

Volk Protesters Kathy Kelly and Brian Terrell in Court

Volk Protesters arraigned February 25th, 2016, Update: Volk Field, Wisconsin, Action to Protest Drone warfare



On February 24th, two co-coordinators of Voices for Creative Nonviolence, Brian Terrell and Kathy Kelly, appeared before Judge Curran from the Juneau County jail via the jail's video link. The two had been held overnight. They were served documents charging them with trespass at the "dwelling" of Volk Field. Pilots train at Volk Field to operate Shadow Drones over other countries.

Kelly told Judge Curran that she wished to plead no contest and that she would not be able, in conscience to pay a fee and that she preferred not to promise that she'd return to the court since she didn't believe she had committed a crime in the first place. "Oh, I get what's happening here. You have some people out there who will give you a gold star and a pat on the back for being so courageous," said Judge Curran. He then said he would not impose a cash bond and he set a pre-trial conference date for March 23rd even though Kelly had already indicated that she wished to plead no contest and was not seeking a trial.

Terrell appeared next. He reiterated what Kelly had said, wishing to plead no contest and go directly to sentencing. "It would save the county, the court and everyone involved time and trouble if the judge would accept the no contest plea," said Terrell, "and go right to sentencing. I don't understand

why a pre-trial conference was scheduled when we haven't asked for a trial."

"It's not necessary for you to understand the process of this court," said Judge Curran. That's why God made lawyers."

Kelly and Terrell were released after signing personal recognizance bonds. On February 25th they returned to the court to attend Mary Beth Schlagheck's trial for a protest at Volk Field last August. Due to an emergency hospitalization of one of the state's witnesses, her trial was postponed.

Following the hearing, District Attorney, Michael Solovey agreed to an informal conference with Kelly and Terrell. He discussed a motion Terrell had filed that morning to dismiss the criminal charge of trespassing at a dwelling. Mr. Solovey said he expected the charge to be changed to the less serious forfeiture of trespassing on land. He was ready to accept a plea of no contest when he learned, at the end of the conference that the U.S. Air Force was asking for another criminal charge of disorderly conduct alleging that Kelly and Terrell had disrupted traffic in their protest. Kelly and Terrell told him a video taken by Joy First would verify that Kelly and Terrell did not disrupt traffic.

Kelly and Terrell await word from the DA about whether he will seek an additional charge. "We're building on earlier efforts by Wisconsin activists," said Terrell, "and we see today's events as part of a continuum."