

# War and Peace

Donald Trump moved ahead last night to bomb Syrian government facilities in retribution for an unproven claim, an event not yet investigated, with no grounded information, no warning and no discussion. He has taken his place on the tip of the spear of the war machine. But make no mistake, Mr. Trump pulled the trigger but he didn't aim the gun.

Hillary Clinton ran on a bigger version of this same scenario. The war machine has been geared up on invading Syria for years. It is so frustrating to watch the proxies muck around. And please be aware that, whatever you may read, the Russians and Chinese are taking this action very seriously. However, unlike our own government, they don't act without intelligence, consideration and a plan.

If you think this is about a chemical gas attack, then please read Ray McGovern's prescient article, The Sarin 'False Flag' Lesson, from last December. Apparently, we didn't get it.

So what can we do? Last week Doug Noble, Ted Wilcox and I met with Louise Slaughter and Kirsten Gillibrand's aides. We talked about the danger of making war on Syria and the many questions that arise from the massive propaganda campaign to support US military action there. We asked the Congress Woman and the Senator to support the Barbara Lee bill to restrain US placement of troops in Syria and the Tulsi Gabbard bill to stop US funding and arming of organizations that are affiliated with Al Qaeda in Syria.

We received the response at the end of this email from CW Slaughter's local aide, Sr. Beth, who quotes Jack, an aide in Washington DC who apparently didn't think our message was worth sharing with the Congress woman. Their response was a disrespectful brush off on all counts. The local people apparently didn't share the materials we provided and the DC

aide responded without consulting our representative. The local people are good people. I've known them for years. But at this time, they have dropped the ball, and when we reminded them, they responded with tea and sympathy – not comprehension and action.

If you are as offended as I am after reading the response at the end of this post, please give Jack a call at (202) 225-3615 or call Jeff or Sr. Beth at (585) 232-4850 and let them know that you oppose US imperialist wars. Let them know that you do not support attacks on the Syrian State or any attacks on Syrian soil. Tell them if you don't support the holocausts in Yemen and Mosul Iraq in which the United States is a participant and a primary enabler.

At the same time, they wanted to know why we don't have a movement behind us. And I wonder about that as well.

Of course we need to save the planet, so the environmental movement draws a lot of interest. We are clearly seeing the effects of environmental destruction around us. And, we are concerned about the plight of immigrants and undocumented workers in this country. America is a country of immigrants and the treatment of our most recent arrivals should concern all of us. But can we look beyond the ends of our noses?

For those who wish to focus on the environment, I would like to point out that:

- the fossil fuel industry is the immediate excuse for much of the US imperialist war mongering.
- The US military consumes more oil and gas than any other single entity
- The US military dumps untold quantities of toxins in their chosen war zones from Agent Orange to White Phosphorus to Depleted Uranium
- The US military burn toxic waste in the open when they are operating in war zones and leave behind stashes of

toxic weapons and ammunition buried in the ground or pawned off on local allies

- A nuclear war would free the planet of it's human burden, and unfortunately, most of the other flora and fauna that currently inhabit it's biosphere.

If it is refugees and immigrants that are your concern:

- Like other poor people and people of color, refugees and immigrants have a difficult life in this country
- Still, they come because
  - Someone is paying terrorists to kill and maim ordinary civilians in their home countries.
  - Someone is bombing their home countries without permission and without the requisite intelligence to avoid civilian casualties
  - Someone is supporting and has been supporting wars of aggression either
    - openly targeting internal political forces attempting to free the country of imperialist governance -as in Yemen;
    - disguised as as revolutions by (heavily armed) internal social movements (that are prepared to kill and maim their neighbors) - as in Syria and Ukraine;
    - using militarized chaos and misdirection on behalf of elite constituencies -as in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Honduras, Venezuela – the list goes on and on.
- Someone is:
  - Making life a living hell in their home countries;
  - Making it impossible to survive in their cherished homes;
  - Destroying their cultural roots and ethnic histories

Who might that 'Someone' be? It is the US, the exceptional imperialist. And the US is us.

Meanwhile, they come here where they can be mistreated and impoverished in many cases, patronized in some contexts, but they can't just be 'normal' until they have given up the last vestiges of their cultural and ethnic identities, until only skin color and gender identity remain. It isn't that these don't matter, but rather that diversity is so much more complex and rich in fiber than basic physical identifiers which, as we know, turn out to be not so physical in any case.

So, after a generation or so, some may prosper; they may forget and join the cardboard American consensus, while others continue struggling against racism and poverty in ghettos across the country.

So I ask you,

- Wouldn't it be nice if the the world were safe for it's inhabitants to live and prosper in their own homes?
- Wouldn't it be nice for people to be free to live in peace in their homelands and to visit others and experience the richness of diversity in some kind of context?
- Wouldn't it be nice if a civilized global political community were able to address the welfare of our planet and serve the welfare of people every where?
- Wouldn't it be nice if a predatory exceptionalist imperialist government bursting with armaments and indignant self-righteous outrage did not control the actions of all other entities with its big bad attitude problem?

Is there a "new sheriff in town" as Nikki Haley told the United Nations Security Council or is there just a new bandit at the helm of the greatest war machine ever built, a hungry machine that feeds on history, civilization, natural resources, human lives and everything those of us who love life hold dear?

And what responsibility do we bear in this context?



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## Letter from Louise Slaughter's Aides

**Q:** When might there be the emergence of bills like Barbara Lee's or others on war/peace on the congressional agenda? For example with budget and proposed amounts for military and wall versus domestic programs? We assume this will be a "hot" time? What do you think?

**Jack:** *Barbara Lee has been a leader on this issue for a long time and the Congresswoman has supported her efforts – I believe Rep. Lee even has a bill that would establish an Institute of Peace [apparently he doesn't know that there already is an 'Institute of Peace' in Washington DC populated by neocons ]. In terms of the timeline, it's hard to say when you're in the minority. To move bills while in the minority, bipartisan support is key. With Republicans controlling the agenda and what comes up on the floor for consideration it's very hard for Democrats to have a say in what is considered. Also, with President Trumps "skinny budget" released and proposed increased in defense spending, we may not see an increase in domestic programs vs. defense programs in the near future. The Congresswoman stands ready to work to craft legislation that maintains important domestic programs, while preserving funding for our national defense in a reasonable, appropriate way.*

**Q:** Who are the key people in Congress who might work on peace legislation? What chance is there for them to emerge in a leadership/spokesperson role? They spoke of Representative Barbara Lee's legislation as a plus. HR 1473. For example is she a leader on this issue, is this a good piece of legislation that might move ahead?

**Jack:** *I think LMS would be supportive of HR 1473 though I haven't asked her to cosign the bill [apparently you don't see it as important]. One thing Rep. Lee and some others have*

*tried to push for is a new authorization for the use of military force (AUMF) in our fight against ISIS in the middle east. This would help clarify what kind of actions US forces could take in that conflict, including a clear answer on whether or not troops could be deployed there. However at this point I don't see HR 1473 moving anywhere fast. [since you don't feel it's worth cosigning why would it?]*

**Q:** What advice would you give peace groups like theirs and many others? What bills to watch, leadership to watch, what do advocate for and when?

**Jack:** *If they keep the pressure up I would recommend they keep looking for members and proposals that encourage a comprehensive dialogue on how the US can play a role in the peace process. [What 'peace process'?] Looking even at the Israeli-Palestine efforts, as well as the importance of robust international aid funding for the US worldwide so we can continue to be a leader and set an example to other countries and governments. Humanitarian and refugee issues I think are*

**Q:** What else should they be aware of or other advice for them and their counterparts?

**Jack:** *Not sure I have much else for them minus what I included above. I'm always glad to chat over the phone [ (202) 225-3615] as well if that would be helpful to them to talk more specifically about questions/ideas they have.*

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## **Jury Acquitted Hancock 'Big**

# Books ' Protesters

## *Drawings by Dan Burgevin*

A six person jury acquitted Hancock Big Books Protesters 2 years after demonstration resulted in arrests. The trial of Hancock protesters, Ed Kinane of Syracuse, James Ricks and Daniel Burns of Ithaca and Brian Hynes of Brooklyn, began on February 28th with jury selection, and ended after 11 pm on March 2nd with all defendants acquitted. They were tried before Judge David Gideon on charges of trespass and 2 counts of disorderly conduct, all violations, and on misdemeanor charges of Obstructing Governmental Administration (OGA).

Two others, Bev Rice of Manhattan and Julianne Oldfield of Syracuse have yet to be tried as they have additional misdemeanor charges of violating Orders of Protection. It is ironic that these two women, both over 70, will be facing an additional charge for approaching Hancock Air Base due to an order protecting the Colonel who runs it.

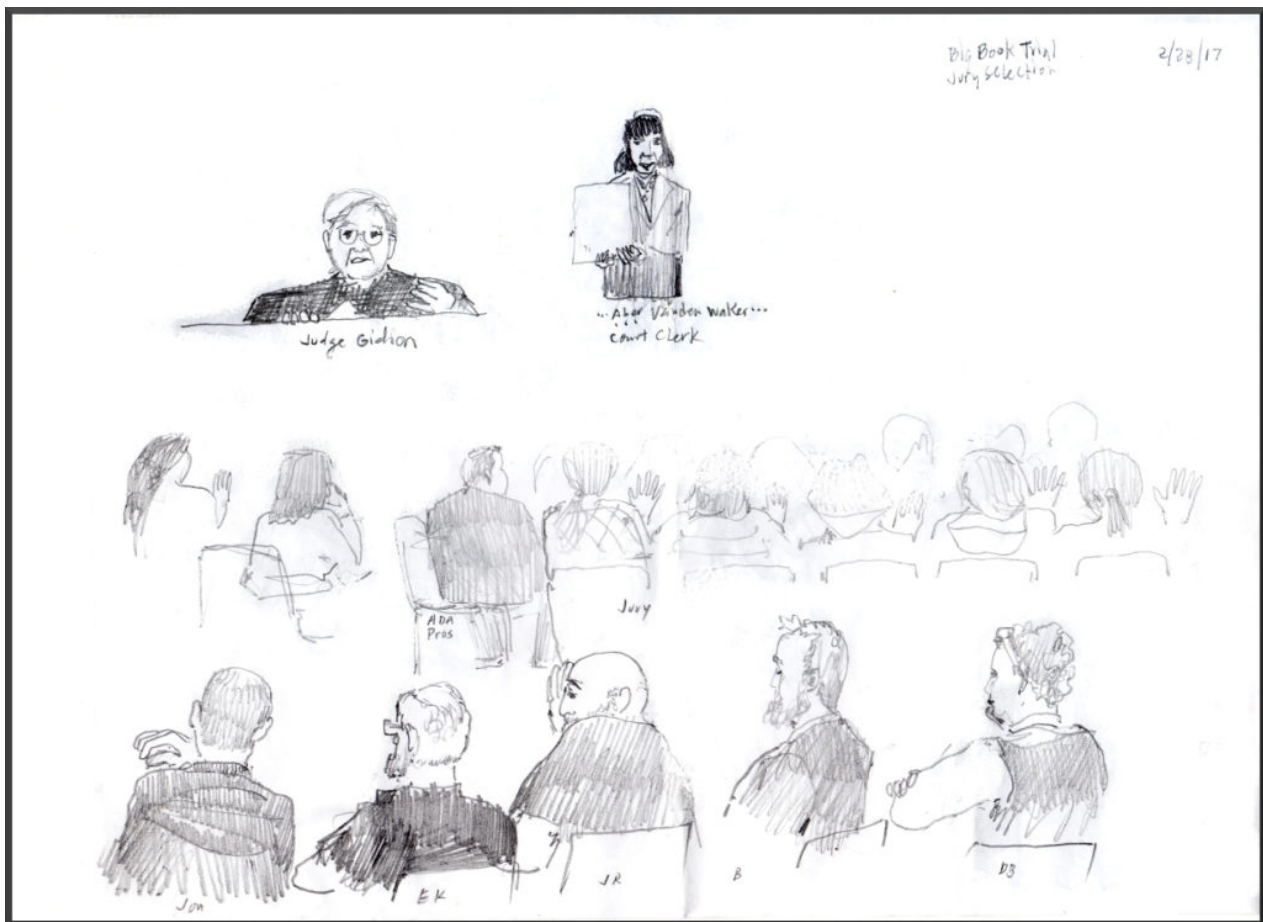
James Ricks and Brian Hynes were pro se before the court, i.e. they represented themselves in the proceedings, while Ed Kinane was represented by Jonathan Wallace of NYC, and Daniel Burns was represented by Daire Irwin of Buffalo. The defendants met with their lawyers and advisors every day in early to mid afternoon and were in the courtroom from 5pm till after 11pm. The first day, the court proceedings got off to a late start (from the standpoint of the audience) due to general discussions about the instructions that would be presented to the jury.

