

Blase Bonpane on WORLD FOCUS,

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Hello, this is Blase Bonpane with World Focus coming to you from KPFK/ Los Angeles. We're podcast and available 24/7 on kpfk.org where we're heard internationally.

I'm very privileged today to have Elizabeth McAlister as a guest. Elizabeth McAlister is co-founder of Jonah House, a faith-based community center which is centered around nonviolence, resistance, and community. The great and history-making actions for peace that have radiated from Jonah House over the past many decades will be remembered as a faithful defiance to the warfare state and hopefully, to saving the world from nuclear biocide.

Welcome, Elizabeth McAlister.

Elizabeth: Thank you so much. What an introduction. Hard to live up to.

Blase: Very well earned. Could you tell us something about a certain trial that's taking place in Knoxville, Tennessee today?

Elizabeth: A beautiful, terrible trial. And stunning human beings involved in it. They're in jail now. This past summer, July I believe, they entered on the property of the Y-12 Nuclear facility in Oakridge, Tennessee, and this was an impenetrable facility, so-called. This is where the Manhattan Project had the bombs made and it has continued since World War II to be the center for the development of the necessary fuels for thermonuclear weapons and it's vast. It's so vast that it's hard to believe and it's so inserted into the population down there in Tennessee, almost everybody has some association with Oak Ridge. It employs people on so

many levels. It has totally contaminated that area. Along the roads, the gulleys, along the sides of the road, are period signs that say “Do not drink this water.” The problem is that the wildlife can’t read, you know, so they drink it. We learned when we were down there two years ago, not quite two years ago, for this wonderful gathering commemorating the anniversaries of the Plowshares 8, and also Nuke Watch and the Nuclear Resistor, that when there is road kill, people are told not to deal with it, you have to call people from the facility who come out and test the creature for radioactivity. This is common in that area. Well, our friends, Greg Boertje-Obed, Michael Walli, and Sister Megan Rice, entered that facility last July and were on the property probably three hours, climbing up to this central building. Totally secure place? No. Megan Rice is 82 years old and here she is, climbing through brush and accompanied by two of the most gentle human beings you can imagine, Gregory and Michael, both of them veterans, war veterans, but both of them incredible peacemakers. I’m going on and on. Blase, please stop me – where do you want this to go?

Blase: Well, I just want people to know that these three were trying to save the planet’s destruction and they are looked upon as criminals. They’re in on felony charges and...

Elizabeth: Yes, and right now they are in jail, having been convicted and the judge is saying, “Listen, I can’t let these people go; they’re violent. They’ve been convicted of a violent crime of sabotage.” And there was no sabotage involved. It’s just horrendous.

Blase: Elizabeth, you’re very experienced in this. We remember Catonsville ’68, Harrisburg 1970, and so many other cases. Here is a situation where the defendants are not allowed to refer to their motive. Is that correct?

Elizabeth: Well, that has been true of all these plowshares actions. They can play lip service to motive, but don’t go too far into it. And, it’s really not important to the judge and he’ll tell the jury to ignore it.

Blase: It's just amazing that you can't explain why you did something. I remember the judge in the DC 9 trial said that if you mention Vietnam again, you're going to go from here to a jail cell.

Elizabeth: That's been the case.

Blase: We heard that at Catonsville. You probably heard it at Harrisburg. This is absolutely incredible. What kind of obstruction of justice made that possible for a court to say you can not give your motive? How do they explain that?

Elizabeth: Basically, the way it works is precedent. That when you get a precedent, they just look at the precedent and that's more important than the law.

Blase: In a trial for murder, someone says, "Well, why did you hurt this person?" They can say, "He was coming at me with a meat axe and my motive was to stop him." But we can't give our motive in a case of this kind?

Elizabeth: That's correct. Well, you can try to squeeze it in but then the judge is going to tell the jury to ignore it. What's important is did they or did they not break the law? And did they or did they not break this particular law, and if they did they're guilty. Period. And their motive, their intentions, have absolutely nothing to do with it.

Blase: That seems almost impossible from the long history of the study of logic and the study of morals and ethics...

