

**TRIAL STATEMENT BEFORE JUDGE CRISTEL—US DISTRICT COURT—
DISTRICT OF WESTERN WASHINGTON—TACOMA—4/1/2016**

Judge Christel,

In an effort to present my perspective on what transpired early the morning of August 10, 2015, at the Trigger Gate of NBKB, I turn to **Defense Exhibit 1 (A)**, offered here earlier, --a **letter** that I carried onto the Base on my person that day. This letter sheds light on the purpose of my action and is intended to clarify the context of that action for the Court.

By way of **introduction** to its reading, let me say that this letter was jointly composed by the group assembled that weekend at Poulsbo's Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, to observe the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The letter was signed by 31 of those present. The group of 8 here before you today were part of a much larger group gathered in Vigil that day at the Base's Trigger Gate

Our group of 8 was convinced that conveying the message of this letter face-to-face to the Base Commander was important enough to warrant risking arrest and prosecution.

While 2 of us tried to proceed to the Base Headquarters with the letter, the other 6 participated in a "die-in" in front of the gate's guard house, with several representing those killed in our country's surprise nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Others outlined the bodies on the pavement with chalk to leave at least a temporary reminder of the many people incinerated, dissolved into less than ash, leaving indelible impressions throughout H & N in 1945.

The letter is preceded by a return address and a mailing address for the Base Commander, and reads as follows:

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action
16159 Clear Creek Road NW
Poulsbo, WA 98370
August 10, 2015

Captain Thomas Zwolfer, Commanding Officer
Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor
120 South Dewey Street
Bremerton, WA 98314

Dear Captain Zwolfer:

We, the undersigned, gathered with the group at the Ground Zero Center to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, write this letter to you respectfully urging that you use every power available to you in your command of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor to call for an immediate halt to the proposed updating and expansion of the Kitsap Bangor Trident fleet under your command.

We are a group of conscience and/or faith-driven individuals who want the very best for our country's future. As nonviolent resisters, our goal is not at all to subvert our nation's defense but to follow the mandate given us in the Nuremberg Principles to do all in our power to assure that our country stops violating international and humanitarian law and strictly adheres to any and all treaties and conventions to which we are signatories, as requested by our Constitution. As resisters, we are not simply protesting current and proposed policies, but sincerely and nonviolently seeking the alternative—an America that leads the world to “Affirm Life and Abolish Nuclear Weapons”—in keeping with our theme for this weekend's event. As resisters, we seek to educate others on the need to abolish nuclear weapons through information and our action.

Prior to the initial testing of the atom bomb in 1945, many of its creators called for prudence and consideration of its moral implications—a call that went unheard then, with horrific results at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

With the implementation of each and every step toward the refurbishing and upgrading of our nuclear arsenal, we continue to disregard prudence and morality; and with every deployment of a Trident submarine in international waters, we continue to violate international and humanitarian law that specifically prohibits the use and threat of use of any nuclear weapon (International Court of Justice decision, 1996).

If we want to regain international respect we need to conform to what we expect of other nations: stop building and deploying these illegal and immoral weapons.

Once again, this year we have conducted an overnight vigil at the Main Gate to make clear our firm commitment toward ending the building and deploying of all nuclear weapons in general and the Trident Weapons System in particular.

We welcome you, Captain Zwolfer, as the highest authority accessible to us, who can speak to the Navy, the Pentagon, and the President, to rise to the challenge of making an exigent call to those up the chain of command to cease and desist from further development, production and deployment of the Trident Nuclear Weapons System and all nuclear weapons.

We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss this request further.

The letter concludes with contact information, closing, and signatures.

Judge Christel, I am here before you in this court today because as a U.S. citizen I have little éntre into the halls of power in this country...--- writing letters, making phone calls and the like notwithstanding.

Attempting to deliver this letter was our way to get as close as possible to the one in command of the naval base that houses more nuclear warheads than any other place in the country. It is from this Base that Trident submarines are constantly deployed. Each carries at-the-ready missiles threatening the use of nuclear weapons all over the world, contrary to international treaties to which our country is signatory.

In my defense, I say only that as a person of faith and conscience, when I see something as wrong as our proliferation of nuclear weapons systems and their current and proposed use, I have to act.

I cannot do otherwise.

I invite and implore you, Judge Christel, to step outside the box that is contiguous with your comfort zone. Act in whatever way(s) you feel appropriate to address the menace of nuclear weapons. Perhaps—for one thing—here today, find our actions justified, as an initial step. Then stand up and be counted in calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons and a halt to refurbishing these Weapons of Mass Destruction and their systems. One way to do that would be to join us at our action next August at the Ground Zero Center. We'd love to see you there.

Thank you.