The following is taken from my notes. My personal comments are in brackets []. Dan's drawings give a visual sense of the courtroom. On the last day, the jury went to deliberate after 10 pm. They were tired and we thought they might be out a long time. After about 15 minutes they asked to have the

charges read to them again. Apparently they don't get written copies of them (how weird is that?). Less than 10 minutes after they went out again, they came back with the verdict. By now it was after 11 pm. Everyone was exhausted and we were expecting the worst. It was so uplifting to hear the charges recited one after another for each defendant, and the Jury Forperson respond "Not Guilty". Wow!

**So, here is how it happened:**

## ———— Tuesday: Jury Selection ————



The Jury pool between the defense team and the officers of the court.

After a jury pool of some 30 people was admitted to the courtroom and seated, Judge Gideon read several pages of instructions to them. Finally, the first 10 candidates were called up to the jury box for questioning. Judge Gideon again read instructions at some length. He then asked some

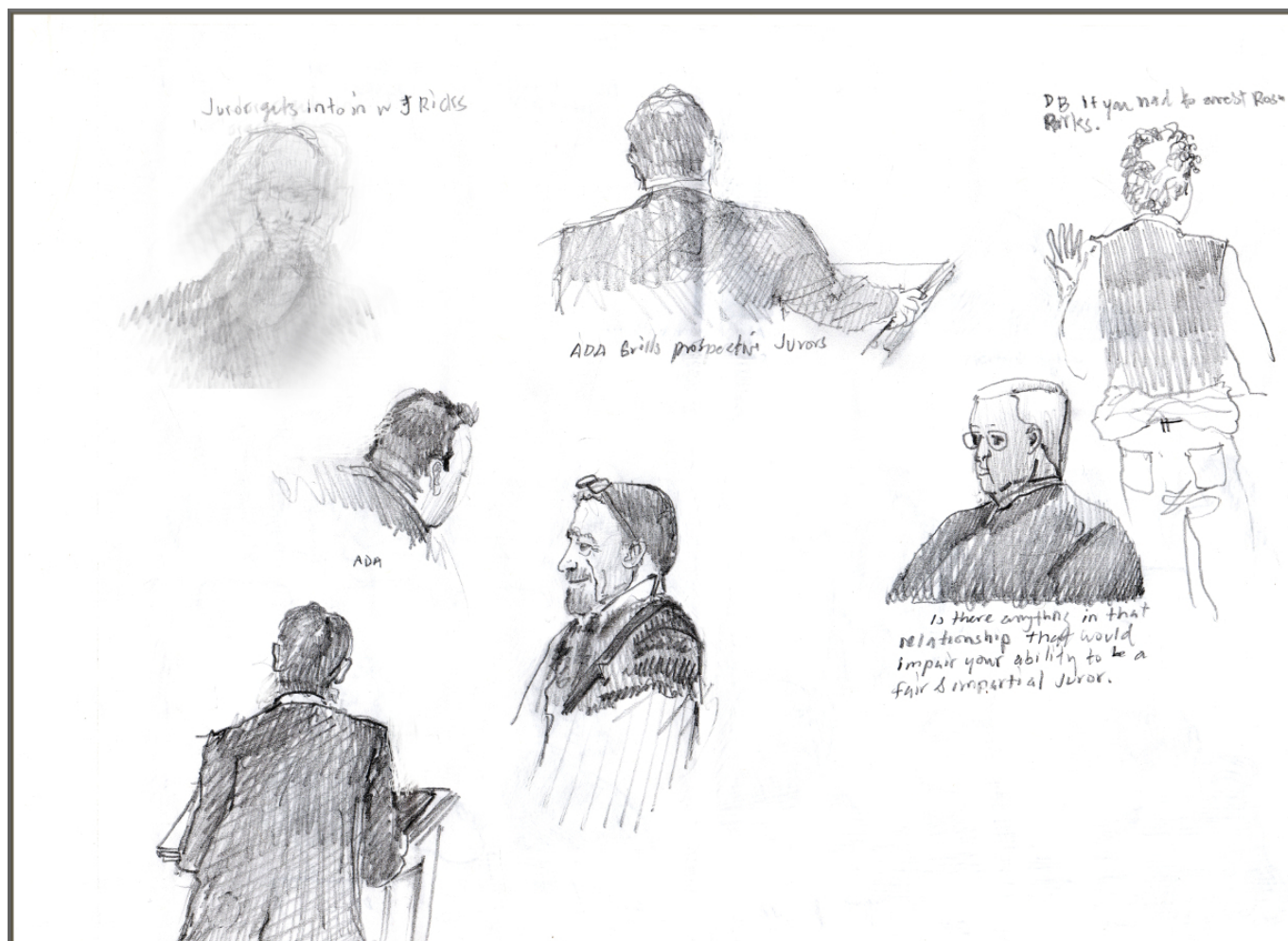
basic questions of the prospective jurors regarding their ability to be impartial before calling on the assistant district attorney (ADA) to present his own questions. Mr. Albert told the jury that there are consequences to one's actions, and asked if they could hold the defendants accountable for their actions. He presented a very broad understanding of 'intention'. He says that the case is simple and he is only going to present one witness. On hearing the testimony of that witness, they can use their common sense to decide whether or not they believe his testimony.

Defense attorneys and pro se defendants now had an opportunity to interview the prospective jurors. Brian Hynes begins by telling them that the facts of the case are not in dispute. There is general agreement on "What Happened". What the prosecution needs to show is that a 'crime' was committed. Over the course of several interviews, the defense team introduced themselves to the prospective jurors and asked them questions about themselves and their lives.

The defense wanted to know how the jurors felt about authority. The defendants have strongly held beliefs but the trial is about their right to express those beliefs. Can you be fair if you disagree? One gentleman became quite confrontational with the members of the defense team. One of the two black women who were brought into the jury pool to increase the diversity approached the bench to speak to the Judge, then left. She apparently had asked to be excused and her request was granted.

They asked about their relations with the military and whether they had ever heard of 'civil resistance'. Did anyone know what it was? Is it ever acceptable to break the law? Notable examples were raised; Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, the Boston Tea Party; strikes. Any union members here? The judge's rules say that each individual should be judged separately but Jonathan emphasizes that all the defendants are

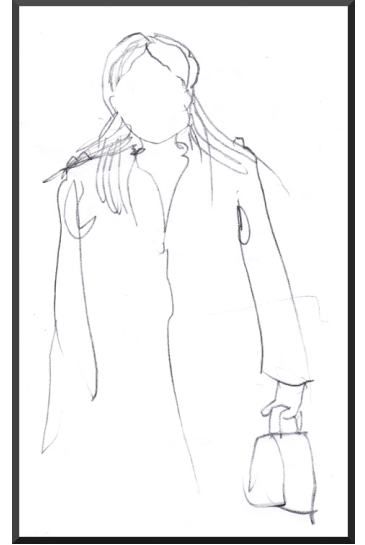
the same, whether or not they have a lawyer. Some will speak more than others, but we 'the defense' don't have to say anything.



James Ricks introduced himself to the jury and asked if they were intimidated by the Judge's recitation of the rules. It was long and complex and somewhat redundant. A woman sitting behind me said that it was the substance a semester class in the first year of law school. James introduced himself and asked the jury whether they felt intimidated by the lengthy (and at times tedious) rendition of the rules "I find it intimidating", he said. There were numerous instances of Judge Gideon reading extensive (and often redundant) instructions to the jurors during the trial. They went on for tens of minutes. I don't know if every judge does this. It seems to me to be one way in which Judge Gideon asserts his authority, although, as he directly states, they

are actually the final arbiters in the case.

The first group was finally considered and four jurors were chosen. Another group of ten were called. Perhaps Judge Gideon heard James because he shortened his recitation of the rules and allowed the attorneys to proceed with their interviews. Jonathon tells them that the prosecutor will try to prove that a crime happened. Are they comfortable understanding that? Midway through this process, a second juror comes forward to



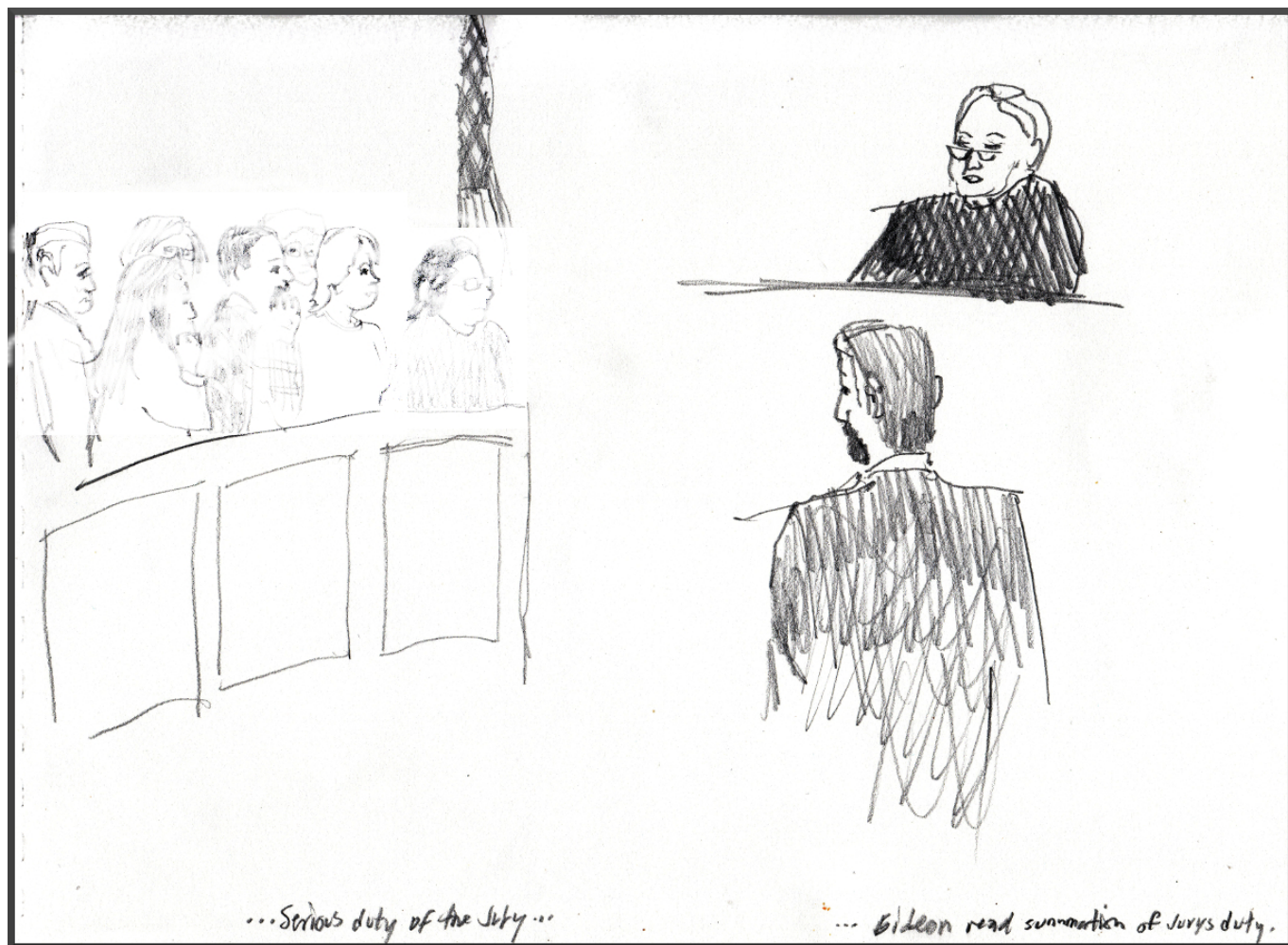
speak to the judge. After a consultation with the attorneys, she returned to the jury box. However, she was not chosen for the jury. Is it possible that two people quit the jury because they could not be impartial? Could it be that neither could see the obvious crimes committed?