Elizabeth: I know, it's laughable. It's just laughable. Except that it is so very, very tragic. And so many have given so much of their lives to try to put this out there. Do you know that also I have never, ever, seen a trial last from Monday to Wednesday and that's it. And a trial where they're talking about putting people away for thirty or more years.

Blase: Well now, we also, Elizabeth, have the problem of instructions of the judge to the jury. These can be very questionable where the judge is simply...

Elizabeth: Amen, Amen! They're very nice people, but you have to ignore that. The question isn't whether they're nice or not. Did they or did they not trespass on to this facility? Did they or did they not harm national defense material?

Blase: This is utterly amazing at a time when the President is saying about past crimes, "Well, let's move forward and forget the past." He's talking about a past of terrorism and saying to forget that and yet, let's punish people for what they might be doing in the future by having signature drone strikes against people that we don't even know who they are! So, we've lost our moral compass.

Elizabeth: I think that is very tragic and there are, happily, people all around finding these sites where the drones are being directed – from where the drones are being directed – and they are getting just incredible sentences coming from it. It is not an easy time to be what you would call a peacemaker. You have to be willing to pretty much give your life for it.

Blase: At the time of Catonsville and Harrisburg and so many other trials, there was a different attitude. I think the population in general looked upon the defendants as really being evil. I think something has changed because today it appears almost everywhere we go and speak against these wars and nukes, that for some reason, people are agreeing with us. Do you notice that change in the population?

Elizabeth: Yes, it's not universal though, Blase, it's localized. You can feel it in certain places and you can feel the antithesis in other places. And Knoxville, Tennessee will be one of those "other places," I'm afraid though they have had a long standing witness at that site, at Oak Ridge. Every Sunday night for 20 or 30 years they have been there. Every Sunday night.

Blase: Absolutely awesome and people have to realize the danger we're dealing with. This is not simply a nuclear power facility. This is a nuclear obliteration facility and the very fact that it continues is unacceptable. We know the number of accidents. There have been several books called "Broken Arrows"....

Elizabeth: And we also know the health consequences because there are so many people in that region who are sick. They're sick. And they're sick from radiation.

Blase: It's so sad that people will allow themselves to be killed in the name of a job. We see this with mountain-top removal and people complaining about experts that are going in and talking about the dangers and saying, "Wait a minute. That's my livelihood!" Well, it may be your livelihood for awhile, but what about your children? What about the world? And this is very sad. We even heard something like this in Texas in the town of West, Texas. They claim that the people don't want restrictions. Well, that sounds like propaganda to me. They don't want regulations. "This is Texas. We do things our way." Well, I looked upon that in today's New York Times as a pure propaganda piece but it is tragic what people will do to earn a living. How many work at the facility in Tennessee? There must be hundreds of people there.

Elizabeth: Oh, it's more than hundreds, Blase. I don't know the figure but it's got to be thousands. It's massive and in typical fashion, with all of these kinds of facilities, they just keep growing. It's like topsy and an unregulated kind of growth. And it grows based on fear.

Blase: Fear is the glue that holds this society together. My theme song is about fear and of course, John said "Perfect love casts out fear" which is a beautiful statement. I want our listeners to know that I'm speaking today to Elizabeth McAlister who is co-founder of Jonah House, a faith-based community center of nonviolence, resistance, and community. The great and history-making actions for peace that have radiated from Jonah House over the past many decades will be remembered as faithful defiance to the warfare state and hopefully, to saving

the world from nuclear biocide. Sister, I want to thank you so much for being with us. Do you have any final thoughts for us today?

Elizabeth: Well, I believe in prayer. I believe that not only the defendants, but also the prosecution team there, needs our prayer. It may be that it's the only thing we have going for us there at this point. I would urge people to pray for the prosecutor and the judge. There is a slight change, the attorneys are working on it right now, that they can still cancel out the sabotage charge which would enable them to be released at least on personal recognizance until sentencing. But that's a hard climb. The jury has convicted them of it. The process has been absurd. We've never seen anything quite like it.

Blase: Well, you and Jonah House and all of the people involved in this very important trial are caring out the message of "Happy are you peacemakers; that you shall be called the children of God" and that has been your work and that is the message for our country which is in dire need as it has apparently lost its soul in terms of its leadership and lost its compass. So, we're so grateful to you for being there and we will continue discussing this matter of this unique trial.

