



## **A Dossier on Civilian Victims of United States' Aerial Bombing of Afghanistan: A Comprehensive Accounting**

"What causes the documented high level of civilian casualties -- 3,767 [thru December 6, 2001] civilian deaths in eight and a half weeks -- in the U.S. air war upon Afghanistan? The explanation is the apparent willingness of U.S. military strategists to fire missiles into and drop bombs upon, heavily populated areas of Afghanistan."

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When U.S. warplanes strafed [with AC-130 gunships] the farming village of Chowkar-Karez, 25 miles north of Kandahar on October 22-23rd, killing at least 93 civilians, a Pentagon official said, **"the people there are dead because we wanted them dead."** The reason? They sympathized with the Taliban[1] . When asked about the Chowkar incident, Rumsfeld replied, **"I cannot deal with that particular village."**[2]

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A U.S. officer aboard the US aircraft carrier, Carl Vinson, described the use of 2,000 lb cluster bombs dropped by B-52 bombers: **"A 2,000 lb. bomb, no matter where you drop it, is a significant emotional event for anyone within a square mile."**[3]

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Mantra of the U.S. mainstream corporate media: **"the report cannot be independently verified"**

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". . . shameful dependence on and uncritical acceptance of Pentagon handouts instead of substantial, critical coverage of the ground situation in Afghanistan. The US corporate media seems to be muting any talk of civilian casualties first by framing any such news with "Taliban claims that . . ." and then happily putting the matter to rest with Pentagon spokesman . . ." [Joel Lee, "civilian casualties -- notes from India", *Znet Inter Active*]

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"When people decry civilian deaths caused by the U.S. government, they're aiding propaganda efforts. In sharp contrast, when civilian deaths are caused by bombers who hate America, the perpetrators are evil and those deaths are tragedies. When they put bombs in cars and kill people, they're uncivilized killers. When we put bombs on missiles and kill people, we're upholding civilized values. When they kill, they're terrorists. When we kill, we're striking against terror."[4]

## Abstract

What causes the documented high level of civilian casualties -- 3,767 civilian deaths in eight and a half weeks -- in the U.S. air war upon Afghanistan? The explanation is the apparent willingness of U.S. military strategists to fire missiles into and drop bombs upon, heavily populated areas of Afghanistan. A legacy of the ten years of civil war during the 80s is that many military garrisons and facilities are located in urban areas where the Soviet-backed government had placed them since they could be better protected there from attacks by the rural mujahideen. Successor Afghan governments inherited these emplacements. To suggest that the Taliban used 'human shields' is more revealing of the historical amnesia and racism of those making such claims, than of Taliban deeds. Anti-aircraft emplacements will naturally be placed close by ministries, garrisons, communications facilities, etc. A heavy bombing onslaught must necessarily result in substantial numbers of civilian casualties simply by virtue of proximity to 'military targets', a reality exacerbated by the admitted occasional poor targeting, human error, equipment malfunction, and the irresponsible use of out-dated Soviet maps. But, **the critical element remains the very low value put upon Afghan civilian lives by U.S. military planners and the political elite**, as clearly revealed by U.S. willingness to bomb heavily populated regions. Current Afghan civilian lives must and will be sacrificed in order to [possibly] protect future American lives. Actions speak, and words [can] obscure: the hollowness of pious pronouncements by Rumsfeld, Rice and the compliant corporate media about the great care taken to minimize collateral damage is clear for all to see. Other U.S. bombing targets hit are impossible to 'explain' in terms other than the U.S. seeking to inflict maximum pain upon Afghan society and perceived 'enemies': the targeted bombing of the Kajakai dam power station, the Kabul telephone exchange, the Al Jazeera Kabul office, trucks and buses filled with fleeing refugees, and the numerous attacks upon civilian trucks carrying fuel oil. Indeed, the bombing of Afghan civilian infrastructure parallels that of the Afghan civilian.

For Feriba, Mohammed, Assaduleh, Rukia and the countless others who may now be counted and remembered, and not vanish quietly as "could not be verified independently."

### **Feriba, a young Afghan girl, refugee in Pakistan[5]:**

"I and all my classmates are very sad because of the situation in our homeland. When our teacher said in the class that many people have been killed in Afghanistan, I and my all classmates started weeping because everyone has relatives there. I expect America not to kill the poor Afghans. They are hungry and poor."



