



DIOCESE OF SAN JOSÉ

HUMAN CONCERNS COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

To: Ed Ehmke
Mary Jane Parrine
Larry Purcell

Date: June 6, 2008

The Human Concerns Commission of the Diocese of San José wishes to congratulate you for your principled stand against weapons production and testing at Vandenberg Air Force Base and in the Federal Courtroom in Santa Barbara on March 15, 2008. The statement of Mary Jane Parrine was both inspirational and powerful. Thank you for your witness.

I crossed the line that day to make a statement that thousands of people share. This is our hope: that there can be a conversion of weapons production and testing to forms of technology that will benefit humanity. Alternative energy sources, medical research, transport and communication -- these and so many areas where technological skill can be transferred to work that pays well, builds more jobs, and is held in esteem in just the same way as we currently respect those who protect us. Police, law enforcement, international regulation of crime -- all of these are noble efforts. But not this emphasis on war of aggression and on nuclear weapons that proliferate to the point of massive overkill. Besides being impractical and foolish, Vandenberg's testing of weapons of mass annihilation brings the concept of defense to an extreme that is wrong in every moral and theological sense.

In the Acts of the Apostles (4:13-21) there is a description of Peter and John appearing before the Sanhedrin. They had been arrested for telling people about the teaching of Jesus and then they were warned not to continue speaking. Their reply was "Whether it is right in the sight of God for us to obey you rather than God, you be the judges. It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard."

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