

GETTING BEYOND WAR AND MILITARISM: the “To-Do” List

Violence begets violence. War profits only the few, the rich, the powerful – the 1%. As moral beings and tax paying citizens we must vigorously oppose war. Especially those wars of aggression perpetrated by the United States and its allies and proxies. These mostly occur in or near the Islamic oil lands (Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen).

We must oppose resource war and wars of weapon demonstration (drones over Gaza). We must oppose war for corporate profit. War industry lobbying (Lockheed Martin) and election buying corrupts our Congress, our Executive Branch and any legitimate defense force. War dehumanizes the “other.” It dehumanizes and disempowers ourselves.

War diverts vast, unimaginable federal tax funds from their most worthy function: meeting human needs – feeding, housing, schooling, healthcare, infrastructure. And disaster relief – these days so criminally paltry (Puerto Rico).

War solves no legitimate problem; war spawns problems. War impoverishes, erodes democracy, undermines law. War targets civilians, creates refugees and triggers ethnic cleansing. War uses rape, maims bodies and minds (PTSD), cheapens life. War spurs ecological devastation (Viet Nam) and climate disaster. Nuclear war risks nuclear winter, i.e. the extinction of the human species.

Not only must we oppose war, we must oppose *militarism*: the incessant search for enemies, the incessant preparation for war, the saturation of our economy and culture with martial values and vested interests in war.

WHAT MUST BE DONE (personally and nationally)

1. *replace toxic with renewable energy.*
2. *avoid dependence on the war economy; divest from the corporate war profiteers.*
3. *expose the mainstream media's unholy alliance with militarism. The corporate-owned MSM reflexively align with military policy. The MSM generate fear, normalize violence, villainize rival powers, gloss over war crime.*
4. *"take a knee" against nationalism/exceptionalism – major enablers of war.*
5. *stamp out racism – also a major enabler of war (end the "new Jim Crow," de-militarize the police, abolish the prison/industrial complex).*
6. *resist the Islamophobia enabling invasions and genocide (Yemen).*
7. *end U.S. military aid and exports to any invading nation or entity (Saudi Arabia/Yemen, Israel/Palestine).*
8. *abolish nuclear weapons.*
9. *abolish weaponized drones.*
10. *stop deploying mercenaries.*
11. *negotiate in good faith with adversaries.*
12. *expose the phony "war on terrorism" – that war of terrorism (a.k.a. state terrorism) – cynically keeping the pot boiling. "Terrorism," though rarely defined, is the use – or threat – of violence against civilians for political or economic reasons.*
13. *withdraw U.S. and NATO forces from Iraq, Afghanistan and Eastern Europe.*
14. *withdraw clandestine U.S. special forces – 70,000 in about 80 countries – from the continents they infest (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America).*
15. *dismantle U.S. military bases menacing rival economic systems (Venezuela, Russia, China, Iran, North Korea).*
16. *dismantle the myriad, redundant domestic military bases not necessary for defending our borders.*
17. *finance the reconstruction of those nations that U.S.*

- bombs destroyed; compensate the victims (1950s North Korea, Viet Nam north and south, Laos, Iraq, Libya).*
- 18. avoid lifestyle pitfalls (addictions, distractions, consumerism, co-optation, debt). These impede our capacity to speak out and further risk resistance.*
 - 19. build solidarity with kindred – and sometimes not so kindred – spirits. Get beyond our bubbles, our turfs, our siloes.*
 - 20. overcome obliviousness and compartmentalization. The compartmentalized mind is a colonized mind. People of goodwill here often bemoan the lack of federal funding for domestic needs. Yet many refuse to acknowledge – much less oppose – the elephantine impact U.S. military spending has at home. Such needs, if addressed, would provide more employment and security than high tech war industries do.*
 - 21. slash the Pentagon budget. Doing so will boost most of the foregoing initiatives. Doing so will impede the mounting decay and insolvency of this nation.*
 - 22. become a war tax resister.*

Our ultimate mission: “achieving a global just peace by abolishing war and militarism.” Okay, we’re unlikely to achieve that utopian goal. But work on these “can-do” campaigns has a huge payoff: reducing human suffering, plus empowering ourselves and others. We can’t do everything, but we can do something. Each of us needs to do what we can, with what we have, where we are.

