

Lack of transparency in the CIA and military drone killings

You Never Die Twice: Lack of Transparency in the CIA and Military Drone Killings

By *Mickie Lynn*,

Republished from her blog in the *Albany Times Union*, *Waging Peace*.

This week *Women Against War* and members of several other Capital District peace groups joined in a *Statewide* lobbying initiative of our two Senators, Kirsten Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer, after having to re-schedule our Monday appointments due to the foot of snow and more that fell on the area. Women Against War had already held a [long, productive lobbying meeting on the topic of Weaponized Drones](#) with David Connors, Senator Gillibrand's Regional Director, in October. So we decided to just deliver the excellent packet prepared by the *Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars* to their office.



At the courthouse in DeWitt, NY, May 16, 2014, Ed Kinane, Teresa B. Grady & Mary Anne Grady Flores

But we took the opportunity to set up a lobbying session with Senator Schumer's Regional Director, Steve Mann. In both cases we asked that they pass our information on to the legislative aides in Washington, D.C. It was nice to be part of an effort that visited regional offices all over the state, each delegation creating their own materials to add to the Upstate Drone Coalition's printouts and talking points.



Drones Kill Civilians, banner and signs at Legislative Office Building, photo by Mabel Leon

If you want to read more about our visits to our two Senators, I've written [a detailed report](#) with links to the packets that we distributed, and our local lobbying materials as well. The links to each of the materials gathered by the Upstate Drone Coalition can be read on [their website](#). Since they have been demonstrating for 4 years now and appearing in DeWitt town court where some have been tried and sentenced they have heard many stories about drone killings of civilians that have moved and inspired them. You can read their ["Talking Points"](#) to find out more.



Hancock Air Base Drone Protest, April 2011

In this particular article I wanted to share two documents from their packet that moved me the most and made me *rededicate* my efforts to stop the use of kill lists, secret drone programs, and such indiscriminate targeting as classifying all men of a certain age range as "military targets" or targeting people for death because of their location or behavior – as seen by drone sensors, or the dropping of bombs and missiles on homes, fields, gardens, and other infrastructure where civilians are most likely to be killed while present but unseen or unidentified.



You Never Die Twice: MULTIPLE KILLS IN THE US DRONE PROGRAM”, report by human rights charity, Reprieve.

US drone strikes kill 28 unknown people for every intended target, new Reprieve report reveals

US drone strikes in Yemen and Pakistan have killed as many as 1,147 unknown people in failed attempts to kill 41 named individuals, a [report](#) by human rights charity Reprieve has found. The report looks at deaths resulting from US drone strikes in Yemen and Pakistan between November 2002 and November 2014. It identifies 41 men who appeared to have been killed multiple times – drawing into question the Obama administration’s repeated claims that the covert drone program is ‘precise.’ While the US drone program is shrouded in secrecy, security sources regularly brief the media on the names of those suspected militants targeted or killed in the strikes. Frequently, those individuals are reported to have been targeted or killed on multiple occasions. Reprieve’s assessment is the first to provide an estimate of the number of people – including in some cases children – who are killed each time the US apparently attempts to assassinate a ‘high value target.’ Due to the US Government’s refusal to publish any information relating to the program, or the ‘Kill List’ said to determine its

targets, the analysis is limited to existing, publicly-available data from media reports and The Bureau of Investigative Journalism. [...]

And in the case of high value targets who receive the most publicity and the greatest numbers of attempt to kill them without trials the rate of civilian deaths is even higher for every strike.

***Jennifer Gibson, Staff Attorney at Reprieve who compiled the report, said:** “These ‘high value targets’ appear to be doing the impossible – dying not once, not twice, but as many as six times. At the same time, hundreds of unknown men, women and children are also caught in the crosshairs. President Obama continues to insist drone strikes are ‘precise’, but when targeting one person instead kills **as many as 128 others**, there’s only one conclusion that can be drawn – there’s nothing targeted about the US drone program.”*

This is a very detailed report, footnoted and citing many examples. Some names may be familiar to you from the media. You can read the [complete report here](#). The second article is a letter from an Afghan man whose brother-in-law, and four friends were killed in a US drone strike. His name is Raz Mohammad. I’ve heard his story before because his letter asking for the drone attacks to stop is one that several nonviolent drone resisters have cited as their inspiration to act.



Raz Soeaks out on the use of weaponized drones in Afghanistan

Afghan Peace Volunteer Says Drones Bury Beautiful Lives: Raz Mohammad Interviewed by Kathy Kelly by Hakim and the Afghan Peace Volunteers

January 10, 2013

Raz Mohammad: Salam 'aleikum. I am Raz Mohammad. I'm from Maidan Wardak province and I'm Pashtun.

You can read his interview by Kathy Kelly and see a video [at this website](#) Here's the [text of his letter](#) that so moved and inspired me and many other anti-drone activists:

On Friday the 30th of May, 2008, my brother-in-law was killed by a drone along with four of his friends. My brother-in-law was a student and he was innocent. Accountability from the US Military for this incident was non-existent. The incident created a situation which was beyond imagination. It affected the minds of my sister and all members of my family. When my

nephew was 5 years old, he asked his mother "Where is father?" My sister replied "He was killed by a computer." These negative effects persist on all of us to this day. I am worried for my family and for the people of my village. I request that the United States courts protect my family and my village. Signed by Raz Mohammad, translated by Dr.Hakim in Afghanistan, written 11/25/13,

Framing our Action

As I frame our narrative re last April at Hancock we weren't "dieing-in" or "protesting," but exercising our first amendment right to assemble, speak, and petition our government for redress of grievances. We were stymied in our attempt to deliver our indictment (against illegal activity on the base)...after having – in past gatherings there – apparently failed in our [civil] attempts to communicate with the base commander.

For me our April action was neither "illegal" nor "civil disobedience" – but compliance with international law (Nuremberg Principles). the charge the D.A. dropped – obstructing government administration – was indeed one I might have pled guilty to. For me this campaign *is* about obstructing the government's illegal/immoral/dangerous hunter/killer reaper drone attacks.