

# Buffalo Letter to NYS Senators About Drones

*Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve Station is currently being transformed into a drone operations center.*

February 9, 2015

*Dear Senators Gillibrand and Schumer,*

During the week of February 2 – 9, 2015, across the state of NY, citizens are meeting with your respective staff members to express our concerns and provide important information on the use of weaponized drones, including current use overseas. Their use is illegal, immoral, and counterproductive.

We, members of the *Resist Militarism!* Taskforce of the WNY Peace Center and the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars, are vehemently opposed to our government's policy of drone warfare. No one's safety is assured by the slaughter of innocent children and civilians.

Not only are we guilty of war crimes, but the terror of those living under drones and the widespread death of innocents causes blowback that increases the likelihood of the U.S. being attacked.

Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station's becoming a drone operations center will turn the area into a potential target in international conflict. Drone operators also develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder at a frequency higher than enlisted personnel in combat zones. We offer you a plan developed by Charles Bowman, Ph.D., Chair of WNY Peace Center's Renewable Energy Taskforce for turning the site into a solar array, a superior use of the sunny site, providing renewable energy to power the regional economy. Rep. Brian Higgins has given us some encouragement on this plan. Last summer, he proposed a technical school at NFARS to train people to install solar

panels for large scale and small scale installations.

Our continuing campaign over the last four years occurs both at the base gates of Niagara Falls and Hancock Air National Guard Field, as well as at many subsequent courtroom trials in the DeWitt Town Court.

**We offer you a packet of information** to assist you in evaluating both overseas and budding domestic use of drones.

- Presentation of the issue
- Story of Raz Mohammad, Afghan Peace Volunteer
- Drone Strikes: Tears in Congress . . . (Pakistani mother killed, article in the Guardian)
- You Never Die Twice (report by Reprieve)
- Living Under Drones report and two excerpts (Stanford University; NY University)
- Description of Hellfire missiles' functioning – including burning
- Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control (book by Medea Benjamin)
- Proposal for Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station Solar Farms (author Charles Bowman, Ph.D., 716-908-8227; CandABowman@verizon.net)
- Bibliography

**Additionally,** important points we discussed with your staff are

- the extreme danger of drones flying over some dozen nuclear sites in our region;
- the unending, illegal, immoral, and counterproductive nature of the “War On Terror”; and
- the fact that violence generates more violence.

**We request that you:**

- Provide us with information regarding the current and projected use of drones in Buffalo and WNY as a border region;
- Provide information on current budgets for NFARS;
- Sponsor legislation that prohibits the use of weaponized drones.

Thank you for your attention to this matter of grave concern. We look forward to your response, and remain ready to provide you with further information if needed.\*

Sincerely,

Russell Brown

President, Veterans for Peace Ch #128

Chair, *Resist Militarism!* Taskforce of the WNY Peace Center

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