Finally, the prosecutor, judge and defense team retired to select the final 2 jurors and an alternate. On their return, the entire jury was convened, and Judge Gideon once again read at length from the document on his desk stating the rules and responsibilities of jurors.

## ----- **Wednesday: The Trial Begins** -----

Judge Gideon reads the rules to the Jurors.



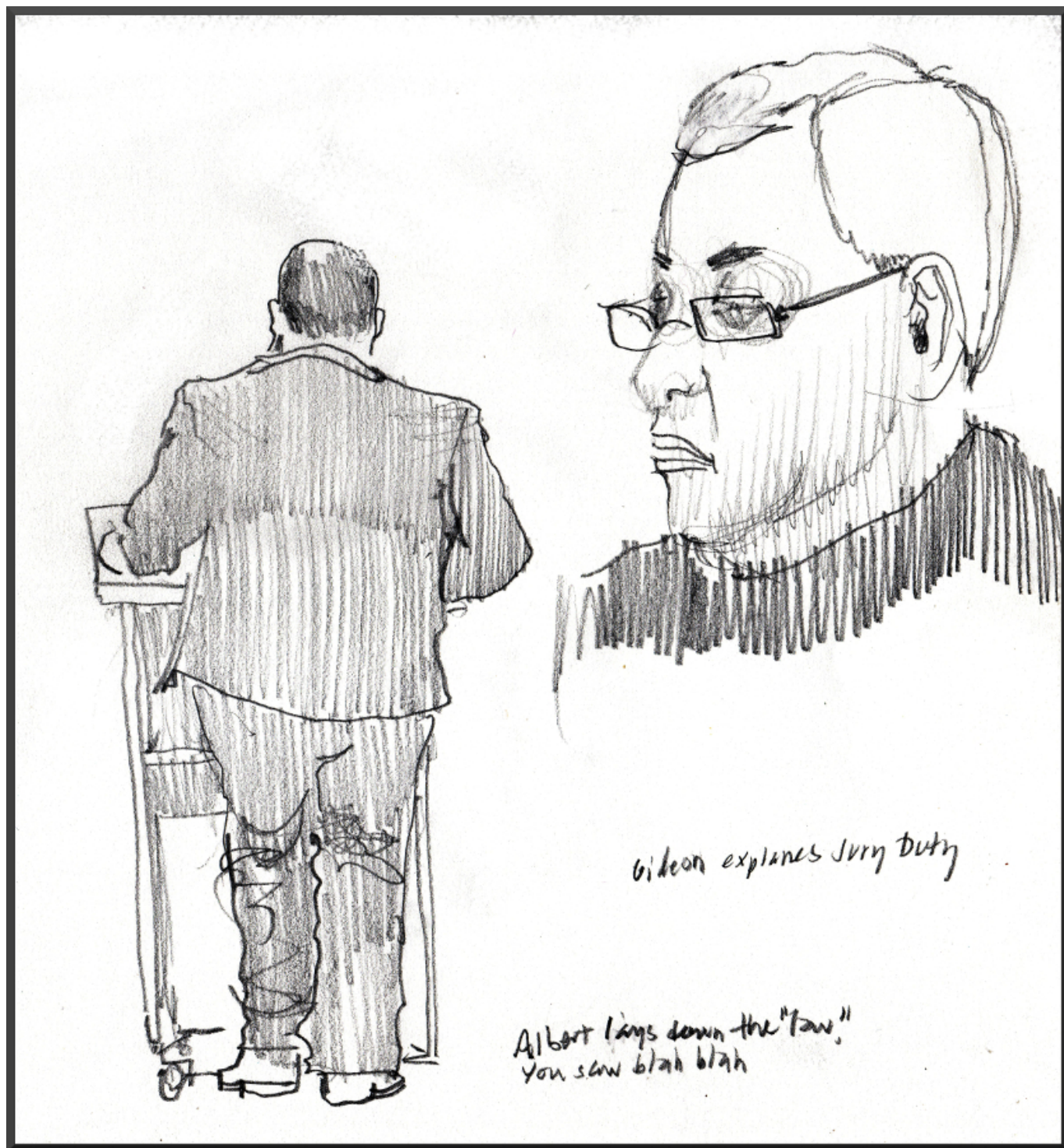


## Opening Remarks

Prosecution is up first. Mr. Albert says he will provide a 'roadmap' of the case. He describes what happened. He is confident of his description of the crimes committed, which he presents in ordinary words that are subtended by a lot of assumptions about the context. The protesters blocked the entrance to the base for over an hour. They didn't cross the street when asked to do so. He says that the case is about the 'law' not about 'beliefs'. The case is not complicated and he will call a witness who is responsible for security at the base to explain events.

Protesters come to the base twice a week, and there are normally no arrests as they abide by the restrictions. He neglects to mention that they are the same protesters who are here in court today for not abiding by those restrictions.





Mr. Albert welcomes the burden of proving the facts of the case beyond a reasonable doubt. Not complying with instructions from an individual in authority is disorderly. Standing on base property is trespass, no matter that they were outside a ten foot fence topped with barbed wire and in an area generally associated with an easement. The presence of the protesters caused a nuisance for base personnel thereby obstructing Governmental Administration.

## Brian Hynes Opens

Brian begins by saying that this case is not like a typical courtroom drama on TV which begins with a crime scene. The police have to figure out what happened and apprehend a perpetrator. Then there are accusations and denial; finally a verdict. That is not the case here. The prosecutor and the defendants agree on the facts. The question is whether what happened violates the law or upholds the law. The verdict is not a determination of what happened. Exercising our right to defend ourselves is an extension off what we began at the base.

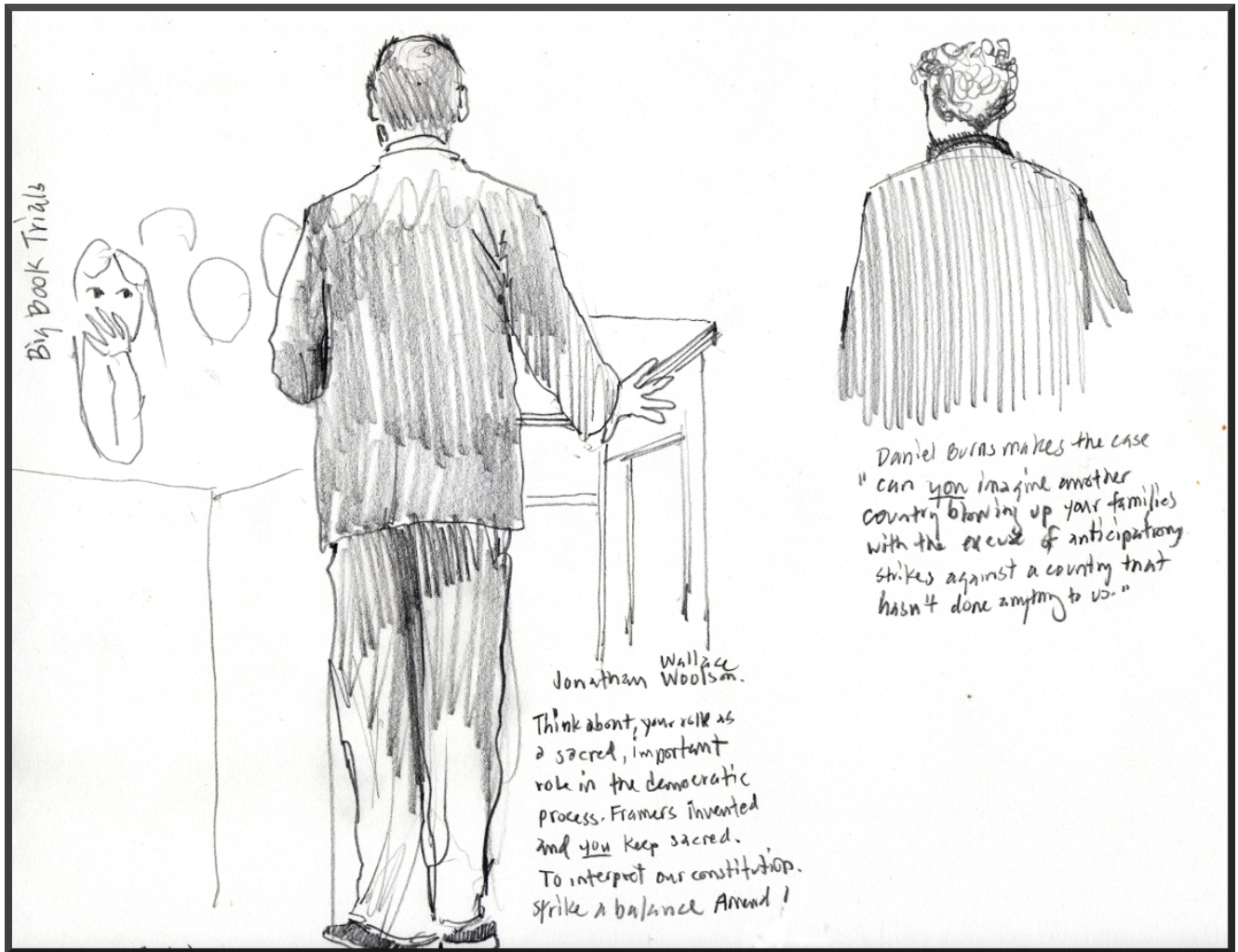
All of these codes take place within a context. We brought information about that context to the base. that context supersedes all of these other laws you have heard about.

Among the Big Books brought to the base were Dirty Wars, Living Under Drones, The United Nations Charter which was ratified by the US Congress. The preamble to the UN Charter begins:

*"WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED  
to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,  
which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to  
mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human  
rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in  
the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and  
small, and to establish conditions under which justice and  
respect for the obligations arising from treaties and  
other sources of international law can be maintained, and  
to promote social progress and better standards of life in  
larger freedom."*

The protest we began at Hancock Base was constitutionally protected speech. ***This trial is not about a protest. It is a protest.*** It is a sustained, disciplined, nonviolent protest that you are now a part of.





## Brian Hynes and Daniel Burns Opening

After 16 years, the War on Terror has become an open ended search and destroy against civilian militants that kills 9 unintended civilian victims for every target. We are caught up in a crisis of policy which none of us is completely responsible for, but none of us can fully escape responsibility. We fight by legal means to restore our government function to the law.