Is there a more authentic way to spend our lives than that?

Standing Up to the National Anthem

by *James Ricks of Upstate Drone Action*, previously published on [United National Antiwar Coalition Blog](#) and [Ithaca Gazette](#)



This Nation's anthem was composed by Francis Scott Key, a racist, white supremacist, anti-abolitionist lawyer. He felt that black people, free or slave, were genetically inferior to white people. That perception was the foundation of his legal pursuits. When he was the District Attorney for the City of Washington, he defended slavery and prosecuted those in the abolitionist movement. He argued in court that the institution of slavery should be continued, continued ad infinitum, I suppose, as there is no known cure for "genetic inferiority" that I am aware of. Actually, I never heard anyone but my white brothers use that particular terminology.

But back to Francis, this anthem that he wrote, and this very demeaning obsession this nation has, that I, a black man, should stand respectfully and honor his musical creation. I suggest that anyone who takes umbrage at my statement, read the lyrics of the song, the whole song. Then dare ask a black person to stand for this anthem.

*"No refuge could save the hireling and slave/
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave/
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave/
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."*

Would Jewish people be expected to stand reverently for an anthem written by Heinrich Himmler or Joseph Goebbels or the rest in that Nazi crew? Should anyone be expected to endure

the humiliation of honoring an anthem, authored by someone who felt they were less than human? Not in any just environment. Which also begs the question, exactly where are we?

Ridicule, anger, suspicion, and confrontation are what people face, should they choose not to demonstrate visible deference to this disingenuous (at best) piece of sheet music. To expect black people to stand and honor this anthem is troubling on so many levels that it boggles the mind. It's a shameful thing to stand for an anthem, which represents, in my opinion, a tacit acceptance of a clear insult or the pure ignorance – willful or otherwise – of its author, its history and tone.



Colin Kaepernick 'takes a knee' during the pre-game national anthem

I don't want to get into the psychological ramifications of showing respect to a personal insult, hurtful but at least a contained experience. Truthfully, I look at white people who stand for the national anthem at a sporting event and wonder what's on their minds. Are they following the crowd's inertia, thinking only to finally get on with the game? Are they thinking military thoughts, nationalistic thoughts? I don't know.

But to see black people standing and honoring

this anthem sadly brings back familiar feelings, feelings I had while reading *"The Invisible Man,"* a book written by Ralph Ellison. He wrote about the dynamics between the slave and the enslaver, in a fairly self-explanatory phenomenon called the *"Plantation Mentality."* Egregious or otherwise, the slave did what was pleasing to the master. If you need elaboration, read the book. It makes me sad and disappointed to see that this repugnant form of oppression is alive, slightly camouflaged and insidiously thriving.

We are Killing Terrorists and Attack We Will

*Those who slaughter innocent people will find no glory in this life or the next. They are nothing but thugs and criminals and predators, and that's right losers.
~President Donald Trump*

We are Killing Terrorists and Attack We Will, Trump's Most Vicious Racist Rants

by Brian Terrell, Originally Published in "[The Sower](#)", Dec. 17, 2017

On Monday, August 21, President Donald Trump delivered a prime-time speech almost shocking in its ordinariness. It was such an address as either of his immediate predecessors, George W. Bush or Barack Obama, could easily have given over the previous decade and a half. While hinting at nebulous new

strategies and ill-defined new metrics to measure success, President Trump announced that the sixteen year old war in Afghanistan will go on pretty much as it has. And the establishment breathed a sigh of relief.

