NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Catholic Worker Apel 'a threat to the order and security' of airbase

Megan Fincher | Dec. 5, 2013 NCR Today

Catholic Worker Dennis Apel was taken to Supreme Court on Wednesday [1] for his acts of civil disobedience against Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. The transcript for his case, *United States of America, Petitioner* v. *John Dennis Apel*, is now available on the Supreme Court's website [2].

Apel has organized and attended a monthly vigil outside of Vandenberg since 1996. In an act of civil disobedience, Apel threw his own blood onto Vanderberg's entrance sign in 2003 and walked onto base property. He was barred from the base for three years and given a misdemeanor. Apel again walked onto the property in 2007, which gave him another misdemeanor and a lifetime ban from Vandenberg. Apel continues to vigil outside of the military base, but the government claims he is restricted from doing so [3].

Here is a sampling of the transcript, where Apel is labeled as "posing a threat to the order and security of the base."

MR. HORWICH (Petitioner): [Apel's ban and bar] says, "Effective immediately, you are ordered not to enter onto Vandenberg Air Force Base, except to traverse," meaning to travel "to or from Lompoc and Santa Maria on Highway 1 and to and from Lompoc and Amtrak Surf Station on Highway 246," which passes through Vandenberg's property.

JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: He couldn't go to the public school, though? Or the stores or any other facilities that the public's invited to?

MR. HORWICH: That's -- that's correct. But, of course, there's a reason for that, which is that he has been individually identified as posing a threat to the order and security of the base. Now, we would point out, he was barred --

JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: It seems such an odd thing for a Class B misdemeanor to be used to protect the national security; that Congress has determined that the threat is so great, that the only thing you need is a Class B misdemeanor to protect the U.S.

[Megan Fincher is an NCR Bertelsen intern. Her e-mail address is mfincher@ncronline.org.]

Source URL (retrieved on *08/02/2015 - 04:22*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/catholic-worker-apel-threat-order-and-security-airbase

Links:
[1] http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/supreme-court-lacks-interest-catholic-workers-free-speech-argument
[2] http://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts/12-1038_d18f.pdf
[3] http://ncronline.org/news/peace-justice/catholic-worker-takes-free-speech-case-supreme-court