

**INSPECTORS' DEADLINE PASSES, SILENCE FROM MOD**

A request from a group of citizens in Tyneside for an inspection of a nuclear site in Northumberland has been met by total silence. The group wrote to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) over a week ago, requesting access to the "secure vehicle compound" at Albemarle Barracks near Stamfordham, asking for an inspection on terms similar to those imposed on Iraq.

The group, Tyneside Citizens' Inspection Agency (CIA), wrote in similar terms to the UN Security Council Resolution 1441, and asked for an acceptance of their "prerequisites for inspection" within a week, and for a declaration on the site by 8th December. The site at Albemarle is used as an overnight stop-over for military convoys, carrying nuclear warheads from the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) factories in Berkshire (AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield) to the Trident submarine base and arms depot at Faslane and Coulport, Scotland. The letter and documents were sent to the MOD last Wednesday, 27th November.

The week's deadline has now past, and nothing has been heard from the MOD, despite writing to both Albemarle Barracks and Catterick. Andrew Gray, from the group, said:

*While the world awaits Iraq's declaration on its alleged weapons programme, expected on Saturday, we will be awaiting a declaration on the UK's proven and far more deadly Trident nuclear arsenal. We will not solve the problem of nuclear proliferation by unleashing more violence in the Middle East, or pursuing Tony Blair's current policy, which seems to be one of "Do as we say, not as we do."*

The preamble to the Tyneside CIA's request for a declaration on the use of the Albemarle site is reproduced below. The full letter and documents are available on the internet. at <http://tyneside.sdf-eu.org/albemarle>. The group is committed to inspecting the site, with or without cooperation from the MOD, and will publicise a report on its findings after the inspection.

For further information, contact Andrew Gray on 0191 209 3140 (evening) or 0191 374 3203 (daytime), or by email to [andrew@andrewgray.uklinux.net](mailto:andrew@andrewgray.uklinux.net).

**Request for declaration (preamble only)**

The Tyneside Citizens' Inspection Agency,

*Recalling* that there exists at the north side of Albemarle military barracks, at Stamfordham, Northumberland, a disused airfield, part of which is used as a secure vehicle compound,

*Noting* that this compound has notoriously and long been alleged to be used in the transportation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) or their components, and particularly in the transportation of Trident nuclear warheads from the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Burghfield to the Royal Naval Armaments Depot (RNAD) Coulport,

*Recalling* that the British government, as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 1970 (NPT), is obliged under Article VI of that treaty to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament,”

*Recalling* also the unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in July 1996, that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control,”

*Recalling* further the “unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals” agreed by the UK government at the NPT review conference in May 2000,

*Noting* the requirements for intrusive and unconditional inspections of WMD facilities imposed on Iraq by Resolution 1441 (2002) of the United Nations Security Council,

*Noting* that the said compound was last inspected in 1998 by members of the Nuclear Weapons Inspectorate (Northumbria), who served a “notice to quit” on the compound fence, notwithstanding which it has continued in use for WMD transports,

*Determined* to secure full compliance with the international obligations of the government, and with the spirit of the conditions imposed on other countries that hold or threaten the use of WMD,

...

**ENDS**