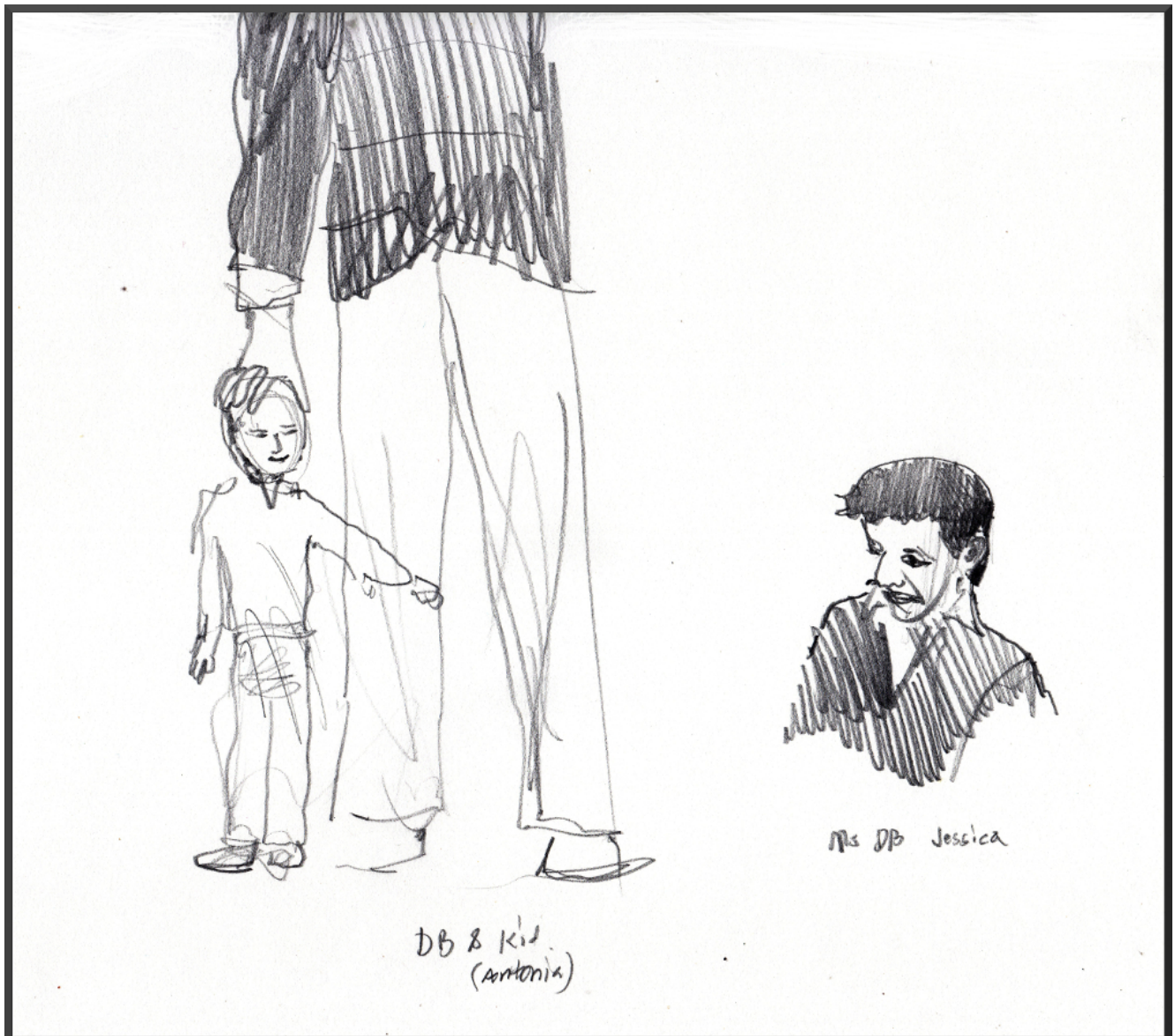
## James Ricks Opens

He greets the jury and shares that he has Native American ancestors. He said "I find it hard to be charged with trespassing on land that has been basically misappropriated. After crimes you committed against my ancestors it is no wonder you do so with such a deservedly paranoid view. He went on to say "The evidence will show

that my co-defendants and myself are innocent of these charges and that the charges are a very thinly veiled smokescreen to divert attention from the real concerns and reasons that we were there that day, that they are committing war crimes on that base."

## Daniel Burns Opens

He said "This is a case about the killing of people, women, children, the elderly . . ." He said "This is a case about citizens' obligation to stop war crimes." He said "This is a case about hope for a better world and the responsibility we have to one another . . ."



Daniel with his wife and daughter

He said, " I nonviolently upheld domestic and international law. Drone war is premeditated murder, which we all know is illegal. Drone killings . . . violate the ban on assassinations and they violate the policy that due process be granted before deprivation of life. They not only violate US state and federal law, they violate the military code of conduct and they violate international law. Since 1986 it has been illegal for US agents to assassinate people in other countries". Gerald Ford Signed a Presidential Executive signed disallowing assassination, which was later affirmed by Ronald Reagan.

Daniel quoted article 2 of the United Nations Convention which says that it is illegal to use armed force except in self defense, and even then only in a manner proportional to the attack you are confronting and not punitive in nature. Furthermore, he said that the UN Charter says that if you know your country is committing a crime and you do nothing to try and prevent it, you are guilty before the law. "The US is not in authorized [by the United Nations] combat in Pakistan, Somalia or Yemen. Therefore it is illegal to kill there. " The US government justifies these actions as anticipatory self defense. Would the United States allow this on our territory?

## **Jonathan Wallace Opens**

Jonathon began by telling a story that is related in both the old and new testaments of the Christian (and Jewish) scriptures. This is the story of the rejected stone that eventually becomes the cornerstone of the structure. The stone is initially rejected because it is different, and only used when all other options fail. It proves to be strong and stable. New ideas take time to be heard but they carry us forward.

Jonathan tells the Jury he is interested in speech. He says, "What you are doing is the cornerstone of our legal

system.” He says “Words that seem to have an obvious meaning may not. Think about the meaning of words.” “The trial isn’t about what Mr. Albert says or what I say. It is about your beliefs [understanding]. You may have to decide what a ‘lawful order to disperse’ is.”

The defendants mocked up Big Books to communicate a message to government officers and staff at the base. They presented a new stone. Was there a lesser way for the government to respond to this attempt to communicate? Whether you agree with their message or not, the first amendment guarantees that:

*“Congress shall make no law [] abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”*

Jonathan told the jury “You are not expected to become androids for jury process, but to bring your own experiences to the process; to bring that humanity to your determination. If you find one of the pieces of the law missing then maybe you have to acquit – or not. Do you need all the parts to convict? The judge will inform you. [you do] ” There is an old saying: “I disagree with what you say but I will fight to the death for your right to say it. That may be this instance.”

## --- Testimony ---

### **The Prosecution calls Chief Master Sargent Michael Ramsey**

Chief Master Sargent Ramsey has been at Hancock Air National Guard Base since 1991. The point wasn’t made, but he had just returned from deployment to Iraq in Operation Desert Storm at the time. In April of 2001, just before 9/11, he became Chief Master Sargent.





In his testimony, Chief Ramsey described the front gate at Hancock base on East Molloy Rd as the primary point of entry and exit used by both civilian and military traffic. He said there is lots going on at the base beyond the drone related activities of the 174th Attack Wing. It is the Headquarters of NY State National Guard and the initial processing location for recruits in all branches of the military.

He said that there is an easement of about 60' from the center line between East and Westbound lanes on East Molloy Road. There is a blue line at the end of the access road, though it is unclear what it designates. At least in some cases it has acted as a 'property line'. There are 2 other gates on either side of the base, one on Thompson Rd and the other on

Townline Road. These gates are normally not open except for some deliveries. There is also access to the base through Syracuse Hancock International Airport which shares some facilities with the base.

When Chief Ramsey became aware of the protesters along the road outside the front gate, he had the gate closed and the Thompson road gate opened. The process for opening the side gate takes 10 – 15 minutes. He also deployed security officers to greet vehicles that entered the turning lane on East Molloy road and redirect them to the Thompson road gate. He said that he closed the gate immediately for the protection of the protesters. It would be dangerous for them to go through the gate into the base.

On March 19, 2015, the protesters arrived around 9 AM, and removed the Big Books from a U-Haul, placing them in locations across the bottom of the access road.

They were in the road for about an hour before he pressed them to move. He didn't ask them to leave immediately as he was waiting for enough local police to arrive to arrest them individually one to one. There is an agreement in place that outside the gate that surrounds the base property is the jurisdiction of the local authorities and not the military authorities. He did go out and speak with them. He wanted to make sure they were on an even keel and that they were aware that they were on base property.

The second time he spoke with them he addressed each individual personally and offered him or her the opportunity to cross the road and join the other protesters. He told them that if they did so, they would not be arrested. Mr. Albert asks whether anyone on the other side of the road was arrested. Ramsey replies "No".

Mr. Albert shows clips of video from the base security cameras so the jury can see the actions of the protesters. There are



7 – 10 people standing between the Big Books in the access road, and a group of people on the shoulder of the road across the street holding signs. People cross back and forth across the street periodically and base personnel walk among the protesters and into the road. The Books are light so, when cars drive up them on exiting the base, they move the Books and allow them to pass.

Chief Ramsey identifies the defendants in the courtroom as the protesters he spoke with that day recognizes them by name, but in the listing he has made of the video, mapping events to time-stamps, the protesters are referred to as 'protester 1', 'protester 2', etc. not identified by name. He says he told them that if they don't cross the street they will be arrested. You can see him in the video walking from one person to the next but there is no sound. Finally, we see law enforcement officers arrive and arrest the protesters, knocking over the Books as they approach them.

There is a second video that shows events along East Molloy Rd. You can see the blue line at the end of the access road on the left and Chief Ramsey says that the line demarcates the property line. I find myself confused because he previously stated that the property line is at the double yellow lines in the center of East Molloy Rd. In any case, on the left side of the line is base property. Master Sgt. Ramsey says the town has given permission to the base for exclusive ownership to the left of the blue line. There is a Big Book on the blue line, and there are people to the right of the line. After a while the Books are moved inside the blue line, i.e. to the left of the line.

The blue line interests me. Base personnel have given inconsistent definitions of the property line at different trials over the years. Common sense does not suffice to bring understanding. The base is surrounded by a ten foot fence with two feet of barbed wire at the top, and there is a Guard Shack next to the opening which is manually closed by a

rolling gate. It isn't surprising that the base claims the property to the road since that is normal. The grassy area along side the road is usually an easement so that work can be done on and pedestrians can pass by.

This was the assumption by everyone at our first couple of protests. Then, suddenly, we found out in court one day that the base owns the property to the center of the road; and the easement is not viable in certain cases. Two years ago, Mary Anne Grady Flores was sentenced to a year in jail for standing in the west bound lane (on the same side of the base) of East Molloy Rd. taking photos. She walked back and forth across the street and at one point her shadow touched the blue line. But, when the final warning came (as it always does) she crossed to the opposite shoulder of the road and then left the scene.

So, after the discussion of what happened, facilitated by the video, Daire Irwin was the first to cross examine Master Sgt. Ramsey.

## **Daire Irwin's Cross**

Daire asked Chief Ramsey if he was trained in New York State law. He said the he was not. His job was base security. He then asked him some questions about the function of the base. Ramsey said it was responsible for both weaponized and surveillance Reaper UAVs. Daire asked for a clarification. A UAV, and unmanned aerial vehicle is another name for what is commonly called a 'drone'. Ramsey said that he isn't a member of the 174th. He is in charge of base security and law enforcement. He knows that they fly Reapers locally to Fort Drum and back but he isn't privy to their mission briefing. That information is classified in any case.