The air attack on Afghanistan began at 4:20 G.M.T., October 7th . The following day, Reuters carried an interview with a 16-year-old ice-cream vendor from Jalalabad who said he had lost his leg and two fingers in a Cruise missile strike on an airfield near his home:

"There was just a roaring sound, and then I opened my eyes and I was in a hospital," said the boy, called Assadullah, speaking in Peshawar after being taken across the border for medical help. "I lost my leg and two fingers. There were other people hurt. People were running all over the place".[6]



16 yr old, Assaduleh, one of the first civilians hit by a U.S. missile

[Reuters photo, at <http://hamilton.indymedia.org/local/webcast/uploads/metafiles/ww3victim.jpg> ]

**Mohammed Raza**, an odd-job man, was not so lucky. At 8 p.m. as he was walking back home, near to the Jalalabad airport. A cruise missile targeted at a Taliban facility "a few hundred yards away", strayed and landed next to him. Shrapnel pierced his neck, grazing his spine, paralyzing him.[7]

Three days later, a researcher at the Institute for Health & Social Justice, Partners in Health of Harvard University, H.J. Chien, confirmed that civilians had been killed in Jalalabad and elsewhere.[8] On October 9th, the *Pakistan Observer* [Islamabad] daily newspaper reported on the first night, "37 Killed, 81 Injured in Sunday's Strikes." [9] The casualties spanned four provinces: Kabul [20], Herat [9], Kandahar [4] and Jalalabad [4]. By October 10th, *The Guardian* reported 76 dead civilians.[10] And by October 15th, the leading Indian daily, *The Times* of India was mentioning over 300 civilian casualties and that the US-UK bombing action was in violation of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter allowing the use of force in self-defense.[11] On the following day [October 16th], the alternative U.S. media noted that during the first week of bombing, 400 Afghan civilians had been slaughtered.[12]

Yet, the mainstream western press only took note of civilian casualties on October 9th when a cruise missile destroyed the building of the United Nations land mine removing contracting firm, the Afghan Technical Center, in the upper class Macroyan residential district of eastern Kabul, killing four night watchmen.[13] Tellingly, the day before, October 8th, twenty other Afghans living near the Kabul airport [in the Qasabah Khana neighborhood] and near the Kabul radio station were also killed. On October 10th, the Sultanpur Mosque in Jalalabad was hit by a bomb during prayers, killing 17 people. As neighbors rushed into the rubble to pull out one injured, a second bomb was dropped reportedly killing at least another 120 people [though I have not included this figure in my tally].[14]

Fleeing the intense bombing in Kandahar, Mehmood, a Kandahar merchant, brought his family to his ancestral village of Chowkar-Karez, a village 25 miles north of Kandahar. His extended family, crowded into six cars, arrived at a village just about when it was attacked

by U.S. warplanes in the night of October 22/23rd. Ironically, the cars arriving in the night may have prompted the raid -- as the Pentagon labels "a target of opportunity." Said Mehmood, "I brought my family here for safety, and now there are 19 dead, including my wife, my brother, sister, sister-in-law, nieces, nephews, my uncle. What am I supposed to do now?"[15]

At 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 27th, a U.S. bomb and missile fired from a F-18 hit the village of Khan Agaha at the entrance of the Kapisa Valley, some 80 kms northeast of Kabul. The U.S. planes dropped 35 bombs in the area. Ten civilians were reportedly instantly killed said an ambulance driver who had gone to the village. A nearby hospital to which victims were rushed, run by the Italian relief agency, Emergency, said up to 16 people had been killed in Saturday's attack on Khan Agaha.[16] Television photos taken by Britain's Sky News showed footage of the F-18 dropping bombs, hitting a mud and timber family home. The TV report said ten members of a family were missing under the rubble and another twenty were injured. A five year-old girl lay in a wheelbarrow with a bloodied face.[17]

On Monday, October 29th, citing Reuters, The *Times* of India reported from Kabul,

"a US bomb flattened a flimsy mud-brick home in Kabul on Sunday blowing apart seven children as they ate breakfast with their father. The blast shattered a neighbour's house killing another two children . . . the houses were in a residential area called Qalaye Khatir near a hill where the hard-line Taliban militia had placed an anti-aircraft gun."[18]

The Afghan town of Charikar, 60 kms north of Kabul, has been the recipient of many US bombs and missiles. On Saturday, November 17th, US bombs killed two entire families -- one of 16 members and the other of 14 -- perished, together in the same house.[19]

On the same day, bomb strikes in Khanabad near Kunduz, killed 100 people. A refugee, Mohammed Rasul, recounts himself burying 11 people, pulled out of ruins there [*ibid*].

Multiply these scenes by a couple hundred and the reality on-the-ground in the Afghan October and November is approximated. This same reality is blithely dismissed by the Pentagon and the compliant U.S. corporate media with "the claims could not be independently verified," whereas the military press calls reports of high civilian casualties as being "inflated by air." [20] Another comments on the "humanity of the air war." [21] Yet another, wails about too much press coverage of civilian casualties by a media unable to understand that some civilian casualties must occur but that "what IS newsworthy is that so many bombs hit their targets".[22]



**The U.S. Bombing of Kapisa Villages**

Photo: Agence France Presse, October 28, 2001

Little mention made in the U.S mainstream press.[23] Even better, seven weeks into the war, a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* could write without shame,

". . . although estimates are still largely guesses, some experts believe that more than 1,000 Taliban and opposition troops have probably died in the fighting, along with **at least dozens of civilians**." [24]

Dozens? Hundreds? Thousands, as we shall document.