Reviews were glowing. While acknowledging how low the bar had been set, on August 25, the Washington journal, *The Hill*, opined that even the most hardened members of the anti-Trump camp must admit that Monday's speech communicated a remarkable amount of humility and self-awareness, particularly for this president. The timing of the president's crowd pleasing speech was duly noted: Unfortunately, his very presidential announcement of the Afghanistan decision was bookended by Charlottesville and the president's rally in Phoenix on Tuesday night.

Ten days before, in Charlottesville, Virginia, torch bearing white supremacists had marched in a "*Unite the Right*" rally to protest the planned removal of a statue of the Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Replete with flags of both the Confederacy and the Nazi Third Reich and traditional fascist chants of blood and soil, the rally met with resistance from anti-racist activists, one of whom was murdered and others injured when one of the united right used his car as a weapon of terror, driving it into the crowd. There was outrage when Trump responded by condemning the violence on all sides and declaring that there are very fine people on both sides of the issue.



Afghan Peace Volunteers work for peace at their Border Free School in Kabul

In the next days, thousands marched in cities nationwide and the denunciations of racism and white supremacy resounded from many surprising quarters. Trump's tolerance of the use and celebration of overt symbols and slogans associated with hatred, slavery, anti-Semitism and genocide offended all but his most fanatical base. Members of his own party, many who had stood by Trump through other scandals, took steps to distance themselves from his statements, if not from Trump himself.

Five of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, representing the Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force and National Guard, came extraordinarily close to rebuking their commander in chief. While they did not address Trump by name, they posted messages on social media condemning neo-Nazis and hatred, citing the

events at Charlottesville.

"@USNavy for ever stands against intolerance and hatred."

"No place for racial hatred or extremism in @USMC."

"The Army does not tolerate racism, extremism or hatred in its ranks."

"We're always stronger together-it's who we are as #Airmen."

"I stand with my fellow Joint Chiefs in condemning racism, extremism & hatred. Our diversity is our strength #NationalGuard."

In his prime time address on the war, Trump called for the national unity that he had seemed in the days before and after to disdain- *"Loyalty to our nation demands loyalty to one another."* Saying that *"the young men and women we send to fight our wars abroad deserve to return to a country that is not at war with itself at home,"* Trump seemed even to shame his detractors for letting down those he calls the "special class of heroes whose selflessness, courage, and resolve is unmatched in human history." *"Let us make a simple promise to the men and women we ask to fight in our name: that when they return home from battle, they will find a country that has renewed the sacred bonds of love and loyalty that unite us together as one."*

The healing balm that should bring Americans together, Trump said to general applause, will be a continuing commitment to a seventeen year old war. When that war began in October of 2001, Vice-President Richard Cheney suggested that the US would eventually take it to forty to fifty other nations, an expanding war that he predicted "may never end" but would "become a permanent part of the way we live." Like Cheney before him, Trump urges Americans to set aside the issues that divide us and unite behind an endless war of aggression

against a people who never met us any harm.

It should be self evident that the war against Afghanistan and the broader war on terror, like every war that the US has engaged in since the end of World War II, is as much a war about race and white supremacy as was the Civil War. The fact that the war on terror was presided over for eight years by our first African American president (who in his last year in office dropped 26,171 bombs exclusively over populations of people of color) does not alter the fact that it is a racist war. If the war on terror does not divide our nation's people as severely as did our war against the people of Southeast Asia fifty years ago, it is only because fewer Americans are paying attention to it.