Daire showed Chief Ramsey photos of the demonstrators holding signs with words on them and of the Big Books they brought to the base. He asked him what the protest was about. Ramsey said he didn't know exactly. They don't like the drone mission. He was dismissive of the details. He said he lets people talk, but he doesn't necessarily stop this or that protest unless the protesters are on base property. Did he notice what any of the books were? They are representations of actual books.

Daire shows him photos of the books, The Constitution, The

United Nations Charter, Dirty Wars, Living Under Drones and You only Die Once. Was he familiar with Article 6 of the Constitution? It says that treaties signed and ratified by congress become the “supreme law of the land.” Ramsey didn’t seem certain. “Are you sworn to protect the Constitution?” Daire asked.

Chief Sgt. Ramsey did not remember many details about the books but he said that he is familiar with “Dirty Wars”. “Dirty Wars”, a book by Jeremy Scahill, describes the brutal actions of JSOC (Joint Special Operations Command Units) and Drones in Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia. Did he know about the many civilians killed by drones? About the American citizens killed by drones? They include a 16 year old boy from Colorado.

Daire further questioned the fact that the gate was closed on the arrival of the protesters to ‘keep them off the base’. Would the closed gate not be a visual barrier to those who wish to enter? The protesters were letting people out. There was no clear reason to believe they would not also allow cars and deliveries to come in. However, no cars approached the protesters and asked to be allowed to pass. No car was deliberately barred from entry by the protesters. Ramsey concurred that the protesters were courteous and cooperative except that they did not leave when asked to do so.

The hour or so of the demonstration passed while waiting for local police to show up to clear the driveway including the right of way and easement up to the blue line. Even so, to his knowledge no deliveries to the base were missed and no one was absent from work. He checked. Local law enforcement decides what the charges will be. They typed up Chief Ramsey’s statement together.

## **Jonathan Wallace’s Cross**

Chief Ramsey is in charge of security for the entire base,

of the 300-500 people who work there, about 30 work for him. Asked for a clarification, Ramsey said the blue line is a 'Stop Line'. The gate is visible to approaching cars on East Molloy Rd. Eleven local police and five or six base personnel were involved in the arrest. Did the anyone request that the protesters move the books? No.



Jonathan Cross Examines Chief Ramsey with Jessica and Daire looking on.

Members of base security tell people not to go through or past the protesters as the contact may cause a confrontation. No protesters at any time interacted with the vehicles. The gate is closed to make certain the protesters won't try to get into the base. The drivers do not interact with the protesters or vice versa. The scene is managed.

Jonathan says that other protests occur at other times where people chain themselves to fences or to one another and create blockades that take hours to dismantle. Chief Ramsey says these protesters don't do anything like this. Ramsey estimates he has attended about fifty demonstrations at the base. They were all nonviolent events. At some demonstrations the protesters stay on the far side of the road and don't cause any trouble at all.

Jonathan asks what Governmental Functions did the protesters interfere with? Ramsey says it is "Keeping traffic open in the driveway". Interesting. At some trials there were serious clarifications about whether it is a driveway or an access road. It seemed to matter. In this moment it clearly doesn't.

The prosecution rests.

Mr. Albert asks if Chief Ramsey can stay in the courtroom now that he has testified. Of course. He always attends our trials.

## ———— Motions ————

The jury retired. Mr. Albert had no motion. **Jonathan Wallace** made a motion to dismiss all charges. He said that the prosecution did not prove all of the necessary elements of OGA. OGA is a misdemeanor, but in this case the specifics are redundant with the violations. He says "It wasn't the intention of the legislature to have violations automatically elevated to misdemeanors" with no additional elements. He goes on to say that the OGA charge requires that physical force is involved. The law specifically requires 'intimidation, physical force and interference'. "Ramsey", he says, "informed us of the opposite. " There is nothing to escalate out of the level of a violation.





He goes on to say that the disorderly conduct charge doesn't stand up. There was no intent to obstruct. It seems like the base is vested in the game. The protesters should not show up and they should be obedient. No effort was made to avoid a confrontation or to receive the message. There is no evidence that anyone was impacted by the actions of the defendants. Every element is missing.

Finally, with regard to the trespass charge, Ramsey did not place everyone at the scene. He recognized the people here, but didn't remember who was there until he saw them in the video to refresh his memory. Without Lt. Dailey here (the local policeman who was in charge at the scene) there is no

specific enough description of a lawful order to disperse to satisfy the charge. Chief Ramsey spoke with the protesters, but he does not have jurisdiction outside the fence.

He further asserted that the blue line has no legal standing. It seems more like a 'stop line' than a property boundary. Ramsey had conceded this point. There was no intent on the part of the protesters to cause inconvenience, annoyance or alarm. The principal intent was to communicate. They were cooperative and peaceful.

There is no claim that the protesters obstructed pedestrians. But the disorderly charge states that they obstructed traffic and pedestrians.

The disorderly conduct charge requires that people congregate in a public space therefore is inconsistent with trespass. There was no 'lawful order' by the police and no testimony that Ramsey is the police.

With regard to the First Amendment, the reaction of the government has to be narrowly tailored to a significant government interest in creating an appropriate channel of communication. This is needed for the trespass charge, but was not proven. The arrest did not allow ample alternative for communication. It was not in the government's interest to take no action other than to arrest the protesters. "First Amendment rights must be protected!"

All of the defendants joined in this motion.

**Daire Irwin** argued a motion to drop the charge which required warnings by the police. There was no testimony by the Sheriffs department and it was not proven that there were multiple warnings by members of the sheriffs department.

Jonathan's motion was rejected but Daire's was upheld and one count of disorderly conduct was dropped. Judge Gideon (and perhaps all court officials) likes narrow technical arguments.



## The Defense Opens with Witness from James Ricks

James begins by explaining that the birth of his young grandson was a seminal moment for him as an activist and a black man. The same year, a black man named Sean Greenwood was killed under suspicious circumstances by a white police man in Ithaca. The two men had attended high school together and had a history of poor relations. Even so, no charges were brought against the man who killed Sean Greenwood. The killing was ruled 'accidental' by an internal police department inquiry. James was concerned for the kind of world his young grandson, Hassan, would live in. Eight year old Hassan was in the courthouse with his mother for the duration of the trial.

James then attended a meeting with drone activists where he learned that people in several countries were being assassinated by US drones on a daily basis. Not only were the targets not given due process, but in most cases significant numbers of innocent civilians who happened to be in the vicinity were killed with them. Drone deaths are never accidental. They are planned. The deaths of innocents are factored in as 'collateral damage'.

James read the United Nations Charter to find out what it had to say about these killings. The UN Charter, Article 2 states the following:

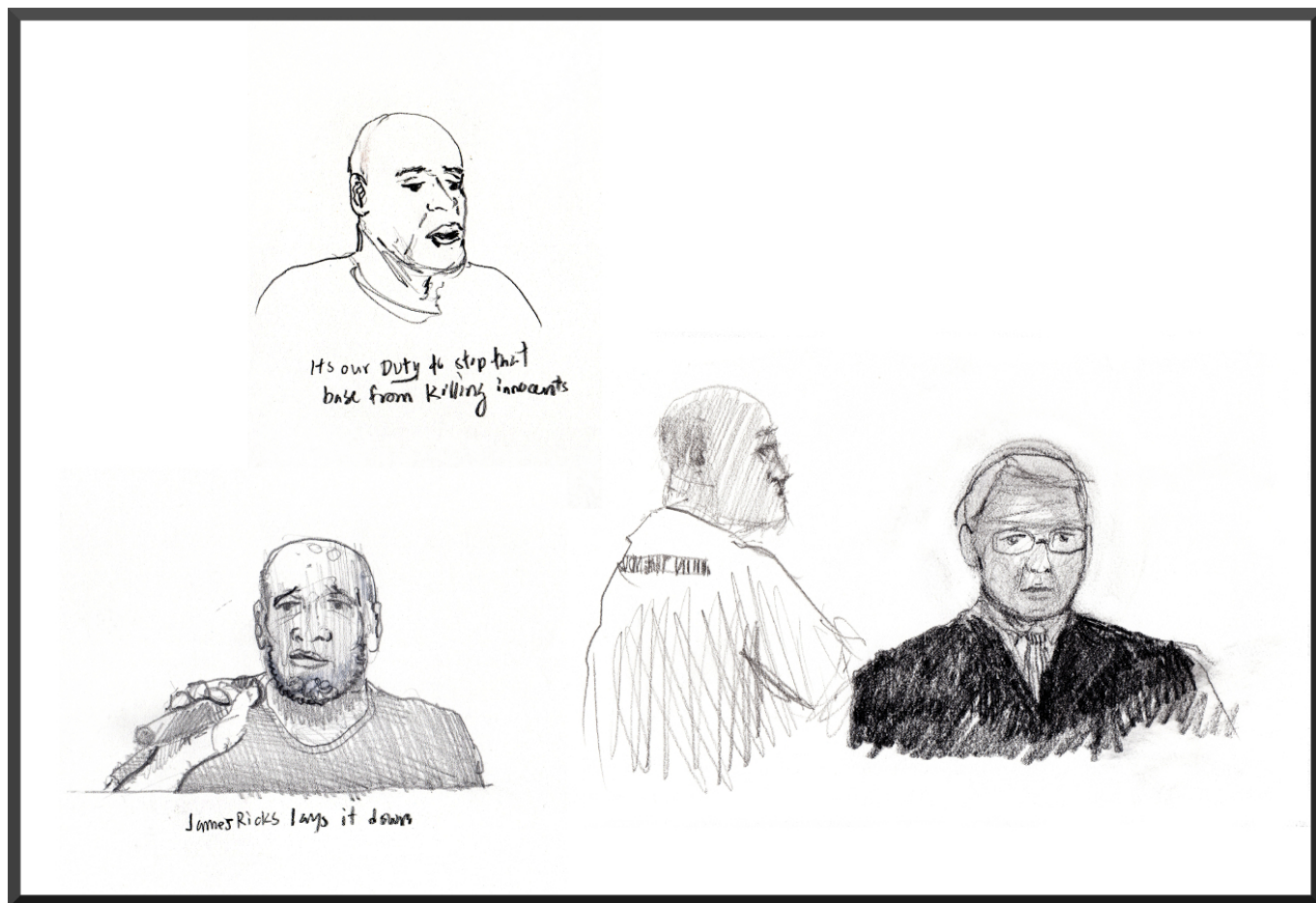
- 1. All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.*
- 2. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations*

and

*1. Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter*

According to Article 6 of the U.S. Constitution, violating the U.N. Charter, legally signed and ratified by the U.S. government is a violation of the Constitution. Corruption in our government has allowed powerful forces to cross the threshold. The law exists to protect the vulnerable.

James talked about his trip to Pakistan and Waziristan in 2012. He met Karim Khan there. Karim Khan is a well educated journalist from Waziristan. His younger brother and his teenage son were killed by a drone strike on his house. Karim Khan has spent time in Texas. He loved America, but now he is better. James held up a photo of Karim Khan with photos of his dead brother and son.



Military attacks without United Nations Security Council approval are going on in Hancock base. They are committing war crimes on the base. We have tried to present an indictment accusing the chain of command of these crimes but it was rejected. It is the chain of command that he holds responsible and not the enlisted men working on the base. However, he said, "it is our duty to stop that base from killing innocents".

James also pointed out that the military base, because it is directly engaged in acts of war makes the base and the local community a war zone, i.e. a legitimate target for retaliation.

**—— Thursday: More Witness Testimony, Closing and Verdict ——**

## **Mr. Albert Cross Examines James**

I didn't record the questions but James made the following points during cross examination:

He has tried repeatedly to deliver the indictment.

The base is committing war crimes in violation of the U.N. Charter and the Constitution of the United States.

