granted an injunction. T.J.'s defence is that she has to go inside in order to witness the crimes the NSA are committing. Tracy had to answer to MoD police bail on Jan. 8 & was charged with Criminal Damage (?) for unscrewing aerial connections on the "pusher" antenna system. MoD police imposed bail conditions that TJ must not enter Menwith Hill Station. Injunction and bail conditions a bit OTT, don't you think boys?

### Beware! Burglars at Spy Base!-

Three wimms innocently strolling through Menwith Hill Station in the early hours of December 20th (it is believed that they were hoping to see the short-eared owl) were unreasonably arrested on suspicion of having burgled the MoD Police Station (which is staffed 24 hours a day). [Getting paranoid are we, boys? ed.]

Inside sources tell us that unlawful entry was made into the custody processing room & that everything that is needed to process prisoners had disappeared.

The wimms were bailed to report back to the Police Station on January 24th. However, before that date the MoD C.I.D. investigating team discovered the whereabouts of the missing property - locked into the lockers & all the locker keys locked into the last locker, & all the charges were dropped.

New locks have now been installed on all internal & external doors of the MoD Police Station & traces of fingerprint powder are still visible in the custody room.