

Penalties for Nuclear Weapons Resisters in Germany Getting Heavier

After years of imprisoning only German nationals for nonviolent protests against the threatened use of U.S. hydrogen bombs stationed in Germany, nuclear resisters from outside Germany are now being imprisoned for their noncooperation. These resisters have all served time in Germany for refusing to pay financial penalties imposed mostly for go-in actions at Büchel Air Force Base: Susan Crane from California; Dennis DuVall, formerly of Arizona, and now living in Radeberg, Germany; Susan van der Hijden and Fritz ter Kuile both from Amsterdam, Netherlands; as well as Nukewatch’s John LaForge.

On June 4, Susan Crane, of the Redwood City, California Catholic Worker, began serving 229 days, the longest sentence ever handed down in 30 years of anti-nuclear protests at Büchel.* She is the first female U.S. citizen to serve hard time in the campaign. After joining a long string of “go-in” actions at the base, Crane was fined a total of \$2,819 by the regional court in Koblenz. She informed the court of her conscientious refusal to pay, and later explained in an email that she “is unwilling to pay for the court’s cover-up of the illegality of U.S. nuclear weapons.”

Susan Van der Hidjen was sentenced to 115-days for the same or similar actions, and the two began their prison time together June 4. After a month in the high-security prison in Rorhbach, both women were transferred to the so-called “open prison” JVA Koblenz, where inmates with good conduct marks are permitted a few hours of free time outside the gates every week. (Because of this strangely regulated “preparation” for a prisoner’s pending release, Crane was able to attend a large anti-war rally in Berlin October 5th.) Van der Hidjen finished her stint and was released and returned home to Amsterdam Thurs. September 26.

Nuclear Resister Dennis DuVall Threatened with Expulsion from Germany

In the newest and most reactionary move by authorities, Germany intends to expel U.S. citizen and nuclear resister Dennis DuVall on October 31, 2024. DuVall, 82, a resident of Radeberg for six years, a member of Veterans for Peace, and a regular protester at the Büchel NATO base has been incarcerated twice for nonpayment of penalties stemming from various actions at Büchel.

The federal expulsion order describes DuVall as a serious threat to security and public order. He has retained an attorney to help fight the order and has won widespread support in his effort to stay. DuVall argues that he has a legal obligation to resist the

planning and preparation for nuclear attacks that take place at the base. In two separate criminal court trials, DuVall explained that these nuclear attack plans are in violation of international treaty law including the 1970 Nonproliferation Treaty and the 1946 Nuremberg Charter, Principles, and Judgment.

DuVall is the second U.S. citizen ever to go to prison in Germany for nonviolent resistance at the base. He spent 60 days in Bautzen prison in 2023, and this past July 22 reported to the same prison for a 90-day sentence for spray painting “crime scene” on a roadway. He was released from Bautzen after seven days when his \$1,643 penalty was paid anonymously.

In a statement announcing the expulsion threat DuVall warned, “B61-12 nuclear bombs and F-35 warplanes at Büchel will push NATO closer to war.” He invites peace and anti-war/anti-weapons groups and individuals to support his fight to stay in Germany, and to sign an online petition to the interior ministry here: www.change.org/p/keine-ausweisung-des-anti-atombomben-aktivisten-dennis-duvall.**

The government’s deportation rationale has been criticized as politically motivated and absurd, since the 82-year-old USAF veteran and retiree can’t possibly endanger the richest industrial state in Europe. German singer/songwriter Gerd Schinkel has even composed a song for Dennis that asks, “Is a demonstrator more dangerous than the bomb he is demonstrating against?” —*JL*

*** Please write to Susan Crane here: JVA Koblenz OVA Simmerner Str. 14A 56075 Koblenz GERMANY**

**** You may also urge Germany to rescind its expulsion order for DuVall by writing: Robert Domanja Head of Office District Office Bautzen Foreigners Office Bahnhof Str. 9 02625, Bautzen GERMANY**

— Felice and Jack Cohen-Joppa at The Nuclear Resister contributed details to this report.



Dennis DuVall, Susan van der Hidjen, and Richard Bishop clipped into Büchel Air Force Base, July 2019.



Susan Crane, left, and Margriet Bos inside the fence at Büchel, July 2019. Photos by Nukewatch.

Coalition, Petition on Monticello

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Recent leaks at the reactor pose serious threats to public health, the Mississippi River, and drinking water for millions. Xcel’s IRP shows renewable energy is a more affordable and safer alternative.