Thank you so much.

Elizabeth: Please do and thank you. It's really important to get this news out as widely as possible. Glad to be part of it. Thank you. Blessings, Blase.

Blase: Friends, I want to give more of an analysis now. We're so happy to have had Elizabeth with us but I want to refer to some of the comments made by people that are there saying, "Let the trial begin." We have these comments from Leonard

It is about the total lack of security provided by the continued pursuit of nuclear weapons.

It is about the fundamental immorality of weapons that kill indiscriminately and on a massive scale, and leave a continuous trail of death far into subsequent generations.

It is about the fact that it is impossible for nuclear weapons and true human security to co-exist. Nuclear weapons are against all that is human, and do not fit within any moral framework.

It is about why the United States continues to consider itself above our own laws, international humanitarian law and treaty obligations.

It is about asking questions such as how does the continuing buildup (by the US) of its nuclear weapons infrastructure along with the production of new weapons systems (example: the new generation of ballistic missile submarines in research and development) move us towards a nuclear weapons free world???

It is about whether we will we choose to base our nation (and our world) on a culture of peace or a culture of violence? And nuclear weapons are truly the taproot of violence.

So friends, this is what we're dealing with today and I do want to give some comments coming directly from the courtroom and from the people who are there, the witnesses who are present.

First, the facts. Greg, Megan, and Michael were found guilty today of both counts brought against them — sabotage and depredation of government property — and they were remanded from the courtroom as we sang them rounds of “Rejoice in the Lord Always,” and “Vine and Fig Tree.” The prosecution has stated that the defendants stand convicted of a “crime of violence”; if this is the case, law requires that they remain in prison until sentencing. They will spend the night in jail, and we will return to the courtroom tomorrow at 9:00 to see what the judge will decide.

In light of these heavy facts, it might seem irrelevant to share with you the evidence presented today in the courtroom. But truth-telling deserves to be celebrated — even if the jury wasn't swayed, glimmers of truth *did* make their way into courtroom, thanks to the sharp minds and firm convictions of the defendants and their lawyers. Such good news should be shared.

A lot of evidence was presented today: Francis finished his questioning of Megan and the government cross-examined her. Michael, Col. Ann Wright, and Greg were also questioned and cross-examined, and lastly the judge read the jury instructions and allowed closing arguments before sending the jury out to deliberate.

Greg's testimony came after the afternoon break, and in a way it tied together much of what had been said all day. He called to our attention the story of the Good Samaritan stopping to help an injured man on the road to Jericho. We see people on the roadside lying wounded, and our job is to do something to stop the violence and help the victims. Greg outlined the violence that we are obligated to stop in our world today: the United States is the only country to have over 700 military bases all over the world; we are the only nation that uses drones to kill people around the world; and we use nuclear weapons to threaten people around the world, weapons whose very manufacturing causes sickness and death.

Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan because someone has asked him, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer to this question is a major point of disagreement between the defense and the prosecution. "Do you consider yourself an American?" the government prosecutor asked Sister Megan Rice. "I believe I am a citizen of the world," answered Sister Megan. "Boundaries are arbitrary." The prosecutor went on to ask if Sister Megan had ever protested nuclear weapons by traveling to nuclear powers other than the United States. She responded that national borders are arbitrary lines; each and every human life on the planet is threatened by the use of nuclear weapons. Michael too was asked where he considered home. "I am a citizen of heaven and I travel

here and there,” he replied. We are all citizens of heaven first; this loyalty takes precedence over any national allegiance we might have.

Greg cited a second story too, after the parable: the story of the Emperor’s New Clothes. It was a little boy who revealed what was missing, Greg said — and he was the only one who dared speak. The emperor here is the United States DOE, and it does not have effective fences. What is more, the emperor doesn’t have real security. Greg explained, “Real security comes when we foster justice among all the nations.”

Ann Wright’s expert knowledge of U.S. security withstood all efforts of the government to discredit her testimony. She established firmly that the emperor has no clothes, insofar as Y-12 does not have effective internal security tests. If Y-12 was running internal security tests, there would never have been so much critical security apparatus that was broken or otherwise not in place. “That’s where the problem lies,” said Col. Wright. That is the key.” Col. Wright testified that Greg, Megan, and Michael’s action improved national security by pointing out this national security deficiency, even if that was not their intention.

