

From Nukewatch

A long-time U.S. peace activist will be tried on four charges of trespassing Monday, January 17, 2022 beginning at 9 a.m., in District Court in Cochem, Germany, charges that stem from protests against the stationing of U.S. thermonuclear weapons at Germany's Büchel Air Force Base* in the west-central state of Rhineland-Pfalz.

Susan Crane, of the Redwood City, California Catholic Worker House, joined several "go-in" actions involving entry into the base in July 2019, as a member of a delegation of U.S. peace activists to a protest gathering near the air base. In September last year, Crane was convicted in Cochem of similar charges and sentenced to a fine or 50 days in jail. Crane also joined other go-in actions as a member of U.S. peace delegations in 2017, 2018, and 2021. The 2017 delegation had been dubbed "the prison gang" in the press as its members had all, including Crane, been imprisoned in the U.S. for repeated actions against nuclear weapons there.

The Büchel air base maintains at least 20 U.S. hydrogen bombs known as B61-3s and B61-4s, under the auspices of the U.S. Air Force's 702nd Munitions Support Squadron, and a controversial US/NATO program known as "nuclear sharing." Protesters have targeted the site for 25 years demanding the ouster of the U.S. H-bombs and a cancellation of plans to replace today's nuclear weapons with the new "B61-12", now being produced in the United States.

In a written declaration to be submitted to the court on behalf of Crane, legal scholar Anabel Dwyer of Ann Arbor, Michigan writes that Crane, "correctly asserts that the charges should be withdrawn" in this case. "All citizens of the U.S., Germany or other NATO countries who know of the planning, preparation, possession, deployment, threat or use of the indiscriminate and uncontrollable B61 nuclear bombs at Büchel AFB have a right, or duty to nonviolently or symbolically resist complicity with the violations of the intransgressible principles of international customary law that the ongoing threatened use of those nuclear bombs constitute," Dwyer says in the declaration.

Many legal scholars agree that stationing U.S. nuclear bombs outside the United States violates the 1970 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, as well as other international laws and agreements. In several polls, the people of Germany overwhelmingly support the removal of the U.S. nuclear weapons.

Crane said, "As a citizen of the U.S. I feel responsible for the nuclear weapons that are made with my tax dollars. As a matter of faith and conscience, I have said 'No' to the nuclear weapons in the U.S., and it makes sense to join with the international community of peace makers to say 'No' to U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Working with the peace community that has gathered to resist the nuclear weapons at Büchel has created hope for me," Crane said.

Since 1997, when GAAA (Nonviolent Action to Abolish Nuclear Weapons; www.gaaa.org) began a campaign of civil resistance in Büchel, at least 97 activists have been charged with "crimes" following nonviolent protests. People convicted of trespass and property damage have been jailed 13 times for nonpayment of fines. Several protesters have appealed the convictions all the way to the Constitutional Court, Germany's highest. In one case, Marion Küpker of Hamburg and Stefanie Augustin of Dortmund have appealed to the European Court of Human Rights, arguing that the German courts unfairly ignored or evaded the question of international laws that prohibit Germany's stationing and threatened use of U.S. nuclear weapons. The ECHR has not yet decided whether to address the complaint.

**De Morgen [Antwerp], July 16, 2019 (<https://www.demorgen.be/nieuws/eindelijk-zwart-op-wit-er-liggen-amerikaanse-kernwapens-in-belgie~b051dc18/>)*