

The Baby Killers

By [Richard Neville](#)

Global Research, September 13, 2008

13 September 2008

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

In-depth Report: [AFGHANISTAN](#)

I keep promising myself not to mention the wars for these reasons: the invaders couldn't care less about their crimes or their critics, my friends think I've become a ranting bore and many of today's citizens have more pressing worries than the serial massacres of toddlers in badlands. Bad stuff keeps happening. It keeps being denied. And is soon forgotten.

From the very first days of the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, the U.S. air force has specialised in dropping bombs on family compounds supposedly containing "militants". Often they are not at home, unlike the women and children and elderly, whose bodies are eventually spread on the ground in preparation for a mass burial, while the Pentagon issues a curt "regret". Then it bombs the funeral. It's happened more than once. Another target is wedding parties. Back in July 2002, snug in their AC-130 bombers, American pilots wiped out a celebration in Uruzgan province, killing 48 civilians – mostly women and children – and injuring 117 locals. It's happened more than once.

It happened again this July, when a U.S. missile strike slaughtered 27 guests in Nangarhar province, 19 of them women and children. When locals arrived at the scene to care for the injured and collect the dead, four more bombs were unleashed, killing the bride and two of her relatives.

It's been much the same in Iraq and Pakistan, though barely reported. We kill on the hint of a whisper, kill because we can, kill because we rule the skies. Even as the Pentagon continued to deny its August massacre of 60 children and 15 women in Nawabad, in the district of Azizabad, Afghanistan, the bombs were raining down on a religious school in Waziristan, a tribal area of north west Pakistan. (The fourth U.S. assault this week on its "ally").

Unleashed by two drones, the strikes killed 23 people, though not the intended target, Jalaluddin Haqqani, a religious scholar and former commander of the U.S.-backed mujahideen which trounced the Russians ("Charlie's War"). Twenty others were wounded, mainly women and children. The guys who push the buttons at the Creech Air Force base in Nevada, managed to murder one of Haqqani wives, his sister-in-law, a sister, two nieces, eight grandchildren and a male relative.

"Sitting in a virtual cockpit is not as exciting as flying a fighter jet", noted CNN's breathless Laurie Ure, "but unmanned attack-plane pilots can enjoy a normal workday schedule". Captain Matt Dean agrees, "seeing bad guys on the screen and watching them possibly get dispatched, and then going down to the Taco Bell for lunch, it's kind of surreal". This is the Pentagon's version of Second Life, soon to be known as Exit Life. One day it will come to a war near you.

The latest unmanned bomber is called the Reaper and carries the same payload as an F-16 fighter plane, but happily, Laurie assures us – ‘its pilots are not put in harm’s way.’ Of course not, they’re eating tacos. Col. Chris Chambliss is commander of the 432nd Air Expeditionary Wing, which was established last year as the first unit dedicated to unmanned aerial systems and remote controlled assassinations. “We’re the victims of our own success”, he tells a Defence correspondent, while he plays tapes of the victims of the Reaper. Chambliss says there is an “insatiable appetite” for his systems and their “capabilities” and his air-wing is currently flying 28 combat air patrols around the clock, and rising.

On Sept 8, while the boys from Creech were wolfing down their tacos, the London Times published an eight-minute video of the massacre in Azizabad, the “most compelling evidence to emerge” of 75 civilian deaths. The hero here is an unnamed Afghan doctor who arrived at the scene with a cell phone and shot footage of weeping parents, injured children and charred babies – line upon line of shrouded corpses. Along with attack helicopters and a C130 Spectre gunship, armed drones were used in the attack.

And so it goes, this depressing spiral of wars without end, arms trading, Government lies, the obliteration of the innocent and an insane certainty that our Kilpingesque military missions are wise and noble. Oh yes, Australia’s on board, fists flying. We’re building a bigger navy to defend our sea lanes from, er, what? Oh yes, Asia’s ascent. George Bush, Barack Obama and John McCain are pushing for a “surge” in Afghanistan, a country which never attacked anyone. True, it did harbour Osama bin Laden, just as America once harboured the Shah of Iran and still harbours anti-Castro terrorists and fully backed General Pinochet and nourished Pervez Musharraf and still trains torturers, etc, but as yet no army has invaded Washington.

Why are we in Afghanistan? “To spread democracy”. Surely it’s death we’re spreading. If we cared about democracy we’d be listening to the locals, who want us out. In the most recent survey of public opinion, (this June, prior to the latest bout of killings), “more than six out of ten of those interviewed... said that foreign troops should leave.” And let’s not mention the encroaching famine – no-one else does.

The only war worth fighting anymore, is the war against carbon emissions. Instead of which, we’re being sucked into an arms build-up, which will further scorch the planet. The chance of changing this priority is slim, given the West’s long devotion to bloody combat. According to Johan Galtung, a longtime peace researcher and futurist, the “number of people killed in overt Pentagon-driven military action after the Second World War is now between 13 and 17 million”. That’s not a misprint. The number of people killed in covert action is “at least 6 million”. Such figures are not to be found on Fox News, or even in the New York Times.

So while war may be hell, it’s as American as apple pie, and unlikely to disappear before we do. It also explains why John McCain is edging ever closer the White House. In an era when Geneva is mocked, dissent ineffective and baby killing tolerated, it is strangely perfect that a presidential aspirant and his running mate should have blood on their hands, whether of Vietnamese civilians or an Alaskan Moose. If America signs up to this dark adventure, forget about calming the weather, restoring the eco system and embarking on an age of sustainability and transformation. All you’ll get is a blood bath.

Footnote: Within hours of publishing this piece, it is reported that U.S. drones fired several missiles at a house of a “militant” in North Waziristan, leaving 12 people dead, including

women and children. Eight others have been taken to hospital. They'll be dancing on the tables at Taco Bell's.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Richard Neville](#), Global Research, 2008

[**Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page**](#)

[**Become a Member of Global Research**](#)

Articles by: [Richard Neville](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca