

Hancock Litany for Good Friday

Written by Jack Gilroy...www.bensalmon.org

Good Friday Prayer for 174th Attack Wing

Video by *Judy Bello*

Men of the 174th Attack Wing, **Stop the Killing**

Women of the 174th Attack Wing, **Stop the Killing**

Men & Women of the 174th Attack Wing, **Stop Drone Crucifixions**

Men & women of the 174th Attack Wing, **—Leave the Military**

People of Iraq

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Afghanistan

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Pakistan

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Syria

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Yemen

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Libya

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Somalia

Forgive us our Killer Drones

People of Gaza

Forgive us our Killer Drones

Our Tax Dollars for Death

Forgive Us

Slaughtered Native Americans

Forgive Us

Teaching Hate

Forgive Us

Our Sins against our Black brothers and sisters

Forgive Us

Tortured people of the Philippines

Forgive Us

United States invasions of Mexico

Forgive Us

United States invasions of Haiti

Forgive Us

United States invasions of Nicaragua

Forgive Us

United States imperialism in Latin America

Forgive Us

United States killings in the Great War

Forgive Us

60 Million dead in World War II

Forgive Us

Calling 60 Million dead a 'Good War'

Forgive Us

Believing War can be Just

Forgive Us

Christian Churches' Silence in Nazi Germany

Forgive Us

German Catholic Bishops' silence

Forgive Us

Lutheran Church Silence

Forgive Us

Dresden Fire Bombed

Forgive Us

Hiroshima Incinerated

Forgive Us

Nagasaki Destroyed

Forgive Us

Nagasaki Cathedral Ground Zero

Forgive Us

All Christian Crews Do Bombing

Forgive Us

38,000 Americans Died in World War II

Forgive Us

1 Million North Korean Soldiers & Civilians Killed

Forgive Us

United States Kills 3 Million Vietnamese

Forgive Us

58,000 American Troops Killed in Vietnam

Forgive Us

Dow Chemical's Agent Orange Devastates People and Land of Vietnam

Forgive Us

American Napalm Burns Vietnamese Children

Forgive Us

Trillions Spent on Nuclear Weapons & War Preparation

Forgive Us

United States Supports El Salvador Death Camps

Forgive Us

United States CIA Helps Assassinate 250,000 People in Guatamala

Forgive Us

United States Creates a Torture & Assassination School at Fort Benning, GA

Forgive Us

Graduates of the School of the Americas Kill Peasants and Union Leaders

Forgive Us

Graduates of the School of the Americas Kill Priests & Nuns

Forgive Us

US Troops IN 180 Countries Around the World

Forgive Us

US Led Sanctions Kill 500,000 Iraqi Children

Forgive Us

United States Slaughters Fleeing Iraqi Soldiers

Forgive Us

US Troops Stationed in Muslim Countries

Forgive Us

Invasion and Occupation of Afghanistan

Forgive Us

Shock and Awe Bombings of Iraq Kill Civilians by the Thousands

Forgive Us

Two Million People Flee American War Making in Iraq

Forgive Us

American Violence Spreads Throughout The Middle East

Forgive Us

Refugees Die in the Deserts & on the Sea Fleeing Wars Promoted
by the United States

Forgive Us

United States Rejects Middle East Refugees

Forgive Us

Islamophobia Sweeps the Nation

Forgive Us

United States Drones Assassinate People in Seven Muslim
Nations

Forgive Us

One Half Our National Spending is for Death & Weapons

Forgive Us

Weapons Are Our Largest Export

Forgive Us

United States in Year 2017 Will Cut Assistance to the Poor &
Children's Programs

Forgive Us

Building Walls Instead of Empathy and Generosity

Forgive Us

Our Bloated Military Budget Will be Increased \$54 Billion This
Year

Forgive Us

Republicans & Democrats Praise Trump for Killing Syrians

Forgive Us

Aaaaa men....Aaaaaa men....Amen Amen Amen

DRONE WARRIORS: Say Hello to the DoD's \$125,000 Ostrich Feather

by *Joe Scarry*, cross-posted from [Scarry Thoughts](#)

In ancient Egypt, there was a highly-developed idea of how to assess the deep meaning of thoughts and acts during life. “The critical scene depicting the weighing of the heart, in the Book of the Dead, shows Anubis performing a measurement that determined whether the person was worthy of entering the realm of the dead (the underworld, known as Duat). By weighing the heart of a deceased person against Ma’at (or “truth”), who was often represented as an ostrich feather, Anubis dictated the fate of souls.” ([Wikipedia](#))

The US Department of Defense has replaced the ostrich feather with \$125,000.

