

Please don't park that on our lawn

This morning, at a "semi-secret" location in London, a group of ingenious peace activists will be setting out for an arms fair. In a tank.

The semi-secret bit, they concede, is not ideal. "It was meant to be totally secret," sighs a spokesman for the Space Hijackers, the collective behind the stunt. "But then the 10-tonne Saracen MK1 turned up on a low-loader. This community policeman spotted it. Bit annoying."

Remarkably, the group claims, it is not illegal to drive through the streets of London in a tank, provided that it has been registered with the DVLA. The Hijackers bought theirs with donations from

well-wishers, and insist that the paperwork is all in order.

Although technically an armoured personnel carrier, rather than a tank per se, it is certainly tank-ish. It has big wheels instead of treads, but it is the right shade of green, and it does have a gun turret. Although no gun. One assumes.

This will be the third time that this group has sought to disrupt the world's largest arms fair, the DSEi (Defence Systems & Equipment International), which takes place today at the ExCeL centre in London. One time its members dressed as businessmen and tried to sell delegates a selection of prosthetic limbs. If you can't beat them, join them. Who could object to a tank at an arms fair?

"We intend," declares the group this time around, "to roll up and auction our tank to the highest bidder. If this happens to be an angry teenager in a balaclava, so be it. We don't see how destruction caused with our tank can possibly be our responsibility." You see what they've done there?

HUGO RIFKIND