In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. noted *"Now, it should be incandescently clear that no one who has any concern for the integrity and life of America today can ignore the present war."* He said that for those working against racism in the US, silence on the war against Vietnam was nothing less than betrayal. Many questioned whether peace and civil rights mix and if by trying, King was hurting the cause of his people. *"Indeed,"* he said of these critics, *"their questions suggest that they do not know the world in which they live."* About that same time, Eldridge Cleaver said *"The black man's (sic) interest lies in seeing a free and independent Vietnam, a strong Vietnam which is not the puppet of international white supremacy. If the nations of Asia, Latin America and Africa are strong and free, the black man in America will be safe and secure and free to live in dignity and self respect."*

Last year, the Movement for Black Lives excited great controversy publishing its platform that draws these connections in the present context:

"...we know that patriarchy, exploitative capitalism, militarism, and white supremacy know no borders. We stand in solidarity with our international family against the ravages

of global capitalism and anti-Black racism, human-made climate change, war, and exploitation. We also stand with descendants of African people all over the world in an ongoing call and struggle for reparations for the historic and continuing harms of colonialism and slavery. We also recognize and honor the rights and struggle of our Indigenous family for land and self-determination."

The violence that we see in American streets is a direct and inevitable result of the violence of our country's wars. Since the war on terror began, police departments from large cities to rural counties have been plied by the Defense Department with an array of offensive weaponry from tanks to assault rifles, accompanied with training in counterinsurgency. Police department hiring preferences favor veterans who often bring with them skills honed in night raids of Iraqi and Afghanistan and the Afghan homes. Full scale Special Weapons and Assault Tactics (SWAT) teams then terrorize American families, disproportionately in communities of color and most often to serve simple warrants and summonses for nonviolent offenses.

The Obama administration's determinations that any male 14 years or older found dead in a drone strike zone is a "combatant" unless explicit intelligence posthumously proves him innocent and that "the condition that an operational leader present an 'imminent' threat of violent attack against the United States does not require the United States to have clear evidence that *"a specific attack on US persons and interests will will take place in the immediate future"*, have poisoned the culture of policing at home. The consequence of these policies is the summary killings of innocent young men because of who they are and where they live, in American cities as well as in places far away. The racial profiling that results in the killings of unarmed black citizens by American police is the domestic expression of surveillance by drones of the *"patterns of behavior"* that trigger the *"signature strike"* executions of countless people of color in

our wars abroad.

"A nation which continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death," Dr. King noted in 1967. There is no serious discussion of racism in the United States today, or of providing health care and education and basic human services that does not address the ever expanding cost of the present war.

Some of the outrage over Trump's responses to the events in Charlottesville and for his shameless affinity for hate and misogyny in general from his campaign until today may well actually be for his violation of a tacit *"gentlemen's"* agreement not to say such things aloud. None the less, it is a sign of social progress that language and symbols celebrating hate raise so much public indignation. The discredited institutions of slavery and Nazism need to stay discredited and those who forget that are rightly and necessarily called out. There are, however, manifestations of hatred and racism that continue to be tolerated and celebrated even in the most polite, progressive and politically correct venues and these need to be called out as well.

As grating and offensive as Trump's off-script train wreck persona is, it is when he is most *"very presidential,"* when he acts and speaks from the same teleprompter as those who preceded him, that he is at his most malicious and hateful. When he declares as he did on August 21 that *"we are killing terrorists"* and threatens *"attack we will"* and when he praises the civilian catastrophe that he called the *"liberation of Mosul in Iraq"* as a model for the future of the war in Afghanistan, Trump is on a racist rant. His speech on August 21 calling for more war is hate speech, pure and simple.

The generals of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who bravely spoke out against neo-Nazis, where are they now? Some of them apparently huddled with Trump to devise his hateful and racist

assault on the Afghan people and all of them, along with Defense Secretary General Mattis (whose advice to the troops is *"You just hold the line until our country gets back to understanding and respecting each other and showing it."*) and White House Chief of Staff General Kelly are busily working to implement it. If generals Lee and Jackson of the 19th century who served under Confederate President Jefferson Davis in the cause of slavery and white supremacy deserve the censure of history and the scorn of every person of good will, so much more these generals who serve the hateful and vile agenda of Trump and his predecessors. To give Trump his due, one truth that he told in his celebrated speech is that those *"who slaughter innocent people will find no glory in this life or the next. They are nothing but thugs and criminals and predators, and that's right -losers."*

Those thousands of good people who took to the streets to denounce the celebration of racism and hate in its archaic and discredited forms need to seek the courage get back out and demand an end to racism and hate in its present, most virulent form. Together we need to demand a US withdrawal from Afghanistan and reparations for all the nations that have suffered US aggression in the so-called war on terror.