A recent report in [The Fiscal Times](#) says the drone pilots are being induced to re-enlist with bonuses of \$125,000. Apparently, even though the military is moving as fast as it possibly can toward robotic killing, it still can't get the small number of people it needs to come volunteer and operate the controls. (“The service trained 180 new pilots in fiscal year 2014, while 240 retired, according to data provided to *The Los Angeles Times*.”)

The situation is likely to become especially dire, now that [drone operators are coming forward and saying what many have been suggesting for a long time: it's not worth it.](#)

Hey, we live in a free market economy, and some people think

that means *everything* has its price. It shouldn't be surprising that the military thinks it can buy off drone operators.

The US government has done us a favor: they've said what they really think the conscience of a drone operator is worth.

Now it's up to us to do something about it.

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 and 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 its substantial economic and political power on blocking its 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 Policy Despite Children's Deaths](#)

Taking Responsibility for Drone Killings

Taking Responsibility for Drone Killings *President Obama and the Fog of War*

by Brian Terrell, reprinted from [Voices for Creative Nonviolence](#)

When President Barack Obama apologized on April 23 to the families of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto, an American and an Italian, both hostages killed in a drone attack in Pakistan in January, he blamed their tragic deaths on the "fog of war."

"This operation was fully consistent with the guidelines under which we conduct counterterrorism efforts in the region," he said, and based on "hundreds of hours of surveillance, we

believed that this (the building targeted and destroyed by drone launched missiles) was an al Qaeda compound; that no civilians were present." Even with the best of intentions and most stringent of safeguards, the president said, "it is a cruel and bitter truth that in the fog of war generally and our fight against terrorists specifically, mistakes – sometimes deadly mistakes – can occur."

The term "fog of war," *Nebel des Krieges* in German, was introduced by the Prussian military analyst Carl von Clausewitz in 1832, to describe the uncertainty experienced by commanders and soldiers on the battlefield. It is often used to explain or excuse "friendly fire" and other unintended deaths in the heat and confusion of combat. The term raises vivid images of chaos and ambiguity. Fog of war describes incredible noise and trauma, volleys of bullets and artillery shells, bone jarring explosions, screams of the wounded, orders shouted out and countermanded, vision limited and distorted by clouds of gas, smoke and debris.

War itself is a crime and war is hell, and in its fog soldiers can suffer from emotional, sensory and physical overload. In the fog of war, fatigued past the point of endurance and fearful both for their own lives and for those of their comrades, soldiers must often make split second decisions of life and death. In such deplorable conditions, it is unavoidable that "mistakes – sometimes deadly mistakes – can occur."

But Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto were not killed in the fog of war. They were not killed in war at all, not in any way war has been understood until now. They were killed in a country where the United States is not at war. No one was fighting at the compound where they died. The soldiers who fired the missiles that killed these two men were thousands of miles away in the United States and in no danger, even if anyone were firing back. These soldiers watched the compound go up in smoke under their missiles, but they did not hear the

explosion nor the cries of the wounded, nor were they subjected to the concussion of its blast. That night, as the night before this attack, it can be assumed that they slept at home in their own beds.

The president attests that those missiles were fired only after “hundreds of hours of surveillance” were carefully studied by defense and intelligence analysts. The decision that led to the deaths of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto was not reached in the crucible of combat but in the comfort and safety of offices and conference rooms. Their line of sight was not clouded by smoke and debris but was enhanced by the most advanced “Gorgon Stare” surveillance technology of the Reaper drones.

