OMNI
DRONE/ASSASSINATION NEWSLETTER # 16.
March 29, 2015.

http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2015/03/drones-newsletter-16.html

Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace and Justice.


What’s at stake:

“America’s targeted killing program is illegal, immoral, and unwise.”

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

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The MQ-9 Reaper at Fort Smith, AR, Arkansas National Guard 188th Wing, the Flying Razorbacks

Dick, Fort Smith, AR, AFB Drones

Obama, Drone Warfare, Extrajudicial Killing, Google Search

Common Dreams, Obama Still Not Transparent

Dick, Review: Whittle, *Predator*

Marjorie Cohn, *Drones and Targeted Killing*

Chatterjee, Drone Pilots are Quitting

Veterans for Peace Protesting Drones at Creech AFB

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**MQ-9 Reaper**

*Published August 18, 2010*


The Reaper is larger and more heavily-armed than the MQ-1 Predator and attacks time-sensitive targets with persistence and precision, to destroy or disable those targets.

(Courtesy photo)
An MQ-9 Reaper sits on a ramp in Afghanistan Oct. 1. The Reaper is launched, recovered and maintained at deployed locations, while being remotely operated by pilots and sensor operators at Creech Air Force Base, Nev. (Courtesy photo)

A maintenance Airman inspects an MQ-9 Reaper in Afghanistan Oct. 1. Capable of striking enemy targets with on-board weapons, the Reaper has conducted close air support and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions. (Courtesy photo)


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Mission

The MQ-9 Reaper is an armed, multi-mission, medium-altitude, long-endurance remotely piloted aircraft that is employed primarily as an intelligence-collection asset and secondarily against dynamic execution targets. Given its significant loiter time, wide-range sensors, multi-mode communications suite, and precision weapons -- it provides a unique capability to perform strike, coordination, and reconnaissance against high-value, fleeting, and time-sensitive targets.

Reapers can also perform the following missions and tasks: intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, close air support, combat search and rescue, precision strike, buddy-laser, convoy/raid overwatch, route clearance, target development, and terminal air guidance. The MQ-9's capabilities make it uniquely qualified to conduct irregular warfare operations in
support of combatant commander objectives.

Features

The Reaper is part of a remotely piloted aircraft system. A fully operational system consists of several sensor/weapon-equipped aircraft, ground control station, Predator Primary Satellite Link, and spare equipment along with operations and maintenance crews for deployed 24-hour missions.

The basic crew consists of a rated pilot to control the aircraft and command the mission, and enlisted aircrew member to operate sensors and weapons as well as a mission coordinator, when required. To meet combatant commanders’ requirements, the Reaper delivers tailored capabilities using mission kits containing various weapons and sensor payload combinations.

The MQ-9 baseline system carries the Multi-Spectral Targeting System, which has a robust suite of visual sensors for targeting. The MTS-B integrates an infrared sensor, color/monochrome daylight TV camera, image-intensified TV camera, laser designator, and laser illuminator. The full-motion video from each of the imaging sensors can be viewed as separate video streams or fused.

The unit also incorporates a laser range finder/designator, which precisely designates targets for employment of laser-guided munitions, such as the Guided Bomb Unit-12 Paveway II. The Reaper is also equipped with a synthetic aperture radar to enable future GBU-38 Joint Direct Attack Munitions targeting. The MQ-9 can also employ four laser-guided missiles, Air-to-Ground Missile-114 Hellfire, which possess highly accurate, low-collateral damage, anti-armor and anti-personnel engagement capabilities.

The remotely piloted aircraft can be disassembled and loaded into a single container for deployment worldwide. The entire system can be transported in the C-130 Hercules, or larger aircraft. The MQ-9 aircraft operates from standard U.S. airfields with clear line-of-sight
to the ground data terminal antenna, which provides line-of-sight communications for takeoff and landing. The PPSL provides over-the-horizon communications for the aircraft and sensors.