Throughout the government’s closing arguments, the prosecutors accused the defendants of disobeying the rule of law, taking the law into their own hands, forcing their will on other people. How ironic! Disregard of the rule of law and treaties is exactly the behavior that the United States engages in, in their foreign policy, that Michael, Megan, and Greg came to Y-12 to address. The same smoke and mirrors allow the government prosecutors to accuse the defendants of “crimes of violence.” How absurd, when crimes of violence are precisely what Greg, Megan, and Michael desired to put an end to when they came to Y-12.

“The teachings of Jesus are practical, doable, worthy of emulation,” Michael said from the witness stand today. “Our role is to try to open their eyes,” Greg said, “to come out of the ways of death.” Megan said, “I believe we are all equally responsible to stop a

known crime.” As we think of our friends in jail tonight, let us allow their words to echo in our hearts and minds.

Friends, this is an extremely important case and we will continue discussing this case of the Transform Now Plowshares that is going on at this time in Knoxville, Tennessee. And as Michael Walli, one of the defendants, said, “Let us rejoin the global community, do away with the attitude of imperialism, and send nuclear weapons back to hell where they came from.”

Brief Interlude

Friends, we’re talking today about the Transform Now Plowshares and the case this is taking place now in Knoxville, Tennessee to claim the three people who were trying to save us from nuclear biocide are violent criminals. This case seems to be a crime against humanity but it’s very much in sync with the case against Socrates, the case against Jesus, the case against the prophets, the case against Bradley Manning, all the others who have suffered for telling the truth in a kingdom of lies. So, let’s see what’s going on. Who’s there now in Knoxville.

The Festival of Hope this evening saw an coming-together of friends from Oklahoma, Indiana, West Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, New York, Wisconsin, Washington state and Washington D.C., Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, Louisiana... and more. We all made our way to Knoxville to honor the desire that Michael expressed, that we each hold deep in our hearts: the desire to overcome violence and form one world community.

The day had begun for some of us at Erik and Libby Johnson’s house in Knoxville, where Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska led us in a Sunday liturgy. We reflected on unjust laws, resistance, and the ministry of “afflicting the comfortable” in light of the good news Jesus brought. After sharing bread and wine around the table, we shared a delicious meal together (soup and pie!) and divided up for the afternoon. Some went to hear Paul

Chappell speak, others attended a planning meeting. Others still continued their puppet artistry, preparing for the week's street theater.

It has been raining for two days straight here in Knoxville, so when OREPA's weekly five o'clock vigil came around, Sister Megan decided to be sensible by staying out of the rain. Greg, Michael, and fifty other people were not deterred by the wet weather however, and rallied with their umbrellas and ponchos on Bear Creek Road outside the weapons complex, brightening the dreary day with songs for peace and freedom from nuclear weapons.

The Festival of Hope was a spectacular, moving end to a meaningful day. The Church of the Savior provided generous hospitality, and over a hundred people were present for the celebration. The Emancipators, Charlie King, and OREPA's own Ralph Hutchison provided music throughout the night: *"sing for Light, sing for Justice, sing for a world without nuclear bombs"; "for swords into plowshares, the hammer has to fall"; "no prison cell, no iron bars can hold your heart."*

Kathy Boylan gave dear introductions for Greg, Megan, and Michael, and each of the three were then able to share with those gathered some of what moved them to act.

If they mention that in the courtroom, they can be cited with contempt of court. This kangaroo court doesn't seem to know anything about justice.

Michael shared his dismay at the erosion of rule of law, and how not only Phil Berrigan and Dorothy Day, but even Abe Lincoln could not rest easy knowing that nuclear weapons production continues at Oak Ridge. Greg spoke to us about the inspiration Dan Berrigan was in his life, and also shared a letter he received from a friend, reminding him that he is on trial to do the will of God, and that requires listening, and letting the Holy Spirit speak through you in the moment. In the insanity of the moment, the

company of saints will be standing with you to help you be the instrument God requires you to be — and in this moment, maybe the truth will be heard. Megan emphasized that she and her co-defendants are simple people who very simply entered a place built on secrecy and lies. “There is no way to secure even one nuclear bomb until it is dismantled. Let’s stop pouring billions in to false, impossible security.”