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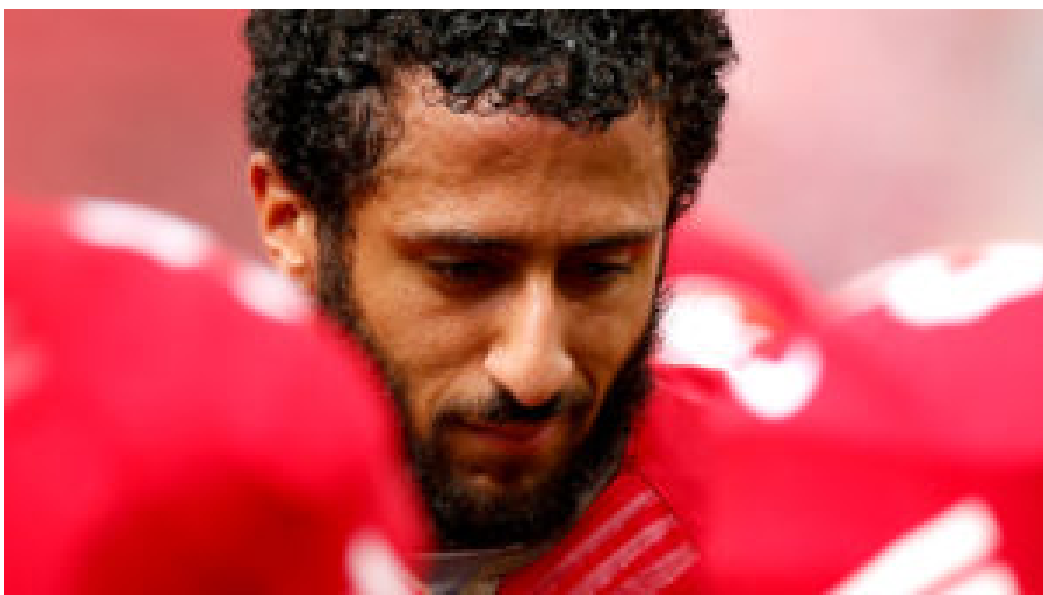
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Protesters Speak Out at Hancock (Video)

Hancock is a Reaper Drone hub on the US mainland which is focused on training drone pilots and technicians, and flies deadly Reaper drone missions over Afghanistan and Pakistan. Hancock is scheduled to increase it's personnel by half over the coming year. Upstate Drone Action members have been engaging in civil resistance at Hancock since 2011.

On September 26th, activists delivered a People's Indictment to the base and stood in the inbound lane of the main entrance to Hancock with signs and images of the ongoing holocaust caused by drone killing. After about an hour the activists were arrested and charged with Trespass and Disorderly Conduct.

Heriberto Rodriguez filmed the following series of interviews with activists at the base shortly before their arrests.

People's Indictment (Update with video)

FOR WAR CRIMES PERPETRATED BY THE 174TH ATTACK WING
OF THE NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD AT HANCOCK AIR FORCE BASE,

SYRACUSE, NY

Video recorded by Charley Bowman of Buffalo, NY. Speaking: Ed Kinane, Julianne Oldfield, Dan Burgevin.

Since 2010 the 174th Attack Wing, via satellite, has been remotely piloting weaponized MQ9 Reaper drones over Afghanistan – perhaps the poorest and most vulnerable nation in the world. U.S. weaponized drones are also known to target people in Pakistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Yemen and elsewhere in the Islamic oil lands. Those who participate in these operations may believe they are fighting “terrorism”; in fact they are unwitting cogs in a war – on behalf of corporate profiteers – whose main instrument is terrorism.