He understands that Chief Ramsey has to do his job. He likes Ramsey because he once compassionately escorted James' friend Louis across the road. However, he does not remember being invited to cross the street on the day of the Big Books protest. He saw the police and thought, "Oh Good! War Crimes are being committed on the base. " The next thing he knew, his hands were cuffed behind his back.

## **Jonathan Wallace calls Ed Kinane to Testify**

Ed is a Syracuse native who earned his graduate degrees at Syracuse University. He has traveled to foreign countries as a peace advocate with the Peace Brigades, Witness for Peace and Voices for Creative Nonviolence. He has traveled to Afghanistan, Guatemala and El Salvador, Sri Lanka, Iran and Iraq. He spent five months in Iraq with Voices for Creative Nonviolence during "shock and awe". They visited hospitals and saw casualties. He believes that aerial bombardment is a form of terrorism. Thousands of people die. Living in Iraq during this period, he saw the dignity of the Iraqi people under these circumstances.

In the U.S. in 2009, he became aware of the drones at Hancock Air National Guard Base. Reaper drones fly 24/7 over Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen Somalia and other countries. He was disturbed by this understanding that robotic planes controlled from 'here' were responsible for bombardment in these countries. He wrote letters to the editor, published on national and international websites. In 2010, he began

the vigil across the street from the base twice a month. They stand there at rush hour and hundreds of cars pass by.

Our taxes pay for the drones, Ed said. The killing is done in our name. What is it about the drones? This is my home town. We have to protest against the crimes of our government. This was the judgement of Nuremberg. If you know your government is perpetrating war crimes you have an obligation to expose those crimes.

How do drone operations translate to war crimes. Not much information gets out about what the drones are doing from the areas where the strikes occur. There is not much reporting going on. The military is secretive.

We have a tableau at the New York State Fair every year. We try to show the destruction that drones perpetrate. We have a drone model we put up, and in front of it, a die-in with people lying on the ground covered with bloody shrouds. We show the wreckage of their homes in the background. People stream by going in and out of the fair. It is educational. People ask 'what is a drone'? 'Do drones save lives?' The answer is 'no'.

Drones are tactically clever but strategically stupid. They can be used as a tool in a context where you can't send regular troops. But they create hostility towards the United States. When families are incinerated it creates hostility towards U.S. people, the U.S, military and U.S. interests. Drones are a cowardly and despicable tool.

Drones are a tool of war. What is the difference between a drone and a battleship. For starters, battleships are not here in New York. Drones are a whole new form of warfare. There is no way to defend oneself. A strike comes from the heavens. You can't even see the drone that launched the strike sometimes. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced out of fear.

Drones implement a kind of warfare that depends on assassination. The United States has laws against assassination. This kind of warfare is not worthy of us. For every 'target', 9 others are killed. Targets are not just named militants. There are strikes targeting patterns of behavior. Men gathering in a meeting; men carrying guns – nearly everyone in these rural areas carries a gun.

Do we know the result of drone warfare? Yes, It is documented. They use double tap strikes. The second strike incinerates rescuers who come to the aid of the victims of an initial drone strike. There are triple tap strikes, where the funeral of the victims is targeted by further drone strikes.

People are very concerned about refugees right now. For instance, there was a protest at Hancock International Airport against those who would reject refugees and about 1000 people attended. Right around the corner, Hancock Base is part of the problem. People have no clue. Hancock Base shares the facilities of the Hancock Airport. It is wrong to expand the use of civilian facilities for warfare. It makes the region a war zone, a legitimate target for retaliation.

We have an organization to support our activism. It is called Upstate Drone Action. Ed goes on to talk a little about the 'Big Books'. He is intimately familiar with their content.

"Living Under Drones" presents research by a team from NYU. They interviewed people in communities that were frequently subject to drone attacks and survivors of drone attacks. The people in these regions live in constant fear.

"Dirty Wars" is a book by Jeremy Scahill that describes actions by the Joint Special Operations Control and by drones in Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia. He interviews many people including survivors and perpetrators. He talks at length to the family of Anwar Awlaki and his 16 year old son

Abdulrahman, both killed by drone strikes in Yemen. What is 'terrorism'? It is violence or a threat of violence towards civilians for political gain. What is 'assassination'? It is killing without due process.

"You Never Die Twice" is another research paper from the human rights organization, Reprieve. It investigates the number of strikes required to kill a particular target and the number of innocents killed along the way – collateral damage. On average four separate operations occurred targeting an individual before he was actually killed (present). Each time, the target was reported as killed and then later found to be still alive. As many as 41 innocent persons were killed in the process of 'taking out' a single target.

Other defendants talked about the United Nations Charter and the U.S. Constitution at length so I will leave that here.



## Mr. Albert Cross Examines Ed

Under cross examination, Ed states that he has been to the base to protest over 100 times. He has, on occasion 'risked arrest' there.

## ————— Closing Remarks —————

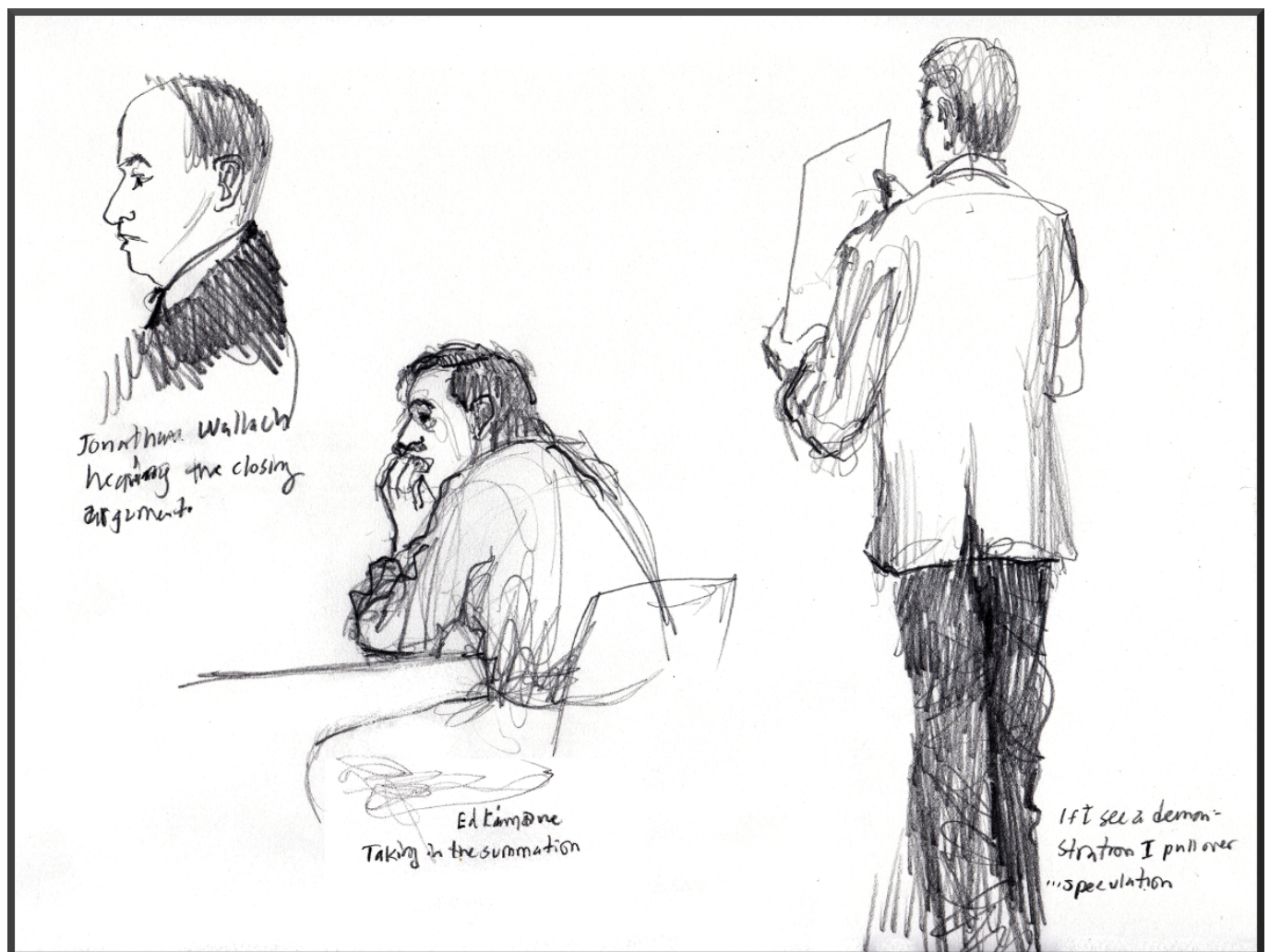
Judge Gideon proceeds to inform the jury that their sworn duty as jurors is to follow his instructions as to the law over the



interpretations of the lawyers and pro se defendants.

## Daire Irwin Closes

Daire tells the jury that all of the defendants are the same. Some did not testify, but that was not because they are any more or less guilty. Testifying is nerve wracking. He tells the jury that they are the most important element of the trial.



He reminds the jury that we talked about the First Amendment and Religious freedom. The defendants were morally and ethically compelled to act as they did. Sunshine is the best disinfectant. The case is not content based. What if it was military appreciation day. They still have to consider the issues of free speech.

The testimony of Lt. Dailey (the responsible police officer)



is missing. Who is innocent? Everybody is innocent until proven guilty. A jury trial is a public trial and is based on the presumption of innocence. The defendants are only guilty if you say they are guilty.

Be true to yourself and follow your conscience. Do what you feel is right.

## Jonathan Wallace Closes:

Every trial is a temporary community. This is a valuable context. We are all in that community, protesters, Chief Ramsey, base personnel, court officials and yourselves. Peaceful demonstrations are not an act of defiance, but an act of cooperation.