The primary concept of operations, remote split operations, employs a launch-and-recovery ground control station for take-off and landing operations at the forward operating location, while the crew based in continental United States executes command and control of the remainder of the mission via beyond-line-of-sight links. Remote split operations result in a smaller number of personnel deployed to a forward location, consolidate control of the different flights in one location, and as such, simplify command and control functions as well as the logistical supply challenges for the weapons system.

Background

The U.S. Air Force proposed the MQ-9 Reaper system in response to the Department of Defense directive to support initiatives of overseas contingency operations. It is larger and more powerful than the MQ-1 Predator, and is designed to execute time-sensitive targets with persistence and precision, and destroy or disable those targets. The "M" is the DOD designation for multi-role, and "Q" means remotely piloted aircraft system. The "9" indicates it is the ninth in the series of remotely piloted aircraft systems.

General Characteristics

Primary Function: Intelligence collection in support of strike, coordination, and reconnaissance missions

Contractor: General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.

Power Plant: Honeywell TPE331-10GD turboprop engine

Thrust: 900 shaft horsepower maximum

Wingspan: 66 feet (20.1 meters)

Length: 36 feet (11 meters)
Height: 12.5 feet (3.8 meters)

Weight: 4,900 pounds (2,223 kilograms) empty

Maximum takeoff weight: 10,500 pounds (4,760 kilograms)

Fuel Capacity: 4,000 pounds (602 gallons)

Payload: 3,750 pounds (1,701 kilograms)

Speed: Cruise speed around 230 miles per hour (200 knots)

Range: 1,150 miles (1,000 nautical miles)

Ceiling: Up to 50,000 feet (15,240 meters)

**Armament:** Combination of AGM-114 Hellfire missiles, GBU-12 Paveway II and GBU-38 Joint Direct Attack Munitions

Crew (remote): Two (pilot and sensor operator)

**Unit Cost:** $56.5 million (includes four aircraft with sensors, ground control station and Predator Primary satellite link) (fiscal 2011 dollars)

Initial operating capability: October 2007

Inventory: Total force, 104

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Dick's Draft statement re drones at fs national guard air base begun 2-20-15

Our country continues to face ever-widening economic disparity, color discrimination and violence,
the militarization of police, more CIA torture revelations, and worst of all them together—climate change. But US drone war causes major harm both to the US and to the world, including the incitement of global hatred against our country by the lawlessness of the innocent people killed and the president’s extrajudicial executions.

Why do these drone attacks continue; why are they being prepared in Arkansas? And why is our Guard, admired for its help during floods and tornadoes, being tainted by operation of such lethal weapons for such illegal purposes? Why would our Guard want to continue bombing the children and families in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Niger, and other nations? Does our Guard not know about the killings? Do the men and women of the Arkansas Guard not understand the perpetual trauma of drone weapons and surveillance hovering over communities and striking without warning? And if our Guard men and women to know, have they no empathy for that immense suffering?

Well, as the preceding public relations report reveals, to the men and women of the 188th Arkansas Air Guard these questions are not relevant. The Reapers are part of the US empire of some thousand military bases around the world, ten carrier attack groups controlling the sea lanes, the multiple-boxcar C-130s (also in Arkansas at the Little Rock Air Force Base) heavy hauling imperial weapons including the reapers, the military Commands for every part of the planet, and a military budget equal to all the other major countries combined. Permanent world control and wars are their patriotic world view. We must not only speak to the people and to our representatives, which so far has failed to stop the growth of militarism and empire, but we must employ direct action.

What might you and I do to actively oppose this militarism and empire? Join the Conversion Campaign to redirect the military budget to civilian needs. Push our Guard to return to its true service for human beings, caring and nurturing life, instead of frightening and destroying it.

We can learn how to advocate and produce these familiar peaceful goals effectively. See OMNI’s many newsletters on drones, anti-war, individual US wars, the military-industrial complex, imperialism, the US security state (http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/).

