

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
BRUNSWICK DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

Case No. 2:17cr22

vs.

PATRICK O'NEILL,

Defendant.

28 U.S.C. SECTION 1749 DECLARATION OF PATRICK O'NEILL

My name is Patrick O'Neill, and I make this declaration, under penalty of perjury under 28 USC Section 1749, to explain why I entered and symbolically disarmed the facility protecting, celebrating and worshipping nuclear weapons at King's Bay Trident Naval Base.

INTRODUCTION

1. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus anoints St. Peter as "the Rock" upon whom I will build my church. Peter proves his worthiness of the title in the New Testament Book of Acts when he and the disciples are dragged into court before the Sanhedrin. Threatened with death, Peter remains unbowed, uttering his famous words: "We must obey God and not men" to the council of rabbis.

2. With a thoughtful warning from their "lawyer," Gamaliel, the council backs off from the suggestion that Peter and the disciples be executed. Gamaliel tells the rabbis that a messianic movement of human origin is doomed to fail, but one of divine origin is destined to succeed, and so the council, if Jesus is indeed the Messiah, may find itself "fighting against God."

**MY RELIGIOUS FAITH AND CHOOSING KINGS BAY TRIDENT NAVAL BASE
FOR FAITH-BASED NONVIOLENT SYMBOLIC NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

3. With a deep sense of humility, the Kings Bay Plowshares, as part of a group of seven devout Roman Catholics, relying on Sacred scripture and prayer for guidance, I have attempted to follow the teachings of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, by challenging the idolatry of a human-made idol called trident.

4. With hammers, blood, spray paint, Catholic lectionaries, rosary beads and other symbols of our faith, we entered Naval Station Kings Bay to beat swords into Plowshares (Isaiah 2:4) and smash idols -- false gods that are excoriated in the Old Testament Book of Exodus:

"Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the Lord
alone, shall be devoted to destruction. (Exodus 22:20)

5. Peter is recognized as the "First Pope" in the Catholic Church, a denomination with 1.3 billion adherents globally. Scriptural accounts of Peter's life and ministry and his own writings inform the motivations of the Kings Bay Plowshares.

6. The facts presented in the Government's case are perhaps the best and most thorough compilation of evidence proving that the motivations of the Kings Bay Plowshares are based on sound religious principles.

7. In fact, the Government's entire case -- based on our signed religious documents and video recordings of our alleged "crimes" -- shows that we as a group focused none of our efforts on trying to "get away with a crime." By providing the Government with all the evidence it apparently needs, the seven of us have tried to make our case be completely based on religious grounds.

8. At present, the nuclear nations -- led by the United States (the nation that developed nuclear weapons first, tested them first and remains -- thankfully -- the only nation to have used nuclear weapons) have their weapons of mass destruction on hair-trigger alert, ready at all times to be launched in an act of madness that may in fact bring an end to the human experiment. These weapons of mass destruction are not props. They are maintained by soldiers trained to use them, trained to launch them when ordered to do so in an act of omnicide.

9. Our Catholic, Christian faith has compelled us to take action in defense of life and God's creation. As a global community, human beings have come to accept the prospect of nuclear annihilation of the planet as an acceptable risk. Because the world has opted to embrace war -- even nuclear war -- as what might be a "normal" course of action in a human conflict, it is up to people of conscience to say no to such insanity, and take subsequent action to expose the lie that weapons of mass destruction are acceptable as tools of warfare.

10. While the Jesus I worship did not specifically face nuclear weapons in his time, the Prince of Peace was executed by the state in a trial somewhat similar to one we are undergoing. It is my belief that Jesus is here present today, though not in body, and my beliefs compel me to do what Jesus would do if He were here in person: I believe He would organize, as he did, and he would literally try to disarm that which would destroy all of His Earthly creation.

11. Therefore, our action is an attempt to allow the Holy Spirit and the will of God to act through the seven of us to protect all of God's creation.

12. Disarmament is the ultimate moral imperative of our times. We cannot at once be Catholic and not seek to disarm nuclear weapons in our country. Faith without action is tantamount to silence and neutrality.

13. By prosecuting the Kings Bay Plowshares -- and saying nothing about the criminality of nuclear weapons -- this court has opted to crush dissent and maintain a status quo that puts the very fate of the God's creation in peril.

CONCLUSION

14. To act against evil is the only way to understand our faith, the only way we can live our faith.

15. Though few may understand us, so too few understood Jesus in his time. The crowd impelled the authorities toward execution. Yet, Jesus was right, and we believe we are right in trying to do what He calls on His followers to do today. To be Christian in America is to offer our lives to disarm all weapons.

16. When voices of reason are silenced -- or drowned out -- it is up to people of faith to continue to dissent; to embrace the Words of the God of Love and shout a collective "No" to those who have placed life itself at risk for extinction.

Signed this 26th day of September 2018 in Raleigh, North Carolina at the
Charlie Mulholland Catholic Worker.



Patrick O'Neill