Friends, our tax money is being used to “modernize” nuclear weapons. “Modernize” weapons from hell.

As a closing reflection, Beth Brockman led us in a meditation on light. Light, she said, is beautiful to look at in and of itself. But even more importantly than that, light is there to show us the truth, show us what is. Greg, Megan, and Michael each lit a candle, and everyone present went forward to spread that light by using the co-defendants’ candles to light a small candle at the front of the room.

The last reflection of the night was taken from J.R.R. Tolkein: *“Such is oft the course of deeds that move the wheels of the world: small hands do them because they must, while the eyes of the great are elsewhere.”*

This is a great and historic trial that is taking place and to let you know how your country is doing with this we can look at the news at one of the Air Force bases where seventeen nuclear officers were accused of suffering rot from within.

The Air Force has stripped an unprecedented 17 officers of their authority to control — and, if necessary, to launch — nuclear missiles.

The action follows a string of unpublicized failings, including a remarkably dim review of their unit's launch skills.

In an internal email obtained by The Associated Press and confirmed by the Air Force, the air group's deputy commander says the group is suffering what he calls "rot" within its ranks.

The tip-off to trouble was a March inspection of the 91st Missile Wing at Minot Air Force Base, N.D. The group earned the equivalent of a "D" grade when tested on its mastery of Minuteman III missile launch operations.

Well friends, not only do we have these planet-destructive weapons but we have people in charge of them who are now accused of "rot" and incapability. So we lose the planet by somebody saying, "Whoops!" and you know Los Angeles could easily look like Hiroshima. It's the accidents. People can even have good will and have an accident. Take a good look at Hiroshima and consider that that was a very small bomb and consider the LA basin looking like Hiroshima. Entirely possible. We're probably in more danger from a nuclear war right now than ever before and this is what we're dealing with at this time.

So we're going to continue talking about this trial. And the people involved. Isn't it curious that highly spiritual people are giving us the example of the most real actions for peace? They're outdoing everyone else and they always have so here are more comments.

Our prayer is that this trial can truly be an occasion to continue the transformation process that began at Y-12 on July 28th. We pray for open hearts and minds and for the ongoing conversion of everyone involved in the trial, to the way of love, nonviolence, and justice.

Let us be clear. Sister Megan, Greg, and Michael have committed no crime. Rather it was their intent to prevent a crime, and uphold God's law and international law.

After hours of courtroom tedium yesterday, today our hearts were ready to welcome the voices of our friends.

The government presented its case first, insinuating all sorts of fear, disorder, and extremism, and then the defense reframed the issue. Chris Irwin, like Francis Lloyd after him, emphasized the nonviolence of the defendants — they brought roses not dynamite, bibles not grenades — and he also brought attention to the slow response of security officers. Greg gave his opening statement next. He stood at the podium wearing his Viva House Catholic Worker 40th Anniversary T-shirt, with its inscription, “Love One Another,” as he described his life of service, Megan’s, and Mike’s, and described the convictions that led them to their action. What is real security? What is false security? Nuclear weapons provide only an illusion of safety; true security is a life of service to those in need. Greg ended by quoting a favorite bible passage of Michael’s, exhorting the jury to take seriously their role as the conscience of the community: *“If today you hear God’s voice, harden not your hearts.”*

The government ran through its case today from start to finish, calling four witnesses and bringing forward banners, bolt cutters, surveillance videos, recorded jail phone calls and media interviews as evidence.

A few highlights from the government witness testimony:

Bill Quigley cross-examines government witness Steven Erhart:

- Erhart tried to differentiate nuclear deterrent (good) from nuclear use (bad). As he explained the U.S. policy of deterrence, his face wore a look of slightly apologetic concern, as if to say he hoped the jury would understand the critical, if unfortunate, nature of Y-12’s mission.

Now, I’ve got to say that the entire scientific community, including all of the great anti-nuclear organizations, have concluded that deterrence is a fraud. It has never had any value. It has

never accomplished anything. It was something dreamed up as an excuse to continue nuclear madness. So to use deterrence as an argument is an absolute failure. The very nature of the talk of deterrence is a fallacy.

