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Fines Dropped: LANL 6 to do Community Service

On Wednesday, January 9, 2013, 6 anti-nuclear activists, arrested during a peaceful Hiroshima-Day protest at the gates of Los Alamos National Laboratory on August 6, 2012, went to trial before Judge Alan Kirk in Los Alamos Municipal Court.

The defendants spoke passionately about US commitments under The 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and decisions of the International Court of Justice as well as for the need to expend resources to confront climate change, the real and immediate threat to national security, not to expand the dangerous and archaic nuclear arsenal.

In his decision, Judge Kirk found the 6 guilty of obstructing movement and refusing to obey an officer and not guilty of trespass. Judge Kirk levied fines of \$100 each for the two guilty charges. He also sentenced the LANL 6 to one year's probation and charged each \$142 in court fees.

The Defendants then Petitioned the Court to allow them to do community service or jail time rather than pay fines or costs to Los Alamos County. On Feb. 7, Judge Kirk granted the defendants' Motion to do twenty hours of community service at not-for-profits they selected in their local community, subject to the Court's approval, but he denied their Motion to do time instead or to do community service for the court costs.

Though the LANL 6 had different reasons for standing firm on Hiroshima Day, they are united in their demands that the US divert spending from nuclear weapons to cleaning up the environment and beginning the work to reverse global warming. All stated that it was more important to get out their message than the municipal ordinances they were accused of violating. In his closing argument, Jeffrey Haas, attorney for the LANL 6 said it was crazy to keep producing hazardous, dangerous, and useless nuclear weapons in an era when the real national security threat was catastrophic climate change, which the US ignores to its peril.