



Statement on sentencing of sisters who protested at missile silo

July 25, 2003

"The three religious women sentenced today acted symbolically in their missile silo protest and did no serious damage. I'm disappointed that the sentences handed down this afternoon were not equally restrained and symbolic. The sisters have already served many weeks for their actions, and it's unreasonable to regard them as a threat to anyone's national security.

"The challenge of promoting peace in a nuclear age is complicated. The Church teaches that nuclear deterrence is morally acceptable, not as an end in itself, but as a step toward disarmament. That does not relieve our leaders of the need to seek alternatives to these terrible weapons.

"Part of the public witness of civil disobedience is accepting the consequences, even when those consequences are difficult. The sisters' witness continues throughout their days in jail. The debate arising from their actions should remind us that nuclear disarmament must remain a priority goal for our country. We should pray for the sisters, and for the day when nuclear deterrence will no longer be considered necessary."