News



by Maria Benevento

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Editor's note: Welcome to NCR's Justice Action Bulletin, where every Tuesday we bring you the latest news on active nonviolence in the service of peace and justice. Do you have news you would like to share? Contact Maria Benevento at mbenevento@ncronline.org.

POULSBO, Washington — The Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action is planning nearly a week of activities to commemorate the anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and call attention to and oppose nuclear weapons today.

On July 31, a "peace fleet" will meet the Navy in Elliott Bay, Seattle. Protesters in boats and on shore plan to protest the glorification of weapons and the waste of taxpayer resources at the Seattle Seafair festival.

A group of Buddhist peace walkers will end a three week long walk at Ground Zero Aug. 4, the same day that activists in boats and kayaks will hold the third annual "Boats by Bangor" convoy that travels past the Bangor shore installations at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor.

Ray McGovern, a peace activist and former CIA intelligence officer, and Bill Moyer, who runs the Backbone Campaign, which plans creative protests, are scheduled as keynote speakers on Aug. 5. Activists will also prepare for a vigil and action at the gates of the naval base on Aug. 6, when they plan to block roads to symbolically slow "business as usual."

BÜCHEL, Germany — Eighteen activists from the U.S., Germany, the Netherlands and England were arrested and released without charges July 15 after they cut holes in fences and entered Germany's Büchel Air Force Base, which houses 20 U.S. nuclear weapons.

The activists, who included Redwood City, California, Catholic Worker Susan Crane, entered in five small groups and walked around carrying banners. Some walked as far as the airbase runway while three people, including Crane, reached a high-security zone housing four nuclear weapons bunkers, climbed to the top of a bunker, and were not noticed until they unfurled a large banner an hour later.

In a July 19 piece in the Duluth Reader, one of the activists, John LaForge, said the group intended to demonstrate the inadequacy of protection systems for the weapons and to call for the removal of U.S. weapons from Germany. The planning process for the action was conducted in meetings that were open to the public.

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LONDON, United Kingdom — People of faith including Pax Christi members, Catholic sisters, and representatives of the Christian Student Movement, London Catholic Worker, Christian CND, Quakers, Anglican Peace Fellowship and parish groups were among those who protested President Donald Trump's visit to London July 13, Independent Catholic News reported July 15.

They joined an estimated 250,000 people who assembled outside the House of Parliament and All Souls Church for a Together Against Trump march and rally organized by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Protesters' concerns included Trump's anti-immigrant stance, the separation of families at the U.S.-Mexico border, the risk of nuclear war and the prioritization of gun rights over women's rights.

PORTLAND, Maine — Jessica Stewart, a Catholic Worker and member of Moral Movement Maine, was arrested July 13 in Portland, Maine, along with Lucia McBee, during a visit by Attorney General Jeff Sessions to meet with members of local law enforcement and promote the prosecution of all opioid distribution cases as part of "Operation Synthetic Opiod."

McBee and Stewart, who were part of a group of approximately 150 protesters, were arrested after they sat on the ground and blocked garage entry and exit lanes.

Stewart said in a July 19 question and answer with the Portland Phoenix that the protest was focused both on the criminalization of opioid addiction and Sessions' immigration policies. "If there's a crisis of any kind his solution is to lock people up," she said. "We should be seeking dignified and humane solutions to these problems."

[Maria Benevento is an NCR Bertelsen intern. Her email address is mbenevento@ncronline.org.]

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