Join one or more of the anti-war, anti-empire organizations of your choice. Identify the Congress men and women who are trying to contain and reverse the waste of our money and natural resources and immeasurably increasing global violence by endless war.

And remember, the growing militarism and imperialism of this country since the beginning of WWII will only be increased by the dire consequences of climate change, unless we stop its growth now. Our response to climate change should be the conversion from causing more victims to caring for the
Obama's drone wars and the normalisation of extrajudicial killing...

The Guardian
Jun 11, 2012 - Michael Boyle: Executive privilege has seduced the president into a reckless 'kill first, ask questions later' policy that explodes the US...

Obama's itchy trigger finger on drone strikes: what happened to due process? .... admits to killing four Americans as part of its war on (or is it “war of”?) .... The extrajudicial killing of an American citizen seemed to him to be ...

Targeted Killings and Drone Warfare - Council on Foreign Relations
Since assuming office in 2009, President Barack Obama's administration has ... The primary focus of U.S. targeted killings, particularly through drone strikes, has ... Philip Alston, the former UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, ...

Obama's Drone Wars and the Normalization of Extrajudicial Murder...

Common Dreams NewsCenter
Jun 11, 2012 - Obama's Drone Wars and the Normalization of Extrajudicial Murder. Executive privilege has seduced the president into a reckless 'kill first, ask ...

US Forced to Release Memo on Extrajudicial Drone Killing...

Common Dreams NewsCenter
Jun 23, 2014 - US Forced to Release Memo on Extrajudicial Drone Killing of US Citizen ... the Bush and Obama administrations to authorize ongoing war and ...

Covert Drone War | The Bureau of Investigative Journalism
Bureau of Investigative Journalism

Drone Warfare. The evolving international use of armed drones. More ... The monthly updates from the Bureau on the covert war. ... Almost 2,500 now killed by covert US drone strikes since Obama inauguration six years ago: The Bureau's ...

  Obama's drone warfare: A legal way to kill? | Fox News
www.foxnews.com/.../obama-drone-warfare-legal-wa...Fox News Channel
Apr 24, 2014 - “Extra-judicial killing” is a targeted killing of a victim by someone in the executive branch without due process. The president wanted the latter, ...

  Did Obama's Drone War Help Cause Yemen's Collapse?
www.slate.com/.../did_obama_s_drone_war_help_cause_yemen_s-
Slate
Jan 27, 2015 - A U.S. drone strike hit a vehicle in central Yemen on Monday, killing three ... of a U.S. citizen being targeted for extrajudicial killing overseas.

  Targeted killing - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Targeted_killing
Wikipedia
Jump to Obama Administration position on combat drones - While noting that a moredetailed ... of the U.S. Senate Judiciary committee, Patrick ... Obama defended the use of drones as just ... targeted killings would not be a war ...

  Extrajudicial Killings through Drones
readersupportednews.org/.../16209-extrajudicial-killings-through-drones
Feb 25, 2013 - ... the US President Barack Obama has broken all the record of human rights by extrajudicial killings of the innocent ... attacks, openly admitted that 4,700 people have been killed by the raids of America's secretive drone war.

COMMON DREAMS News & Views | 3.16.15

Obama Promised Transparency on Drones, But We’re Still in the Dark
by Matthew Spurlock
As long as the government continues its campaign of secret, unacknowledged lethal strikes across the globe, we will fight to subject this policy to the scrutiny and debate it deserves.


**Book Review** by Howard Schneider • 17 February 2015 ... I can only offer a partial **summary** of *Predator* because the author provides a (adeptly rendered) ...