- Bill Quigley read passage after passage from the DOE report concluding that security at Y-12 was “deeply flawed.” Is it true, he asked, that there was a culture of complacency regarding Y-12 security? Erhart equivocated. “It may be better to say, *‘normalization of deviation from the optimum.’* “

Sounds strange. What they’re talking about here at the Knoxville facility which contains enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world is ‘normalization of deviation from the optimum.’ Well, that seems to be what’s going on in the “rot” that was described at Minot Air Force base where seventeen officers were just called on for the “rot” suffering from within. It seems that maybe everybody involved in the nuclear issue is in a state of rot, ‘normal deviation.’

- Erhart stated outright, “We [at Y-12] deploy nuclear weapons.” He mentioned both Hiroshima and Nagasaki even before the defense cross-examined him, and Bill Quigley’s cross-examination brought forth damning facts regarding U.S. nuclear war crimes in Japan. Erhart admitted, “The use of a nuclear weapon would be a devastating event.”
- Erhart asserted that nuclear weapons brought about the end of WWII. The government prosecutor asked him to estimate how many lives were saved by the nuclear weapons, but the judge sustained the defense’s objection to that question.
- Francis Lloyd built on Bill Quigley’s exposition of the consequences of nuclear weapons, in order to enlarge the scope of what was being discussed as “security” and make it clear that nuclear weapons are fundamentally insecure. Under Lloyd’s questioning, Erhart admitted that the U.S. has made several mistakes in handling nuclear weapons, and also admitted that such mistakes could cause extensive harm, though that would be “extremely improbable.” However, he was forced to admit that

he had also considered a senior citizen break-in at Y-12 “highly improbable” before July 28, 2012.

Sgt. Chad Riggs, second security responder to the Transform Now Plowshares

- Told the jury, “I felt endangered.” To be specific, he felt Michael was the most dangerous of the bunch. From his training, he knew that such individuals as these were likely to have a sniper with them somewhere.
- The government presented surveillance camera footage for Sgt. Riggs to comment on. In this footage, Michael, Megan, and Greg are seen coming through the hole they cut in the inmost fence, and they are then seen standing in front of the HEUMF as Kirk Garland, the first security responder, drives up. Megan bows to him deeply at the waist, her arms outstretched in greeting. The three light candles. They stand facing Garland at a distance of ten feet. We learn later that they are singing and offering him bread.

Officer Kirk Garland, first security responder to the Transform Now Plowshares

- Lost his job in August 2012 because his employers were not satisfied with how he handled the situation on July 28th.
- He said of Michael, Megan, and Greg, “They told me they were sent from God and they wanted to read me a statement. They also read from the Bible, in Isaiah.”
- He was quite confident in identifying the three as peace activists. “I’ve arrested... quite a few of them. I recognize a peace activist when I see one. Not that they have a particular way they dress or anything.” His experience with peace activists included nuns, banners, and blood at Rocky Flats.

Gen. Rodney Johnson, in charge of security operations at Y-12

- Offered numbers mostly, of the cost of repairing the damage to fences and buildings.

- Greg's cross-examination of Gen. Johnson came out of his expertise as a house painter. There were 100 gallons of paint purchased?! Greg suggested that, given it only takes about a gallon of paint to paint a standard room in a house, 100 gallons was a gross over-purchase.

The government called one more witness, Ryan Baker, special agent with the DOE Office of the Inspector General, and then rested its case.

The stage was set for Sister Megan Rice. Sister Megan took the stand after 5:00pm and spoke for almost an hour, and yet she commanded the attention of every last juror. The whole room listened in rapt attention as she responded to Francis Lloyd's questions, describing her early childhood realization of the horrors of nuclear weapons, her education in radiation biology in her master's program at Boston College, and her missionary work in Africa, teaching science and building schools. She spoke of the sacredness of the Nevada desert, taken from the Shoshone people ("illegally, breaking a treaty") and desecrated by the effects of nuclear testing; she spoke of the suffering of downwinders, the cancer caused in people and animals, and the \$6 million apiece spent on each test. She spoke of the transformative power of her participation in the Nevada Desert Experience. Besides the "harmonious vibrations" emitted by the mountains and all the earth, Sister Megan also felt in Nevada "the culture of silence, the culture of secrecy" surrounding weapons testing and its consequences. "It was extremely clarifying about the reality of the military industrial complex of this country."

