

85 arrested in protest at Lockheed

By TOM LONG

Sentinel Staff Writer

SANTA CRUZ — Sheriff's deputies arrested 79 adults and six minors Wednesday who lay down before a long line of cars in an attempt to block Lockheed employees from going to work.

A crowd of supporters chanted, "Real men want peace" and asked sheriff's tactical team deputies to "be gentle" as they lifted one protester after another off the asphalt outside the Lockheed plant gate at the top of Empire Grade Road.

More than 100 cars with Lockheed employees waiting to return to work after a two-day unpaid layoff were escorted into the plant by the California Highway Patrol about 11 a.m., after the protesters were carried off.

Protesters have gathered daily outside the plant since Monday, threatening to blockade cars of employees reporting to work. They are protesting Lockheed's work on the

Trident II missile, which has first-strike capability and could be used in a nuclear war.

"I think they're very foolish, very wrong," said Jim Davis, a photographer who has worked at Lockheed for 20 years. They're probably nice people and they mean well, but I don't think they're doing any good."

"They have their rights; I only wish I had my right to go to work," said machinist Simon Rodriguez as he waited in his truck. "We've got more than enough (nuclear bombs) to blow ourselves up 20 times over now anyway."

As the cars drove in through the gate, those demonstrators who hadn't been arrested yelled, "See you tomorrow," and gave the employees the peace sign with their hands.

Many of the employees returned that hand gesture with a less pacifistic salute.

After being removed from the

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roadway, the 79 adults and six minors were cited for being pedestrians outside a crosswalk, an infraction of the vehicle code. But the protesters refused to sign their citations, according to Chief Deputy District Attorney John Hopkins, and were taken into custody.

The adult protesters were being held at the County Jail Wednesday night pending possible arraignment today.

Lockheed spokesman Bob Burgess told reporters that he estimated two-thirds to three-quarters of the plant's employees had returned to work after the cars rolled past the gate. "We expect to continue work for the rest of the week," Burgess said.

Demonstrators said both before and after the arrests that they will continue to blockade workers' cars through this week and into next.

The mood at the protest site early Wednesday morning was decidedly optimistic. Colorful balloons and flowers adorned the gate itself and the mostly young

protesters gathered in groups, many drenched by the morning's rain showers. A woman dressed in a radiation suit and carrying a gas mask blew bubbles out over the crowd.

One pregnant woman wore a shirt that read, "Babies are better than bombs," and the only mishap occurred when a flying disk flew over the gate and its owner had to ask permission from Lockheed to retrieve it.

At 7 a.m. the approximately 150 demonstrators formed a big circle in the road and sang protest songs. At one point the entire circle sang, "Do the

Hokey-Pokey" and wriggled its way through the song's dance instructions.

The crowd then broke into a series of chants that ranged from "Peace! Love!" to "Blockade! Blockade!"

"We have shut this facility down for three days!" one man told the crowd.

He found out that statement was overoptimistic when the CHP and the sheriff's tactical team, wearing helmets and carrying heavy batons, appeared two hours later to escort the workers inside.