Comment on review by Dick Bennett:

When I finished reading this review I thought I had accidentally picked up the *Air Force Magazine*. Schneider’s enthusiasm for Whittle’s enthusiasm for drones is unbounded, as though he were talking about a new automobile technology or weight-loss techno-fix. A moral problem in extrajudicial killing directly ordered by the President? Whittle/Schneider dismiss the denunciation by the UN’s Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions by quoting President Bush’s 2001 CIA Memorandum of Notification modifying Pres. Reagan’s ban on assassinations, and by Pres. Obama’s defense of legality of drones, and he puts aside the Bill of Rights and established principles and practices of criminal law with these words: “I think that Obama’s policy is judicious, and about as civilized as it is possible to be in this ghastly conflict.” Furthermore, he thinks his comparison of drones to “other long-range missiles, artillery, and bombers” absolves drones of their terror, when in fact he reveals how unthoughtful he is about the killing machines of modern war. But Schneider’s most damning revelation of his childlike morality is this statement: “At the very least, opponents of the use of the Predator ought to know that Whittle offers ample proof that the moral and legal issues raised by its use have been earnestly contemplated and debated in the Pentagon and CIA.” Atrocities are now ethical so long as they have been sincerely discussed in advance? Like those who praise Clint Eastwood’s glorification of a US sniper, Whittle and Schneider are dazed by permanent war? What is this review doing in *The Humanist*?

*Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal, Moral and Geopolitical Issues*, edited by Marjorie Cohn; foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. 2015.

“This book provides much-needed analysis of why America’s targeted killing program is illegal, immoral, and unwise.”
EXPERT ANALYSIS OF AN ILLEGAL AND IMMORAL PRACTICE

The Bush administration detained and tortured suspected terrorists; the Obama administration assassinates them. Assassination, or targeted killing, off the battlefield not only causes more resentment against the United States, it is also illegal. In this interdisciplinary collection, human rights and political activists, policy analysts, lawyers and legal scholars, a philosopher, a journalist and a sociologist examine different aspects of the U.S. policy of targeted killing with drones and other methods. It explores the legality, morality and geopolitical considerations of targeted killing and resulting civilian casualties, and evaluates the impact on relations between the United States and affected countries.

The book includes the documentation of civilian casualties by the leading non-governmental organization in this area; stories of civilians victimized by drones; an analysis of the first U.S. targeted killing lawsuit by the lawyer who brought the case; a discussion of the targeted killing cases in Israel by the director of PCATI which filed one of the lawsuits; the domestic use of drones; and the immorality of drones using Just War principles.

Contributors include: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Phyllis Bennis, Medea Benjamin, Marjorie Cohn, Richard Falk, Tom Hayden, Pardiss Kebriaei, Jane Mayer, Ishai Menuchin, Jeanne Mirer, John Quigley, Dr. Tom Reifer, Alice Ross, Jay Stanley, and Harry Van der Linden.

Marjorie Cohn is a professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego, former president of the National Lawyers Guild, and deputy secretary general of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. Her books include Cowboy Republic: Six Ways the Bush Gang Has Defied the Law; Rules of Disengagement: The Politics and Honor of Military Dissent (with Kathleen Gilberd); and the edited volume, The United States and Torture: Interrogation, Incarceration and Abuse. Cohn is a recipient of the Peace Scholar of the Year Award from the Peace and Justice Studies Association. She testified before Congress about the Bush torture policy.

Olive Branch Press

More Reviews

“Very important book… In a few months we will commemorate the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, which, despite the limits of the day, established the founding principle of modern law: presumption of innocence. Today that principle has been rescinded. Guilty verdicts are no longer to be rendered by a jury of peers, but by a White House session
deciding who we are going to kill today—along with whatever unfortunates happen to be in
the vicinity of the drone attack. As these valuable essays show, Obama’s global terror
campaign is a menace to the world, and Americans are not likely to escape unscathed.”

—Noam Chomsky

“Armed unmanned drones have radically reduced the practical constraints on the use of
force, and in so doing present challenging legal, political and moral issues. This hard-hitting
collection offers multiple critiques of drone targeting, raising – if not resolving – many of the
questions that must be asked as nations increasingly develop and deploy unarmed drones as
a security tool.”