The Reaper maims and kills untold numbers of human beings and terrorizes whole communities. Reaper aggression generates both internal and external refugees; generates hatred toward the U.S. (bolstering recruitment for hostile groups); heightens global insecurity as other state and non-state powers join the weaponized drones arm race; and, by blatantly violating such law, undermines both U.S. and international law.

U.S. drone killing violates due process and national sovereignty. It involves intentional, premeditated extrajudicial murder and the massacre of civilians.

These crimes violate Article VI of the United States Constitution: ***“This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges of every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or Laws of the U.S., including treaties made under authority of the U.S. shall be the supreme law of the Land.”***

One such treaty, since 1945 the supreme law of the United States, is the United Nations Charter. The Charter’s Preamble

states that its purpose is to ***“save future generations from the scourge of war “***. It further states that ***“all nations shall refrain from the use of force against another nation.”*** This Treaty applies to federal, state and local branches of U.S. government as well as to law enforcement and to U.S. Armed Forces personnel – all of whom are sworn to uphold the Constitution.

Since 2010 Upstate Drone Action – impelled by our conscience – has sought to expose Hancock AFB war crimes and to awaken Hancock AFB personnel and their chain of command to their role in perpetrating these crimes. Today, as on many former occasions, we come to Hancock to renew that wake-up call. **People of Hancock: we urge you – we implore you – to stop the killing.**

[UPSTATE DRONE ACTION](#)

Ed Kinane Talks to David Swanson

Ed Kinane was featured on David Swanson’s [Talk Nation Radio](#) show this week. It’s a great interview drawing on our local actions as well as Ed’s knowledge of the drone program and his compassion for the victims of US drone wars.

If you have half an hour to listen you can go to [David’s page](#) or if you would like just to listen here, use the player below:

Letter to German Bundestag, re: Military Drones

To the members of the German Bundestag:

I understand that there is a proposal before the Bundestag that will lead to the German government leasing from Israel unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly known as drones, which could be weaponized.

I understand further that Germany may use these drones in Afghanistan.

I am writing you as the Coordinator of the United States website and organizing center KnowDrones.com to urge the defeat of any measure that would authorize the German government to purchase, lease or develop drones that have the capability of carrying weapons of any kind, for the following reasons:

1) Drone stalking and assassination, as undertaken most widely in the world by the United States, violates international human rights law because these practices violate privacy and long-held principles of due process. While Germany might not initially decide to arm its drones, the possession of drones with the capability to be armed will expose Germany to international criticism for being willing to participate in drone killing and will almost inevitably lead to the arming of the drones given the likely pressure by the United States to join it in drone killing.

I say likely pressure because, as you know, the United States is having difficulty keeping drone operators and so is having a hard time meeting the demand for drone attacks in the

various theaters in which it has chosen to be at war, now covering at least seven nations.

Even if the German drones do not carry weapons Germany will be under suspicion of drone killing because it will be participating with the United States in drone activities, and the United States is notorious for its failure to tell the truth about its drone operations.

2) The United States first started drone killing in 2001 in Afghanistan. Afghanistan appears to have experienced more U.S. drone attacks than any other nation, according to statistics provided by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism. The Bureau reports that, as of the date of this letter, the minimum number of confirmed U.S. drone attacks there was 2,214 with a total death toll of up to 3,551.

This is a dramatic underestimate of U.S. drone killing in Afghanistan, however, since the Bureau only began keeping these statistics in January of 2015. The German television service ZDF estimated in their 2015 Webstory "Drohnen: Tod aus der Luft" that between 2001 and 2013 no less than 13,026 people were killed by drones in Afghanistan (based on data provided by U.S. Central Command, CENTCOM, and the book "Sudden Justice" by Chris Woods).

