

# Hancock Nativity Tableau Charges Dismissed

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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CHARGES DISMISSED AGAINST 12/23 "NATIVITY FOUR" HANCOCK REAPER  
DRONE PROTESTERS FOLLOWING LAST WEEK'S JURY ACQUITTAL OF THE  
"BIG BOOKS" HANCOCK DRONE PROTESTERS

In a surprise move, DeWitt Town Court Judge David Gideon dismissed charges against all four\* Upstate Drone Action activists protesting the hunter/killer MQ9 Reaper drones piloted over Afghanistan by the 174th Attack Wing of the NY National Guard at Hancock AFB just north of Syracuse NY.

The four had staged a December 23, 2016 "Nativity tableau" in front of Hancock's main gate, at 6001 East Molloy Road in the Town of DeWitt. The four protesters were charged with trespass, disorderly conduct and obstruction of government administration. (OGA). OGA is a misdemeanor requiring a jury and carrying up to a year's sentence.

Judge Gideon explained last night's dismissal by noting that the accusatory documents provided by Hancock repeatedly referred to the 12/23 "Nativity" arrests as occurring on Federal property – which the Judge declared outside his jurisdiction.

In a three-day trial culminating on March 2, 2017, also before Judge Gideon, a six-person jury, after deliberating about a half hour, acquitted all defendants of the same charges for

their "Big Books" action at Hancock on March 19, 2015

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[[nativity acquittal press release]]

[UpstateDroneAction.org](http://UpstateDroneAction.org)

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## Veterans and Activists Arrested Protesting Drone Terror at Creech AFB

Veterans and Activists Arrested Protesting Drone  
Terror  
at Creech Air Force Base in Nevada

**Veterans For Peace national President Barry Ladendorf, Board member Tarak Kauff, and Advisory Board member Ann Wright** were among eight peace activists who were arrested early Thursday morning, after physically blocking the main gate to Creech Air Force Base near Las Vegas, Nevada.

**Also arrested were VFP members Barry Binks (long time, often**

**arrested drone protester**), Ken Mayers, Chris Kundson and Leslie Harris, along with Joan Pleume of the New York Granny Peace Brigade.

**Drone pilots based at Creech AFB, directed by the CIA and the Pentagon**, regularly carry out drone strikes against targets in Afghanistan and Pakistan, killing many civilians and terrorizing the population.

***A larger civil disobedience action is planned for Friday.***

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March 31, 2016 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Military Veterans Arrested at Creech Air Force Base Trying to Stop Drone Warfare**

Indian Springs, NV – During peak rush hour traffic on Thursday March 31st at Creech AFB, military veterans and friends were arrested while waving Veterans for Peace (VFP) flags and nonviolently blocking traffic at the East Gate on Hwy. 95, the primary commuter gate into the base. As the traffic was impeded, Las Vegas Police diverted cars up the highway to less used, alternative gates.

At the same time, 20 people held vigil between the frontage road and US Highway 95 as four other peace and justice activists greeted the diverted traffic with a second peaceful anti-drone blockade expressed as a sitting silent meditation in front of the second gate.

The arrests at 7:50 AM today were part of a week-long orchestrated effort by over 100 activists from over 20 states in the country, mobilized to oppose the U.S. drone program that uses remotely controlled planes controlled at Creech to indiscriminately drop missiles on some of the most vulnerable

populations in the world. Thursday's traffic was delayed for fifteen minutes, as Creech employees and contractors were diverted to the 2nd gate, and then to the 3rd gate once demonstrators blocked the 2nd gate. The prayer-activists at the 2nd gate were not arrested.

This was the first of several civil resistance actions planned during the week-long National Mass Mobilization against Drone Warfare known as SHUT DOWN CREECH. All of the demonstrators who were arrested were taken to the Las Vegas Metropolitan County Jail.

Meanwhile the remaining activists at "Camp Justice" across from the base continue the regular schedule of nonviolence training and strategy sessions for creative and nonviolent ways to stop the illegal assassination program at Creech Air Force Base for as long as possible.

The 8 activists arrested were:

Barry Binks, VFP, California

Leslie Harris, VFP, Texas

Tarak Kauff, VFP, New York

Chris Knudsen, VFP, CA, California

Barry Ladendorf, VFP, California

Ken Mayers, VFP, New Mexico

Joan Pleune, NY Granny Peace Brigade, New York Col.

Ann Wright, VFP and retired 29 year army veteran, and former U.S. diplomat, Hawaii

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## **Press Release: Drone Protesters' Charges Dismissed**

16 December  
2015

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

info: [www.upstatedroneaction.org](http://www.upstatedroneaction.org)

**ANTI-REAPER DRONE PROTESTERS'  
CHARGES DISMISSED IN DEWITT TOWN COURT**

This afternoon, December 16, town of DeWitt (NY) judge Robert Jokl dismissed the charges against the five anti-Reaper drone protesters arrested on September 21, 2015. The protesters had blocked the main entrance of Hancock Air Force Base near Syracuse with three long one-word banners reading **DRONES KILL CHILDREN.**

Hancock is the home of the 174th *Attack* Wing of the New York State National Guard.

The five Central New Yorkers are from Syracuse and Ithaca, and are each active in the Upstate Drone Action Coalition.

That Coalition alleges that the 174th *Attack* Wing commits ongoing war crime for its weaponized Reaper drone missions over Afghanistan. The robotic unmanned Reapers operated by remote control notoriously kill many civilians both within and beyond war zones through the Middle East and West Asia.

Pro bono attorney Jonathan Wallace argued before Judge Jokl that the prosecution's paperwork was woefully inadequate. That the prosecutor failed to even appear in court probably did not help his case.

The five – along with many others – have each been arrested and incarcerated for previous nonviolent anti-drone protests at Hancock:

- Dan Burgevin
- Ed Kinane
- Bonny Mahoney
- Julienne Oldfield

- James Ricks.

Since 2010 scores of Upstate Drone Action members have been arrested for their nonviolent protests at Hancock.

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## Prosecution Rests in Hancock Trial

*June 25, 2015, DeWitt, NY:* Four concerned citizens are on trial before Judge Joseph Zavaglia in the DeWitt Town Court for their action at Hancock Drone Base, a suburb of Syracuse, NY, on April 28, 2013. The four are Jules Orkin of Bergenfield, NJ, Ellen Barfield of Baltimore, MD, Beverly Rice, and Joan Pleune of NYC.

Jury selection was yesterday. The jury of six and two alternates, were chosen from the Town of DeWitt. One of the jurors said he thinks Edward Snowden should be executed and that weaponized drones are good.

The Assistant District Attorney, Peter Hakes started his case today, with only one witness taking the stand. After a full day of questioning of the witness, Chief Master Sergeant Ramsey, the prosecution rested their case.

The four defendants are facing four charges, Obstruction of Governmental Administration, Trespass, and two Disorderly Conducts. If found guilty the activists could be sentenced to a year.

On April 28, 2013, 31 people were arrested as they tried to bring to the base an image of what a drone strike could look

like. The defendants participated in the action.

The Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and Stop the Wars along with colleague organizations Veterans For Peace and the Granny Peace Brigade to which the defendants belong, believe the killing is immoral and illegal, violating the United Nations Charter, and international treaty laws which under Article 6 of the US Constitution are part of the supreme law of the United States and supercede local and Federal law.

Since 2010 anti-drone activists have experienced nearly 200 arrests and numerous jail sentences at Hancock for scrupulously-nonviolent protests, as part of a national campaign to resist drones at a number of bases.

The trial will continue with the defense starting it's case on Friday morning. Please come support the defendants.

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