

10 Dalhousie Students Arrested in Anti-War Protest

By Mary-Jana WEGE, The Gazette

HALIFAX (CUP) -- About 40 anti-war activists, including more than 10 Dalhousie University students on break, brought attention to the world's largest weapons manufacturer when they attempted to shut down the Dartmouth, N.S. office of Lockheed Martin on Feb. 17.

Twelve protesters were arrested during the demonstrations and 11 were charged with mischief.

"The energy amongst us was pretty high. The atmosphere was fairly respectful even when the police got here," described activist and King's College student Aaron Beswick.

The activists, who oppose a potential war in Iraq, started the demonstration at 9 a.m. on Monday morning. At about 9:30 a.m. the protesters entered the office building of Lockheed Martin. Eight activists sat down on the floor to block the

office doors, their arms locked together in colourful plastic tubes.

When the activists refused to leave the building, the atmosphere grew tense. About 30 Halifax Regional Police officers dragged the locked anti-war advocates out of the building.

"It was painful, when they tried to unlock us. I still have bruises a week and a half later," said activist Cassandra Birch. "The police response was predictable," said Dalhousie student Valerie Zink.

At 10:30 a.m., four women and seven men were handcuffed. Dalhousie student Chris Arsenault was one of them, but was released shortly after.

"They couldn't charge me with anything. I was only standing in the hallway," he said. Arsenault added that he was "very upset," because the police confiscated his daytime planner and discs and are still holding on to the items.

"The confiscated items might show that an existing condition has been violated," said Sgt.

Don Spicer, Halifax Regional Police spokesman. Arsenault had been arrested

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during the protests of the G-7 finance ministers meeting in Halifax last summer and is under the order not to initiate any protests. According to Sgt. Spicer, confiscated items might be held until trial.

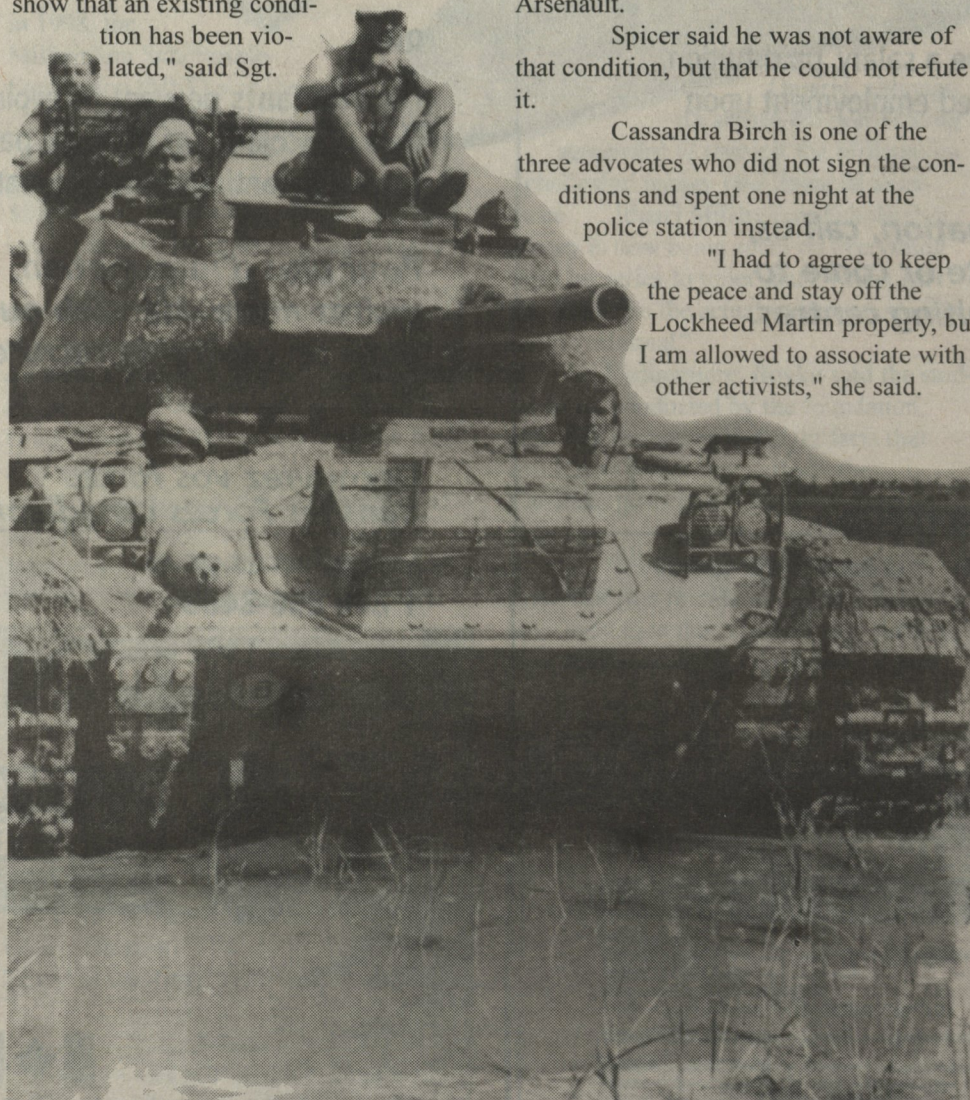
Eight of the 11 anti-war activists who have been charged with mischief, signed an undertaking. It is a promise to appear in Dartmouth provincial court on April 15.

"They signed a non-association clause. These activists are not allowed to communicate with anyone else involved in the Lockheed Martin protest," said Chris Arsenault.

Spicer said he was not aware of that condition, but that he could not refute it.

Cassandra Birch is one of the three advocates who did not sign the conditions and spent one night at the police station instead.

"I had to agree to keep the peace and stay off the Lockheed Martin property, but I am allowed to associate with other activists," she said.



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