

By Brett Wilkins

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A group of 15 peace activists on Saturday wrapped up a week-long nonviolent, socially-distanced protest at a Nevada Air Force base housing a command and control center for unmanned aerial drones.

For the 11th straight year, CodePink and Veterans for Peace led their twice-annual Shut Down Creech [demonstration](#) against killer drones at Creech Air Force Base to “oppose the remote-control killing” orchestrated from the military facility located 45 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

To stop drone warfare, CODEPINK blockaded Creech AFB this past week, which is the kind of thing [#SaintFrancisDay](#) is meant for,,, during [#KeepSpace4Peace](#) week. No arrests in Clark County at the drone base—so happy

[#FeastDay](#)

y'all!

[pic.twitter.com/lw6z5VBGcz](https://pic.twitter.com/lw6z5VBGcz)

– Achorus Amorfus (@AchorusAmorfus) [October 4, 2020](#)

CodePink organizer Toby Blomé said the activists, who hail from California, Arizona, and Nevada, “were compelled to participate and take a strong and determined stance against the illegal and inhumane remote killing by U.S. drones that occurs daily” at Creech.

Indeed, hundreds of pilots sit in air-conditioned bunkers at the [base](#) – known as the “Home of the Hunters” – staring at screens and toggling joysticks to control the more than 100 heavily armed Predator and Reaper drones that launch airstrikes in around half a dozen countries, sometimes [killing civilians](#) along with targeted Islamist militants.

According to the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism, the US has carried out at least 14,000 drone strikes during the so-called War on Terror, [killing at least 8,800 people](#) – including between 900 and 2,200 civilians – in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen alone since 2004.

This year, the activists participated in a “soft blockade” to impede entry of the Air Force personnel who drive to work from their homes in metro Las Vegas. On Friday, two activists – Maggie Huntington of Flagstaff, Arizona, and Blomé, from El Cerrito, California – unfurled a banner reading, “Stop Droning Afghanistan, 19 Years ENOUGH!”

Huntington said she was “motivated to participate in this resistance, with the hope that we will teach the soldiers that they must take control of and understand the consequences of their actions.”

The activists caused a traffic jam on US Route 95, the main road leading to the base, and delayed vehicles from entering for about half an hour. They left the roadway after being threatened with arrest by Las Vegas Metropolitan Police.

Arrests were common in past years. Last year’s protest – which occurred shortly after a US drone strike [killed](#) dozens of Afghan farmers – resulted in the [arrest](#) of 10 peace activists. However, as many of the activists are elders, they did not want to risk being jailed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The activists also placed mock coffins in the road marked with the names of countries bombed by the US, and read the names of some of the thousands of drone strike victims – who include hundreds of children.

Other Shut Down Creech demonstrations during the week included a solemn mock funeral procession along the highway with black clothing, white masks, and small coffins, and LED light board letters in the pre-dawn hours declaring: "NO DRONES."

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