The elements of Obstructing Governmental Administration

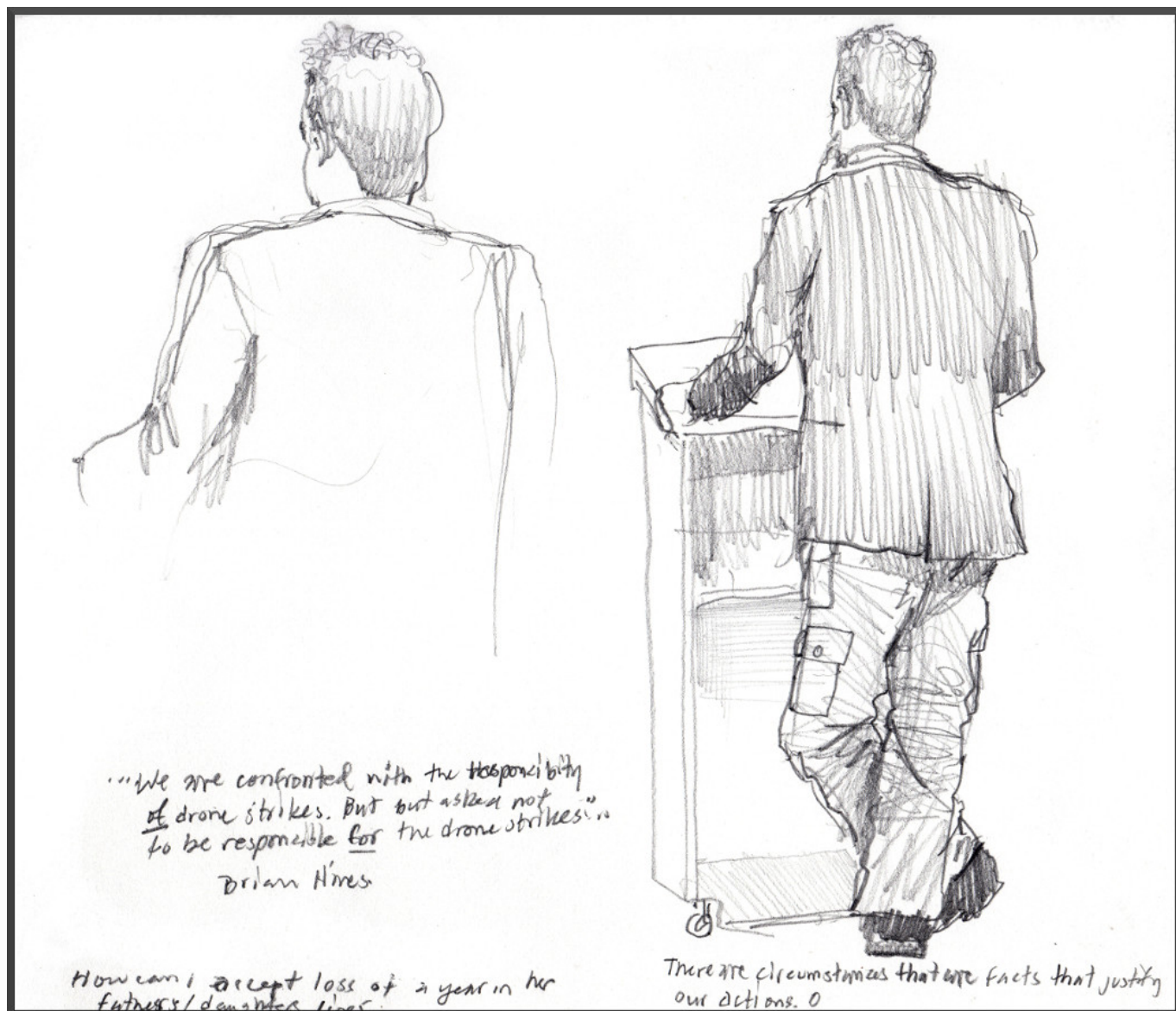
require that the defendants intentionally obstructed, impaired or perverted government function by physical force. There is no proof that these defendants did so. Sometimes words stop thought. The words aren't a crime. Only physical force would be a crime.

With regard to the Trespass charge, the warning was unclear. The elements of the Disorderly Conduct charge require that the defendants stopped vehicular and pedestrian traffic so as to cause alarm, annoyance or inconvenience. It is unclear whether the defendants stopped vehicular traffic and they clearly did not interfere with pedestrian traffic.

Speculation is not evidence.

## **Brian Hynes Closing**

We were Educating the base. Someone has to settle the questions. You the jury are like kings and queens. You can decide whatever you feel is correct. The facts are not in dispute. What you have to decide is the meaning.



There is a circumstance that demands attention. There is no fact that isn't already embedded in some context of meaning. No crime was committed. You are free to respond in a way to what you hear. You have the right to acquit for any reason that appeals to your imagination. The elements given in testimony, drone operations wreak havoc on our neighbors, drive recruitment of enemies and traumatize operators. The protesters symbolically closed Hancock. [This is the difference between 'civil resistance' and 'civil disobedience'. ]

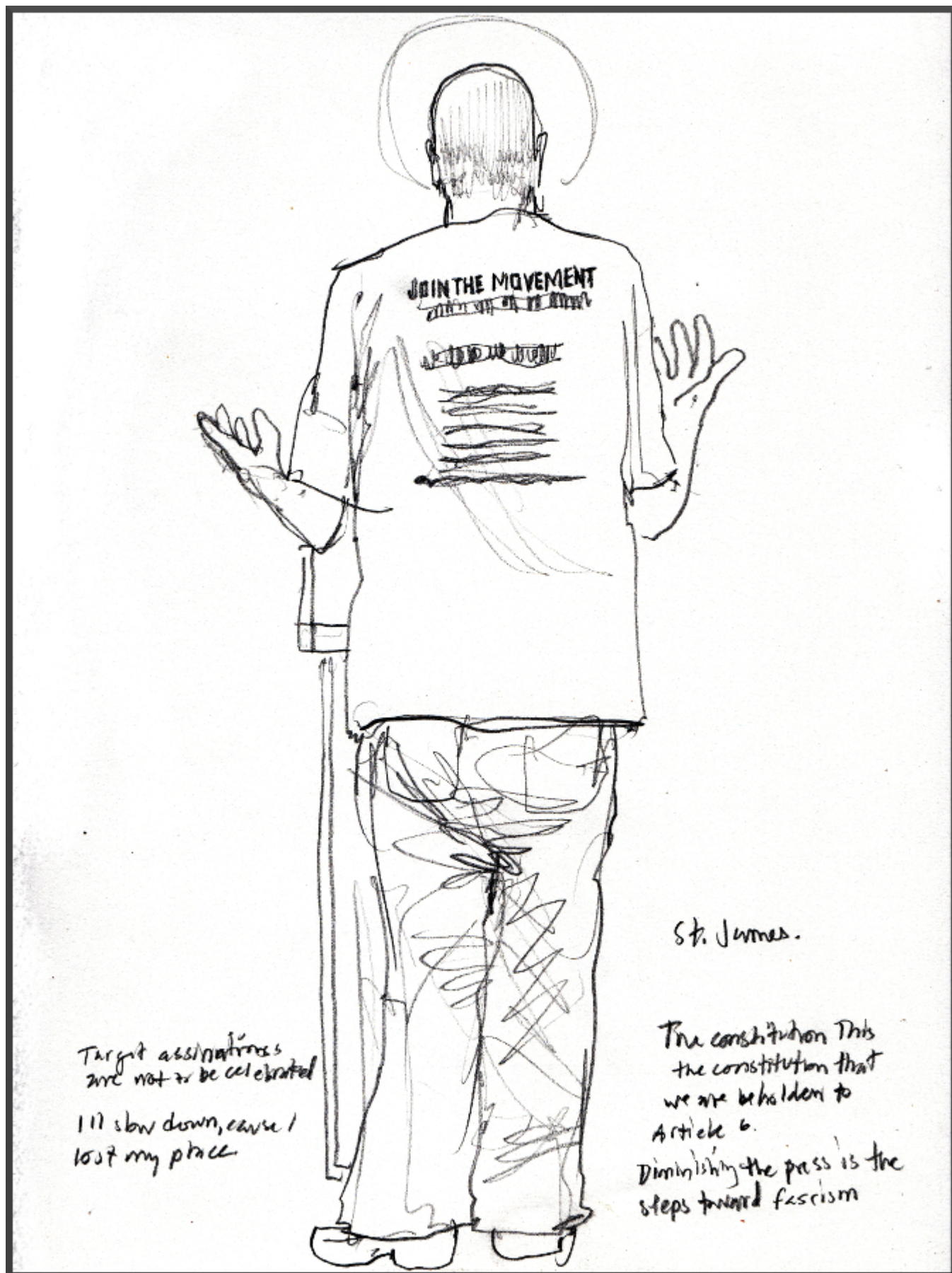
## James Ricks Closing

You can't yell 'fire' in a crowded theater. But what if the building is really on fire".

We each took an oath of nonviolence before going to the protest. We do this every time we have a demonstration. We came to deliver an indictment. War crimes are being committed on the base in violation of the U.N. Charter and the U.S. Constitution. It would seem that these words and these documents are meaningless. There is a need for oversight and accountability on the part of our government.

James saw the truth of drone strikes when he visited Pakistan and spoke with drone victims.



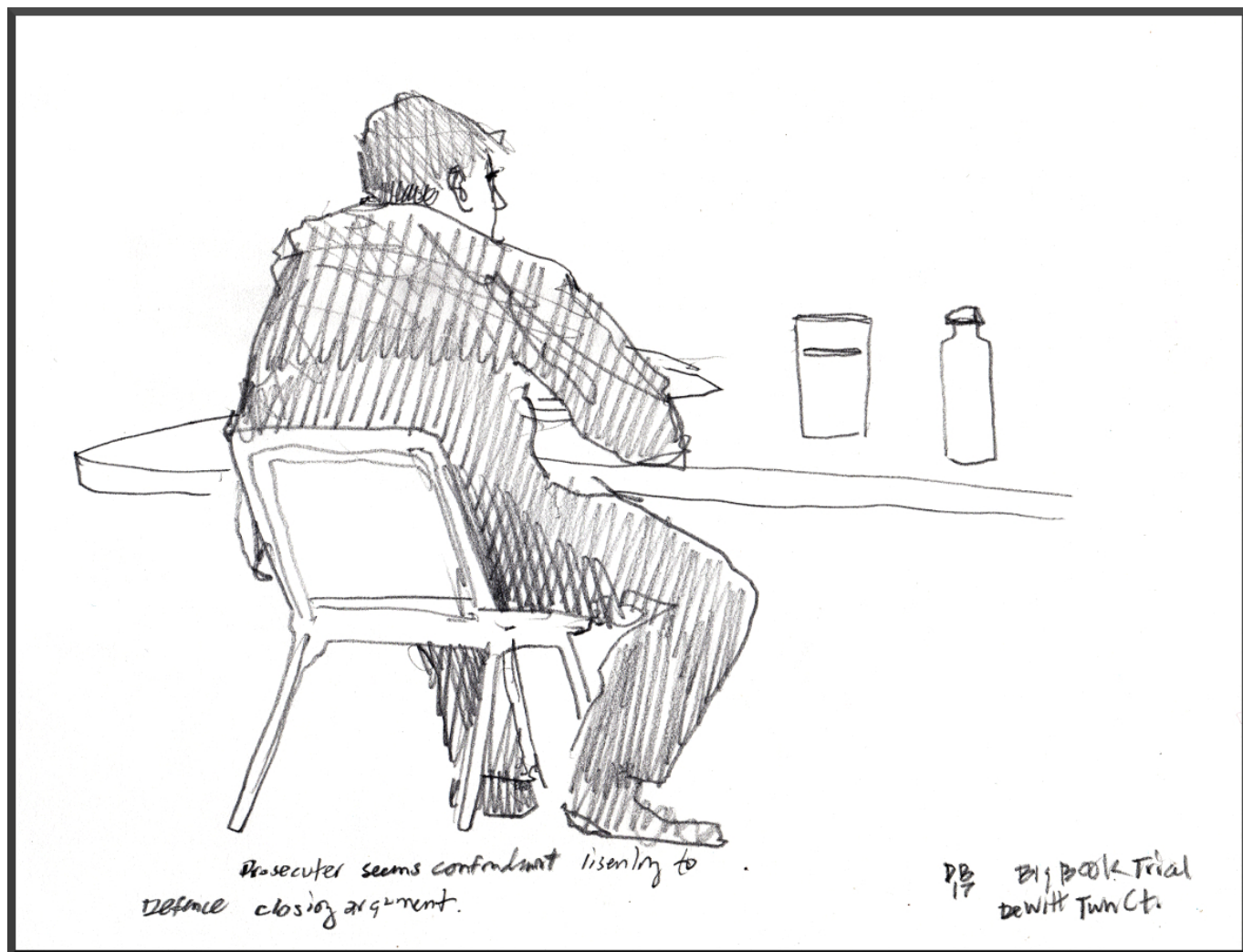


I don't want my country celebrating the death of any living being. Secret justifications of what appear to be illegal

actions are disingenuous. Our government is becoming a law unto itself. Speaking truth to power is troubling and it can be dangerous. Our charges are a diversion from real crimes.

### **Prosecutor Albert Closing:**

Use your common sense. You saw with your own eyes. Listen to the Judge's instructions and follow the law.



# **Dead Syrian Children and**




# Drones on the Wing

## Dead Syrian Children and Drones on the Wing

by Judy Bello rePosted from The Deconstructed Globe

Recently the Pentagon admitted to killing two Syrian children in a drone attack last fall when they bombed a group of al Qaeda fighters in the suburbs of the Syrian city of Aleppo. Someone from the press asked me if I thought this was a sign of increasing transparency. A few of my remarks were quoted in the ensuing article, which I have linked at the end of this one. What follows is my full response.