Fast-forward to July 28, 2012. As Megan, Greg, and Michael approached Y-12, Megan says they "prayed together, we were filled with love and compassion" for the people who had to work in such a dangerous facility. "We wanted to bring love and healing." She felt led by the Holy Spirit, and was more and more surprised to find herself reaching the heart of Y-12. When Francis asked her about the surveillance tape footage and the way she bowed to Mr. Garland, Megan explained the Buddhist tradition of deeply

reverencing each living being. In response to questions about the extent of the damage she did, she said lightly, "I could have repaired it!"

As 6:00 approached, Sister Megan was still not quite finished answering Francis's questions. The judge dismissed the jury anyhow, and when he did, Megan stood, folded her hands in front of her, and bowed to the jurors as they filed past the witness box. After the jury left, the next half hour was spent presenting arguments for and against acquitting the defendants of the sabotage charge, based on lack of evidence. The decision will hinge on what evidence there is of "specific intent" on the part of the defendants, and whether or not there is enough evidence of specific intent for a reasonable jury to convict the three. Prior Plowshares appeals cases are being taken into consideration. Arguments were also presented as to whether or not Jim Sessions and Ann Wright should be allowed as expert witnesses for the defense.

So, these are our criminals today, friends. These criminals are people who are trying to save the world from extinction, from an idiotic, non-functional, nuclear war facility. Those in charge of the base were referred to by their own commanders as "rot." Those running the base at Y-12 were acknowledging the fact that they too were out of sync with all of reality. So, what is the problem as we look at it?

To understand the problem we must go to ethics and morals and ethics and morals have been part of the discussion of politics for thousands of years. We could go back to Aristotle. He was a great writer on politics and his Nicomachean ethics have been recently translated. Where did the name Nicomachus come from? Well, that was his father's name and it was his son's name. Aristotle's father and Aristotle's son were both Nicomachus. So he called it Nicomachean ethics. He was a student of Plato; of course, Plato was a student of Socrates. What is needed for a functional government? The common good and that happiness is found in the pursuit of virtue.

Friends, this is over 300 years before the birth of Christ, before the current era. Here is Aristotle explaining that happiness for everyone is in the pursuit of virtue, primarily justice. Justice means giving people their due; and politics is a matter of the common good. Now we have a political situation today where certain elements are taking three or four hundred times as much as the lowest paid worker. I said “taking” because they didn’t earn anything. They did not earn it; they took it from the people who work. That is a sin against the common good. We know that.

Also, Aristotle talked distributive justice, that common good involves distributive justice. You have equal distribution, as near equal as possible. He had something in common with Socrates. He was charged with impiety. His intellectual grandfather, Socrates, 75 years before was executed. Aristotle didn’t intend to be executed so he fled from Athens and died on the island Euboea in the year 322 BC. So, what we’re saying is for over thousands of years we have had as study of ethics and morals, and what we need now is ethics and morals. We have an amoral, without morals, society. We have an unethical society. And I suppose this is supposed to be cute – some educations have talked about “value-free” education which is a great joke. There’s no such thing because to declare value-free is to declare your value which is that you don’t have any. There are values and they should not be limited from education. Ethics is an important part. It is unethical to make an instrument of massacre that can kill billions of people and destroy this beautiful planet. And here we have these people in court today, innocent, saintly people who are being punished for telling us the truth. We have to reflect on this and understand that we can’t continue the game of repeating USA seventy-five times. It almost sounds like ‘Sieg Heil’ to me after awhile. It is something totally irrational, amoral, illegal and evil that’s taking place here. So, let’s look to this trial. Of course, the media will be talking about the latest starlet getting drunk and being thrown into jail overnight or whatever. This case is taking place now. It’s history. We should identify with these people, with what they’re doing, and why they deserve our complete attention. Sister Megan Rice, Michael Walli, and Greg Boertje-Obed from the Transform Now Plowshares, and it’s an extremely important case.

It's taking place they're being convicted of being peacemakers. Jesus had told us, "Happy are you peacemakers. You shall be called children of God."

So, let us reflect on this and I want to thank you for listening today.