In this climate crisis, it is the responsibility of the State of Minnesota and Xcel Energy to invest ratepayer funds in new and long-lasting renewable energy rather than in dangerous and outdated infrastructure that leaks toxic radioactivity to the environment and is prone to further age-related problems.

We further demand that the Governor’s office intervene and take responsibility and accountability for these issues which the offices below him have continuously failed to address and have ghosted the community.

We urge the Attorney General, Minneapolis, and St. Paul City Councils to demand the Public Utilities Commission maintain the 2030 closure schedule for Monticello.

The Department of Commerce and Attorney General must intervene in Xcel’s IRP to ensure Monticello’s closure and replacement with renewables.

The undersigned shows support for the above petition and demands. Additional resources and sources can be found at: SavetheMississippi.com and nukewatchinfo.org

Why is this important?

We reject Xcel Energy’s 20-year extension request for the Monticello nuclear reactor. The reactor is 53 years old, making it one of the three oldest in the U.S. The 2022 leak of 829,000 gallons of radioactive tritium-contaminated cooling water poses a threat to: the Mississippi River, a drinking water source for 20 million people; the environment and wildlife; the food chain through irrigation of crops.

Tritium exposure, especially during pregnancy, is linked to:

- o Cancers in newborns
- o Pregnancy loss
- o Birth abnormalities

We say No! No to Xcel’s deadly radioactivity harming our children, environment, drinking water, and food! No to the license extension! We demand the safe shutdown of the Monticello reactor!

How it will be delivered

This petition will be circulated by Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Mississippi River through a powerful collaboration of environmental, water safety, and civil rights NGOs, empowering individuals to add their voices through handwritten signatures and a user-friendly digital platform on MoveOn.org. Our collective goal: to exceed 1 million signatures!

— Nukewatch Staff and Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Mississippi River

— Use this QR Code to Access the Online Petition



Timing of New U.S. B61 Hydrogen Bomb Transfer Unclear

According to a November 2021 report by the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration, the so-called ‘life extension program’ for the air-dropped thermonuclear bomb called B61-12, “is refurbishing, reusing, or replacing all of the bomb’s nuclear and non-nuclear components to extend the service life by at least 20 years.”

Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists told Politico that the upgrades to the bomb’s design are for “significantly greater accuracy.” This newfashioned H-bomb is also made so that U.S. and allied fighter jets — including F-15s, F-16s, F-35s, and European Tornado fighter jets — “are all able to carry the weapon, as opposed to the several older versions of the B61 that have been in storage for years.”

“Today, approximately 100 U.S. nuclear weapons are estimated to be stored at six bases in five countries, with one additional base (Lakenheath in England) currently undergoing modernization to potentially store nuclear weapons in the future,” Kristensen reported in November 2023. The United States is preparing to replace all older versions of the B61 now deployed in Europe with the incoming B61-12, Kristensen reported. The timeline for the first delivery has not been made public, so watchdogs are keen to observe the arrival — at any of the six NATO bases — of a U.S. Air Force C-17A Globemaster III, “the only transport aircraft authorized to move the nuclear weapons,” Kristensen noted.

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Newsweek reported in 2022, “The 12-foot B61-12 bomb carries a 50-kiloton warhead — the equivalent of 50,000 tons of TNT.” The U.S. atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima killing 140,000 people was a 15-kiloton device, making the new weapon 3.3 times more powerful.

In December 2023, Kristensen reported that Dutch Air Force pilots at Volkel air base had begun training to attack with the new B61-12s. Volkel is part of the so-called NATO “nuclear sharing” program, in which “the United States Air Force equips Dutch F-16s (and aircraft of five other NATO countries), and trains their pilots to employ B61 nuclear bombs in war.”

Kristensen had earlier reported that in Germany, parliamentary “debate raised questions about whether individual soldiers could be held liable for the use of nuclear weapons. The 2008, legal guidelines for German soldiers prohibited their participation in the use of nuclear weapons, posing complications for Germany’s ongoing nuclear sharing mission. [But] revised guidelines, which were updated in 2018, reportedly no longer include this prohibition — presumably in order to allow German soldiers to fully participate in NATO’s nuclear sharing mission.”

Civil resisters tried in Germany for confronting nuclear attack training have defended their actions by pointing to treaty laws that forbid such preparations.

—*JL*