—David Cole, Georgetown University Law Center

“Just weeks before 9/11, U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk, told the Israelis: ‘The
United States government is very clearly on the record as against targeted assassinations.
They are extrajudicial killings, and we do not support that.’ This extraordinary collection shows
how two presidents abandoned that principled stand and, more importantly, the need to
reclaim it.”

—Mary Ellen O’Connell, Professor of Law, University of Notre Dame

“Cogent and powerful… this book is a rapid-fire attack on the US policy of targeted
assassination by drone or other means… Most importantly it is a reasoned and legalistic
addition to the demand that this policy end now and forever.”

—Ron Jacobs, Counterpunch

“Marjorie Cohn’s new book Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal Moral and Geopolitical Issues
makes the unanswerable case that targeted killing, off the battlefield, is illegal and
unjustifiable… I wholeheartedly commend this book.”

—Richard Harvey, Socialist Lawyer

Why Are Drone Pilots Quitting In Huge Numbers?
The drone war is in crisis, and not because civilians are dying or the right to wage it is in question in Washington.

BY PRATAP CHATTERJEE

Friday, March 13, 2015

Shutdown at Creech AFB Huge Success!

Last week, over 50 members of Veterans For Peace traveled to Creech Air Force Base, home of the CIA drone program, to “Shut Down Creech!” The national mobilization incorporated daily peace vigils, teach-ins, direct action training, art builds, and civil disobedience. **VFP Board Member and Vietnam Continuous Objector, Gerry Condon**, wrote the message reaching out to drone operators and support personnel. Members of Veterans For Peace delivered roughly 50 letters to airmen (and women) who were exiting/entering the base during the week. On Friday, VFP members marched to the base entrance shouting a "no drones" cadence. Both entrances to the base where shut down for about an hour as protesters blocked the gates. **Col. Ann Wright** read the message over the bullhorn to military police and base personnel. Ten (10) VFP members were arrested for crossing the white line outside the base entrance.

For more Creech videos, articles, etc, click [here](#)

CONTACT PRESIDENT OBAMA

*Write or Call the White House*

President Obama is committed to creating the most open and accessible administration in American history. That begins with taking comments and questions from you, the public, through our website.
Call the President

PHONE NUMBERS
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414

TTY/TTD
Comments: 202-456-6213
Visitor's Office: 202-456-2121

Write a letter to the President

Here are a few simple things you can do to make sure your message gets to the White House as quickly as possible.

1. If possible, email us! This is the fastest way to get your message to President Obama.

2. If you write a letter, please consider typing it on an 8 1/2 by 11 inch sheet of paper. If you hand-write your letter, please consider using pen and writing as neatly as possible.

3. Please include your return address on your letter as well as your envelope. If you have an email address, please consider including that as well.

4. And finally, be sure to include the full address of the White House to make sure your message gets to us as quickly and directly as possible:

   The White House
   1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
   Washington, DC 20500


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US Drone Warfare

PBS NOVA, “Rise of the Drones” a Pro-Drones History

Bureau of Investigative Journalism (UK), Tracking the Covert Drone War

Democracy Now!, US Drone Warfare Expanding to Niger

Can't Find Enough “Pilots”
Campaign to End Drone Warfare

Kathy Kelly,

Arrested and Sentenced for Opposition

Google Search: Only a Part of Kelly’s International Presence for Mercy and Peace

Erica Brock, “An Opportunity to Rejoice,” Story of Mark Colville’s Protests and Arrest at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base

VFP Protest at Creech AFB

Compassion for Child Drone Victim in Yemen

Jenna Krajeski’s Review of 5 Books

Recent 2015 OMNI Newsletter Contexts for US Drone Warfare: It’s the War Department

Contact President Obama

END DRONE NEWSLETTER #16

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Dick Bennett

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