

Activists Arrested for Entering Drone Base With Loaf of Bread

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PRESS RELEASE

Camp Douglas, WI – On February 23rd, two peace activists with Voices for Creative Nonviolence, Brian Terrell and Kathy Kelly, were arrested when they attempted to deliver a loaf of bread and a letter to drone operators at Volk Field, an Air National Guard Base in Wisconsin, which trains pilots to operate Shadow Drones over other countries. Voices activists have lived alongside ordinary people in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Gaza. People who can't flee from drone surveillance and attacks have good reason to fear people from the U.S., but instead they have broken bread with Kelly and Terrell and have welcomed opportunities for deepened mutual understanding. Kelly and Terrell carried the loaf of bread to signify the worth of relying on words rather than weapons.

Before entering the base property, Kathy Kelly said: "Living alongside ordinary people who can't escape drone surveillance in places like Iraq, Gaza and Afghanistan and knowing that a drone operator could be ordered to assassinate civilians who have nowhere to turn and nowhere to hide affected my conscience. I wanted to ask drone operators in Volk Field whether they had been asked to target any people for possible assassination that day. I want to ask how the base training manual teaches people to distinguish between civilians and armed combatants. If an operator wants to quit, what does the commander of Volk Field do?"

Brian Terrell also noted: "Wisconsin is where I was born and

raised and so I feel that coming to Volk Field is a responsibility that I owe in gratitude to my home state. The premise that drones will limit the parameters of war and make for fewer civilian casualties has proven false. General Stanley McChrystal, who led troops in Afghanistan from June 2009 to June 2010, warned that the drone 'lowers the threshold for taking operations because it feels easy, there's a danger in that.' And yet the evolution of drones in the militaries of many countries around the globe has been anything but cautious. Instead there is a reckless proliferation of this deadly technology."

Terrell and Kelly will be arraigned on February 24th, after 2:30 p.m., at the Juneau County Justice Center, 200 Oak St., in Mauston, WI. Also on February 25th, at 9:00 a.m., Mary Beth Schlagheck, will be tried for having crossed the line at Volk Field in August of 2015. Hers is the last of seven trials stemming from nonviolent civil resistance actions at Volk Field that were undertaken as the culmination of the "Let It Shine" walk from Madison to Volk Field. The witness of the activists who have protested at Volk Field, and who have testified so eloquently in court, inspired Brian's and Kathy's action.

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