Recently the Pentagon admitted to killing two Syrian children in a drone attack last fall when they bombed a group of al Qaeda fighters in the suburbs of the Syrian city of Aleppo. At the time they claimed this group was a critical target because they were high level operatives associated with Al Qaeda who were planning attacks on the United States mainland.. No one that I know had ever heard of this group, but their name, Khorasan, is the name of a province in Iran, which is an odd choice for an Al Qaeda affiliate. So they bombed this small group of 50 or less foreigners, holed up in a suburb of Aleppo, Syria, in a civilian neighborhood in the middle of a war zone, plotting to kill Americans in America. It is a stretch to to wrap the mind around this rather incredible story.,

But, it isn't a surprise that some children were killed in  Syria in a drone strike. In fact, children are regularly killed in U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen and wherever. In 2013, due to a lot of negative attention brought by International Human Rights NGOs an the United Nations on drone killings in Pakistan and Yemen, President Obama produced a document that set standards limiting drone strikes where civilians might be present. Last year, after declaring war on ISIS in Syria and Iraq, he

waived those limits. Soon thereafter, these children were killed by a U.S. drone strike in Syria. The picture is actually of some other children killed by drone strikes in Syria, Now, there is once again discussion of placing limits on drone strikes.


This is all very amusing, but not very helpful. In fact, any kind of military strike likely to harm uncounted (but certain to be present) civilians is a violation of international humanitarian law. The U.S. government wants to bend the definitions to allow us to have these unconventional non-state wars, but it doesn't want to accept the limits that, in old fashioned wars, were enforced by the existence of a battlefield where civilians would not be likely to be present. But we no longer fight under the formal procedures of interstate war which both require and demand boundaries.

✘ War is the name we now use for global policing, which has not boundaries as far as the United States is concerned, but which is governed by international human rights law, which is even more stringent in its protection of civilians than humanitarian law, or the laws governing war.. So, why are we, the people, the dissatisfied populace, the defenders of peace and justice,, asking for transparency rather than justice under the law? Why should we respect fluctuating assertions of compliance or noncompliance by serial violators as new law? The result is an endless buzz of discussion around a line that is already deep in civilian territory and wholly outside the law. No one is safe in a war zone that is not and cannot be defined. Endless dribbles of transparency in a constantly redefined context have no substance.

In revealing the latest transgression, focusing our attention on the deaths of these children and whatever remedies President Obama might choose to put in place, the Pentagon is covering for something larger and creating a cover story that it can use to have an appearance of transparency. The tragic

deaths of these 2 children are just a drop in the bucket of casualties from US airstrikes in countries our leaders wish to control.. When they choose to target groups that are 'bunkered' in civilian areas, even when they are legitimate targets – and that isn't always the case – the strikes are bound to hit civilian targets. This war is not being fought on a battlefield but in the cities and villages of Syria. The fact that these deaths occurred in this brazenly illegitimate context has been forgotten. There are only these children.

At the time these children died, there were other stories in the alternative press about civilian casualties of U.S. strikes in the vicinity of Raqqa. Notably, there were strikes on a grain silo which stored precious food for the civilians living in this desert city, and another instance where a US strike on a compound targeted a Da'ish prison, killing a large number of 'prisoners-of-war' being held by a handful of Da'ish guards. Strikes on Da'ish targets in the city Raqqa were fruitless because Da'ish had abandoned their urban headquarters for civilians neighborhoods in the suburbs of the city. So, armed U.S. drones followed with the expectable consequence of civilian deaths.

Words like 'building' and 'compound' cover up the reality  that the buildings and compounds are homes, schools, places of business and the structures of ordinary social living. Just because the children aren't playing in the street during a war doesn't mean they aren't present. Not every gathering of men is a militia. As I learned in Pakistan, the women we don't see are generally in kitchens attached to the public areas where the men meet, and which are primary drone targets. This war is taking place in the cities and towns of Syrian, not on a battlefield. It is impossible that U.S. military and government decision makers don't know this.

In modern wars, which are largely fought in the cities and villages of someone's country, there is no way to entirely

avoid a vast number of civilian casualties, usually more in number than the combatant casualties. Combatants are paying attention, and often protected by their weapons and armored vehicles and so on. Civilians have no protection. This is one reason why starting and fueling these wars is such a heinous crime.

The Syrian Arab Army and their allies consistently attempt to evacuate the sites of battles before engaging the enemy. They have the information to do this because they are part of the local society. Yet western news sources generally paint them as psychopathic murderers. The US strikes are based on abstract intelligence; video feedback from drones a couple of miles in the air, satellite imagery that can only pick out certain types of physical material and temperature gradients and radio signals, and information provided by spies on the ground who often have agendas separate from US interests. The information is evaluated by people with little understanding of the local context. So that information is not complete and may be very misleading. The guys with the joysticks know this. Their bosses know this. Yet they fire anyway. Who are the real psychopathic killers?

To lessen the risk of civilian casualties the US would have to coordinate with the Syrian government and the Syrian Arab Army and their allies who have reliable information about civilians on the ground. They would also have to rethink some of their surveillance and weapons deliveries. Some percentage of weapons are delivered directly to Da'ish and Jabhat al Nusra forces on the ground, and many more are delivered to areas and organizations they can easily control and co-opt. Then our barbarism could be reduced to the level of the Syrian Arab Army loyal to Bashar Assad, who are doing their best to preserve their county and protect their countrymen.

And yes, other instances have occurred where the United States has admitted deadly errors. This is part of a shell game that engages people to look at small disturbing details while

the broad pattern of abuse remains invisible. People receive apologies and expend their outrage. Such revelations do cause outrage among activists and others, but since it is no mystery to those who are informed, and explained to those who aren't, they do not incite further analysis and discussion. The truth is that The U.S. violates International laws of war and peace on a regular basis, day in and week out, month in and year out, while the world vacillates around a fruitless discussion of transparency, as if the truth is irrelevant until after a liar confesses.



Meanwhile, even as U.S. forces are focused on surveilling these civilian neighborhoods where 'enemy' forces might be set up under civilian cover, they apparently don't take the trouble to surveil areas where these

forces are in the process of vanquishing or have recently vanquished local forces. After pretty much every victory, Da'ish has a celebratory parade, often transporting weapons not only through the city, but across the desert for long distances as they redistribute their resources. Surely these events are visible on satellite surveillance, but none of these caravans have ever been struck by U.S. forces. Also, there appears to be no US surveillance on the Turkish border with Syria or the Israeli border, both of which are the locus of known supply lines for Da'ish and Al Nusra. These facts have been known, literally for years.

Additionally, U.S. proxies are feeding al Qaeda, ISIS and the foreign Jihadis in Syria and Iraq, while the U.S, makes a show of fighting them. What isn't obvious, what the broader citizenry turns away from, is that there would be no necessity of anyone bombing anywhere if the US would focus it's substantial economic and political power on blocking it's allies from supporting these groups it then bombs in the towns

and cities of Syria and Iraq.

Turkey is the middle man, profiting from the sale of Da'ish oil, and also a transit hub for foreign fighters. It allows border crossings to be openly controlled by Da'ish and Al Nusra fighters, who use these crossings as supply routes and for troop movement. Turkey hosts training camps for the incoming jihadis, and there is some indication that the US Base at Incirlik is involved in this project. Foreign fighters fly into Istanbul and can be seen on public transportation in the city as they make their way to the training camps and the Syrian border.

Israel is providing logistical support to al Nusra fighters in the Golan, including supply routes and medical support. Israel also bombs Syrian government sites periodically. They not only bomb government military sites, but recently have attacked Iranian and Hezbollah fighters in the region. Binyamin Netanyahu has been photographed visiting wounded Al Nusra fighters in an Israeli hospital.

Jordan also hosts training camps.

Saudi Arabia and Qatar and other oil rich Emirates have been funding both al Nusra and Da'ish fighters. Qatar has been providing salaries to Syrian Muslim Brotherhood members to induce them to take up arms against their government since 2011. Both countries are home to wealthy donors who fund transportation and payroll for fighters in Syria, and provide weapons and training to them. Powerful satellite news organizations, Al Jazeera and Al Arabia, owned by members of the royal families of Qatar and Saudi Arabia, provide political cover for the ongoing wars and popularize or normalize vicious sectarian points of view.

The US does nothing to contain any of these activities. Instead it supports them with weapons and diplomatic cover.

The tragic deaths of 2 children provide us with a glimpse of a



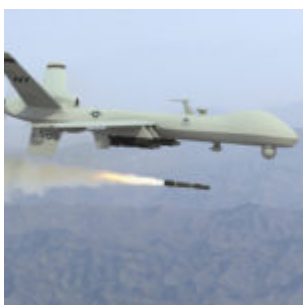
much larger tragedy, The United States and its allies have the Syrian government and the Syrian people enmeshed in a war that they did not initiate, and which they cannot end because it is fueled by an endless supply of men and resources coming from outside the country. Many more men women and children have died in this senseless war to undermine the sovereignty of Syria, and we can expect that they will continue to die as long as those forces continue to prevail in the region.

The U.S. also continues to use weaponized drones for so called targeted killings in civilian areas of countries whose governments we are not at war with, and that includes Afghanistan. Targeted killing target so called 'militants' – if they were 'combatants' they would have some rights under International law – in their homes, mosques and marketplaces where it is unsurprising to find them surrounded by women, children and other civilians who have nothing to do with the so called wars in the context of which they are being targeted.

Sputnik article based on the original interview: US Lacks Transparency on Drone Policty Despite Children's Deaths

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## Export of Armed Drones Approved



The United States government has just eased regulations on selling drones to other countries. According to the New York Times, *"The Obama administration is amending its regulations for weapons sales to allow the export of armed military drones to friendly*

*nations and allies."* In a later article they say that State Department Officials say "*sales must be made through government programs and that recipient nations must agree to certain 'end-use assurances.'*" However, one of the issues that triggered this is loss of contracts from Israel by armed drone manufactures. Israel uses armed drones to police the border and prosecute wars against the people of Gaza.

The first reference that came up was in Al Jazeera. After that there was UNB (Bangladesh), Ntv (India), Dawn (Pakistan), New Europe (EU), WN, (Australia), and more.

Many countries are interested in this opportunity. According to an Editorial in *Barchart*, a Wall Street Blog, 3 Defense Stocks Ride on New Armed Drone Policy. Of course, the money guys are excited about this policy change as well. The policy itself is a response to demands by General Atomics (maker of Reaper and Predator drones), Northrup Grumman and other manufacturers of armed drones who felt they were losing out on lucrative contracts while Israel, China, Russia and others are developing weaponized drones and entering the market.

Now, when you read that the US will be selling armed drones to our friends and allies, you probably think 'England, France, Germany . . . ', our old friends. Leaving aside the fact that one of these countries was the central opponent in the last world war, whose leadership from that period remain the archetype for evil in international dealings, the fact is that our allies include the Gulf Emirates including Qatar, which is the publisher of Al Jazeera, NATO ally Turkey and Saudi Arabia. These latter countries are governed by conservative regimes that are supporting the Islamist insurgencies and driving much of the violence in the Greater Middle East from Lebanon to Pakistan. Will we sell them armed drones?

Perhaps there remain some restrictions on selling armed

drones. But, we are opening Pandora's Box, and when we will find the bottom, no one can know. One thing is certain, all the demons will fly out first.

For another Upstate Drone Report on this subject, read Mickie Lynn's latest blog post in the Albany Times Union, Armed Drones for the World, What a Brilliant Idea!