

By Toby Blome

### **Wheatland Gate (for the morning commute)**

Arriving in the dark of the morning to "greet" the early base commuters, we brought out the most visible banners first. When daylight broke, we began to display the cardboard Ahmadi figures.

Soon after daybreak we walked down the road that leads to the gate to have a peaceful blockade. Fred Bialy walked along the line of cars, handing out the Open Letter to Col. Heather Fox, the base commander. A few accepted.

Traffic was stalled for about 30 minutes and then we agreed to let some of the traffic through so they could read our banners and "witness" the memorial for the Ahmadi victims lined up in silhouette along the roadway. We then returned to blocking the road for about another 15 minutes or so. By that time the military police assisted our blockade by closing the barbed wire topped gates for us! We then crossed the white boundary line onto the base, and walked with a banner and some of the Ahmadi child figures to the now closed gate. By that time the editor/reporter from Marysville Appeal Democrat arrived to cover the event. We read our press statement to the military security and the media simultaneously, which included a list of our Ban Killer Drones demands seeking reparations for the Ahmadi family.

**[See the coverage in The Appeal-Democrat reposted in Yahoo News.](#)**

Ultimately, through the closed gate, the military read the "riot act," threatening arrest if we didn't leave base property. Toby completed reading the statement through the megaphone, while slowly walking backwards, to join the others already across the base property line. She then went back on base property, walked up to the closed gate and handed the Open Letter to the Beale commander to a uniformed man who claimed to be "in charge." Before leaving, Toby asked the other 6-7 military personnel present on the other side of the fenced gate if they would like to have a copy of the letter to read. Surprisingly, a young black woman in uniform had the courage, in front of her peers to accept the letter.

### **PM Action - Doolittle Gate (afternoon commute)**

When we arrived at the Doolittle Gate we were pleased to find a steady flow of traffic that continued throughout our vigil. Michael and Fred did a great job setting up the impactful visuals and Sharat and Susan stood closer to the traffic coming out of the base with the banner and two Ahmadi child figures.

Toby stood in the un-raised "divider" or "gore" near the stop sign, close to where military folks pull out onto the highway to return home. While holding "Malika, Age 3," Toby spent most of the vigil offering copies of the Open Letter to the Beale Commander to drivers waiting to merge onto the highway. Two military security personnel hovered near Toby much of the time making attempts to dissuade her from standing at the prime advantageous spot for leafletting. Surprisingly, many of the uniformed personnel seemed, nonetheless, eager to get a flyer. There appeared to be a "sea change" from past vigils, possibly showing signs of a small but hopeful change in group mentality. With persistence, Toby was able to get about 15 leaflets passed out. Eventually a CHP officer arrived, made repeated attempts to order Toby away from her prime spot, and eventually threatening to write a citation.

Military drones should NEVER have been developed, they make the world less safe for everyone, and since our government won't listen to it's citizens with a conscience, the only tool of resistance we have left to seek justice is blockading.