

By Mary Anne Grady Flores

On Friday, December 23rd, four activists, all members of Veterans for Peace, were arrested at the main entrance of Hancock Air National Guard Base. Many throughout the world prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace from Palestine. The four [Upstate Drone Action](#) members engaged in civil resistance by setting up a nativity scene at the main entrance of Hancock Reaper Drone Base. Angels and carolers played a supporting role from across the street. The base is located on East Molloy Road in the town of DeWitt, E. Syracuse New York.

Hancock hosts the 174th Attack Wing of the NY Air National Guard – the MQ9 Reaper drone hub. Hancock is also the national Reaper maintenance training center.

The MQ9 Reaper is a robotic, satellite-linked, remote assassin drone. Hancock drone pilots fly unmanned missions over Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern, African and West Asian nations. The CIA uses Reapers for its illegal lethal missions over Northwest Pakistan.

According to *Living Under Drones: Death, Injury and Trauma to Civilians from US Drone Practices in Pakistan*, published by Stanford University and New York University Law Schools, such missions are responsible in that region for the deaths of hundreds of noncombatants, including women and children, and for the terrorizing of thousands more.

Mary, being handcuffed, noted that “If Herod had a Reaper, Jesus, Mary and Joseph and I would have been incinerated.” Joseph, also arrested, noted, “The indiscriminate and illegal killings of so many holy families in the Mid-East must stop!”

Today’s civil resistance action is one chapter in Upstate Drone Action’s six-year scrupulously nonviolent campaign to expose the Hancock AFB war crime. Since 2010 there have been over 170 anti-Reaper arrests at Hancock.

Those arrested today:

- John Amidon, Albany, NY
- Ed Kinane, Syracuse, NY
- Jules Orkin, Bergenfield, NJ
- Bev Rice, New York, NY