

Concord protest results in 4 arrests

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CONCORD (AP) — A 74-year-old woman who won the Silver Star was one of four people arrested Friday trying to block a Navy munitions train at the site where peace activist Brian Willson was maimed by a train a month ago, protest organizers reported.

The four tried to block the train outside the Concord Naval Weapons Station, according to sheriff's Sgt. Ian Thomas. Demonstrators believe the Navy base is a source of U.S. arms shipments to Contra forces fighting the government of Nicaragua.

Failed to block train

Thomas said the four failed to block the train and were taken to Contra Costa County jail for booking.

Willson lost parts of both his legs on Sept. 1 when he was run over by a train at the base.

Sydney Vilien, a spokesperson for the demonstrators, said one of the four people arrested Friday was Barbara Graves, 74, who received the Silver Star for her work as director of a combat hospital run by the American Red Cross in England during World War II.

Returned medal

Graves returned her medal last year to protest the U.S. role in Central America, according to Vilien. Graves returned her medal while Willson was participating in a hunger strike on the Capitol steps in Washington, Vilien said.

Willson, 46, is a Vietnam veteran who has said his experiences with war led him to take an active role in protesting U.S. involvement in Central America.