3) The United States is presumably conducting drone killings to suppress opposition to the government it has established in Afghanistan. However, judging from the announcement yesterday that the United States will be sending thousands of more troops to Afghanistan, it appears that the military effectiveness of the United States drone surveillance and killing campaign in Afghanistan must be reevaluated. Indeed, it is quite likely that the United States drone attacks have led to an increase in the size of the force opposing it, a concern expressed by the former commander of United States and NATO forces in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/784919/mcchrystal-opposes-drone-strikes>

Germany's use of drones of any kind in Afghanistan will expose it to charges that, rather than simply training Afghan police and troops, it is joining the new United States offensive.

Germany's use of drones, in and of itself, is likely to increase Afghan anger over German presence and increase risk to German soldiers.

4) The United States drone attack campaign, in which Germany will inevitably be seen as participating, is a particularly unsavory part of a larger military campaign to subdue an indigenous force comprised of extremely poor, Muslim people. I respectfully suggest that the German people may not want to increase their level of participation in this ignominious endeavor.

You will find supporting material for the points above at KnowDrones.com.

Thank you very much for considering this letter.

Sincerely,

Nick Mottern – Coordinator – KnowDrones.com

38 Jefferson Avenue

Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706

Letter to German Parliament, re: Military Drones

340 Midland Avenue
Syracuse, New York USA
315) 478-4571, home
edkinane340@gmail.com
UpstateDroneAction.org

Re weaponized drones

Member of Parliament

Federal Republic of Germany

Dear Sir or Ms:

I write hoping you will do all you can to stop the plan of the German government to make Germany into a killer-drone nation like the United States. I understand that this plan, to be voted on in the Bundestag by the end of June, includes immediately leasing weaponized drones from Israel...while at the same time developing a European killer drone.

I also hope that you will do all you can within the Bundestag to remove the U.S. military from bases in Germany. My particular concern is with the base at Ramstein. Ramstein plays a key role in facilitating the U.S. drone war on so many peoples to your east, including in Afghanistan.

Admittedly I know little about political practice and reality in Germany (a country I have fond memories of, having lived on the U.S. military Caserne at Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the early eighties). But I do know that Germany, thanks to its hospitable spirit has become a beacon to many abroad who have lost their homes and land and livelihood. Like many U.S.

citizens I am grateful that the Bundestag has been investigating the U.S. drone program in Germany that fuels the global refugee crisis.

We know that the U.S. weaponized drone program afflicting several Mideast and West Asian countries is leading to many non-combatant fatalities. Further, the MQ9 Reaper drone, triumphantly called "Hunter/Killer" by the Pentagon, terrorizes whole communities in the Islamic oil lands. Surely such terror contributes to the flood of refugees from those nations now desperately pressing on the gates of Germany and other nations near and far.

Further I believe that the U.S. drone war, while tactically clever, is strategically counterproductive. Not only is it leading to what I call "defensive proliferation," but it almost inevitably must lead to enormous ill will toward the U.S. and to the West generally. That hostility will have consequential reverberations -- blowback -- for any nation perceived as a U.S. ally.

Surely a German killer/drone program would also cause untold non-combatant fatalities and would generate hatred for Germany in the targeted regions.

You may well ask: who is this Ed Kinane who presumes to address you? In 2003 I spent five months in Iraq with Voices in the Wilderness (a mostly-U.S. NGO, now suppressed). I was in Baghdad before, during and after the several weeks of "Shock and Awe." I know firsthand the *aerial terrorism* of the Pentagon's overseas interventions and invasions.

In 2009 when I learned that Hancock Air Force Base -- almost within walking distance of my home in Syracuse, New York -- was becoming a hub for the MQ9 Reaper drone attacks in Afghanistan, I was shaken. Along with others here in Upstate New York I felt that if we (who live nearby this hub for the 174th Attack Wing of the New York National Guard) don't speak

out against this shameful, cowardly, illegal, inhumane way of waging warfare, who else would?