The same day as the president’s announcement the White House Press Secretary also issued a release with this news: “We have concluded that Ahmed Farouq, an American who was an al-Qa’ida leader, was killed in the same operation that resulted in the deaths of Dr. Weinstein and Mr. Lo Porto. We have also concluded that Adam Gadahn, an American who became a prominent member of al-Qa’ida, was killed in January, likely in a separate U.S. Government counterterrorism operation. While both Farouq and Gadahn were al-Qa’ida members, neither was specifically targeted, and we did not have information indicating their presence at the sites of these operations.” If the president’s drone assassination program sometimes accidentally kills hostages, it also sometimes accidentally kills Americans alleged to be members of al-Qa’ida and apparently the White House expects us to take some consolation in this fact.

“Hundreds of hours of surveillance” notwithstanding, and despite being “fully consistent with the guidelines under which we conduct counterterrorism efforts,” the order to attack the compound was given in the absence of any indication that Ahmed Farouq was there or that Warren Weinstein was not. Three months after the fact, the United States government

admits that they blew up a building that they had been watching for days without the slightest idea who was in it.

The “cruel and bitter truth” is actually that Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto were not killed in a “counterterrorism effort” at all, but in an act of terrorism by the United States government. They died in a gangland style hit that went awry. Killed in a high-tech drive-by shooting, they are victims of negligent homicide at best, if not of outright murder.

Another “cruel and bitter truth” is that people who are executed by drones far from a battlefield for crimes they have not been tried for or convicted of, such as Ahmed Farouq and Adam Gadahn were, are not enemies lawfully killed in combat. They are victims of lynching by remote control.

“Predators and Reapers are useless in a contested environment,” admitted General Mike Hostage, chief of the Air Force’s Air Combat Command in a speech in September, 2013. Drones have proven useful, he said, at “hunting down” al Qa’ida but are no good in actual combat. Since al Qa’ida and other terrorist organizations have only flourished and multiplied since Obama’s drone campaigns took off in 2009, one might take issue with the general’s claim for their usefulness on any front, but it is a fact that the use of lethal force by a military unit outside of a contested environment, outside of a battlefield, is a war crime. It might follow that even the possession of a weapon that is useful only in an uncontested environment is a crime, as well.

The deaths of two western hostages, one an American citizen, are indeed tragic, but no more so than the deaths of thousands of Yemeni, Pakistani, Afghan, Somali and Libyan children, women and men murdered by these same drones. Both the president and his press secretary assure us that the events in Pakistan last January were “fully consistent with the guidelines under which we conduct counterterrorism efforts,”

business as usual in other words. It seems that in the president's view, death is only tragic when it is inconveniently discovered that western non-Muslim people are killed.

"As President and as Commander-in-Chief, I take full responsibility for all our counterterrorism operations, including the one that inadvertently took the lives of Warren and Giovanni," said President Obama on April 23. From the time President Ronald Reagan took full responsibility for the Iran-Contra arms deal to the present, it is clear that a presidential admission of responsibility means that no one will be held accountable and that nothing will change. The responsibility that President Obama accepts for only two of his victims is too paltry for consideration and, along with his partial apology, is an insult to their memories. In these days of governmental evasions and official cowardice, it is crucial that there are some who do take full responsibility for all of those killed and act to stop these acts of reckless and provocative violence.



Taking Responsibility for Drone Killing At Beale AFB, California

Five days after the president's announcement of Weinstein's and Lo Porto's murders, on April 28, I was privileged to be in California with a dedicated community of activists outside of Beale Air Force Base, home of the Global Hawk surveillance drone. Sixteen of us were arrested blocking the entrance to the base, reciting the names of children who have also been

killed in drone attacks but without a presidential apology or even, for that matter, any admission that they died at all. On May 17, I was with another group of anti-drone activists at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri and in early March, in the Nevada desert with more than one hundred resisting drone murders from Creech Air Force Base. Responsible citizens are protesting at drone bases in Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, New York at RAF Waddington in the United Kingdom, at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, at the White House and other scenes of these crimes against humanity.

In Yemen and in Pakistan, too, people are speaking out against the murders taking place in their own countries and at great risk to themselves. Lawyers from Reprieve and the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights have filed suit in a German court, charging that the German government has violated its own constitution by allowing the U.S. to use a satellite relay station at Ramstein Air Base in Germany for drone murders in Yemen.

Perhaps one day President Obama will be held responsible for these murders. In the meantime, the responsibility that he and his administration shirks belongs to all of us. He cannot hide behind a fog of war and neither can we.