In its public relations efforts to win over the local civilian community, the then Hancock commander bragged in our local daily newspaper (the Syracuse *Post-Standard*, www.syracuse.com) that Hancock remotely pilots weaponized Reapers over Afghanistan "24/7." It's likely that the Hancock Reaper may also attack targets in North Waziristan (if not elsewhere) as well.

In 2010 here in New York State grassroots activists formed the Upstate Drone Action (sometimes also known as Ground the Drones and End the Wars Coalition). We were keenly aware that, according to the post-World War Two Nuremberg Principles, we each – especially those among us who paid federal taxes – bore responsibility for the actions of our government. Hardly being in a position to physically impede the Pentagon's predations on other countries, we realized that at least here we could help expose those actions to the general public...and help awaken the consciences of Hancock personnel. These personnel typically are very young and live within a military cocoon, cut off from direct communication with us.

Via conventional activist tactics – rallies, leafleting, letter and article writing, street theater, vigiling, lobbying our Congressional representatives, multi-day marches, etc. – Upstate Drone Action has sought to share our distress with the public. Since 2010 a handful of us have vigiled across the road from Hancock's main entrance at the afternoon shift change on the first and third Tuesday of every month. In the years since 2010 we have also blocked Hancock's main gate a dozen or so times. Our scrupulously nonviolent blockades have led to my own and roughly 200 other arrests. These have led to many trials and some incarcerations.

Upstate Drone Action has not been the only grassroots group protesting U.S. drone warfare. Similar, mutually inspiring

campaigns have been mounted at Beale Airbase in California, Creech Airbase in Nevada, and other bases across the U.S. With a kind of relentless persistence these direct actions keep recurring despite police and judicial attempts to deter us.

Let's be clear: what we do isn't civil disobedience, but rather *civil resistance*. After all, we aren't *disobeying* the law; we seek to *enforce* the law. In many of our direct actions we attempt to present "People's Indictments" to the base. In these documents we cite not only the Nuremburg Principles, but also the U.N. Charter and other international law and treaties that the U.S. has signed. We also cite Article Six of the U.S. Constitution which declares that these treaties are the highest law of our land. Those among us religiously motivated also cite the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill."

Having lived and worked in Islamic lands, I am also motivated by what I perceive is the Islamophobia of U.S. military policy – akin to the racism that so plagues our civilian society. Currently, the primary target of U.S. aerial terrorism is the people and communities and regions identified as Islamic.

I could cite statistics regarding the untold victims of drone attacks. I could cite the number of those attacks – steeply escalating with each new U.S. president (Bush/Obama/Trump). I could provide estimates of the millions of refugees displaced from not only their communities, but from their nations. Frankly such numbers leave me numbed. I cannot fathom them.

Instead, with apologies for not writing to you in German, let me cite just one text among many (see attached bibliography of English language sources) that have helped shape my understanding of the drone scourge: the Stanford and New York Universities' 165-page, "Living Under Drones: Death, Injury, and Trauma to Civilians from US Drone Practices in Pakistan" (2012). I encourage you to seek out this deeply human yet rigorously documented report at <http://livingunderdrones.org/>.

I write to you today, not only with urgency, but with desperation. Too many U.S. people – and their Congressional representatives, regardless of party – see the U.S. drone wars as somehow making the U.S. safer. In fact the opposite is true. My hope is that Germany will not follow the Pentagon's lead and that Germany will end its current collaboration with that entity's global war of terror. Any nation, especially a highly nuclearized superpower, possessing the means to assassinate any person and any leader anytime, anywhere only increases global precarity and undermines its own national soul. That nation does not need allies who facilitate its barbarity.

Sincerely,

Ed Kinane

Member, Upstate Drone Action

Are We the Terrorists?

Are we the terrorists? This is the subject of Ed Kinane and Dave Kashmer's informative Workshop on Drone Warfare at SUNY Cortland. Students were informed about the actions of military drones around the world then engaged on the subject of 'Are We the Terrorists'. Very interesting result. A good model for introducing the subject to those who have not had an opportunity to see things as we do.