Apparently, the only real casualties noted are those either connected to a western enterprise or organization, or those "independently verified" by western individuals and/or organizations. In other words, the high levels of civilian casualties are simply written off to 'enemy' propaganda and ignored.[25]

The American Afghan War -- historically the Fourth Afghan War -- is anything but a 'just war' as James Carroll has adroitly pointed out.[26] First, the disproportionate U.S. response of making an entire other nation and people 'pay' for the crimes of a few is obvious to anyone who seeks out the real 'costs' perpetrated upon the people of Afghanistan. Action should be based upon some measure of proportionality, which here clearly is not the case. Secondly, this war does little to impede the cycle of violence of which the WTC attacks are merely one manifestation. The massive firepower unleashed by the Americans will no doubt invite similar indiscriminate carnage. Injustices will flower. Thirdly, by defining these events as a war rather than a police action without providing any argument for the necessity of the former, the American Afghan War is un-necessary and, hence, not 'just.' As Carroll writes, "the criminals, not an impoverished nation, should be on the receiving end of punishment."

It is simply unacceptable for civilians to be slaughtered as a side-effect of an intentional strike against a specified target. There is no difference between the attacks upon the WTC whose primary goal was the destruction of a symbol, and the U.S-U.K revenge coalition bombing of military targets located in populated urban areas. Both are criminal. Slaughter is slaughter. Killing civilians even if unintentional is criminal.

In order to make the American Afghan War appear 'just', it becomes imperative to completely block out access to information on the true human costs of this war.[26b] The actions of the Bush-Rumsfeld-Rice trio speak eloquently to these efforts: calling-in major U.S news networks to give them their marching orders, buying up all commercial satellite imagery available to the general public, sending Powell off to Qatar to lecture the independent Al Jazeera news network, and lastly, when that failed targeting the Kabul office of Al Jazeera and scoring a direct missile hit on it. In mid-October, Duncan Campbell reported how the Pentagon was spending millions of dollars to prevent western media from buying highly accurate civilian satellite pictures of the effects of the U.S bombing. The Pentagon decision was taken on October 11th after reports of heavy civilian casualties from overnight [10/11] bombing of Darunta near Jalalabad. The Pentagon bought exclusive rights to all Ikonos satellite pictures from the Denver-based Space Imaging Inc.[27] Lastly, as has been pointed out, the major U.S corporate media have devoted only sparse moments to the topic of civilian casualties, obeying the Bush-Pentagon directives.

Preventing the images of human suffering caused by the U.S bombing from reaching U.S audiences, creates precisely what the Pentagon and Bush seek: a "war without witnesses."

The power of images in the age of global information is now clearly recognized. According to Gilbert Holleules of the Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Centre for Human Rights, images have begun to replace reality. It is only when we see moving pictures that we process events as an actual experience and only when we see real people suffering that we make a personal connection to them.[28] For this reason, the *Al Jazeera* TV news from Kabul posed such a threat to the Bush war.

This report sets the record straight: **we shall document how Afghanistan has been subjected to a barbarous air bombardment which has killed an average of 62 civilians per day since that fateful evening of Sunday, October 7th. When the sun set on December 6th, at least 3,767 Afghan civilians had died in U.S bombing attacks [roughly equivalent to about 38,000 U.S civilian or the equivalent of eleven World Trade Center attacks]. Detailed day-by-day data is presented in Appendix 4. We let the voices of Afghan refugees speak about the U.S bombings in Appendix 1, which present qualitative corroboration of our figures.**

Naturally, skeptics will howl about how accurate data might be collected. I have relied upon official news agencies, major newspapers, reported first-hand accounts. Whenever possible, I have sought cross-corroboration [the idea being that if a couple major news agencies report the event, then it is more likely accurate]. I have avoided granting greater reliability to U.S. or British sources -- the ethnocentric bias. When greater detail was given about the specifics of a bombing attack, I lent it greater credibility

I have used figures reported by official news agencies [e.g. from *Agence France-Presse* to *Afghan Islamic Press*, etc.], from news reporters who visited the scene, from eyewitness and survivor reports, from distinguished NGOs [like *RAWA* and *Emergency Italy*], from news stories published in reputable national newspapers. I have eschewed making judgements about the relative reliability of one nation's news agencies and reporters versus another's. My assumption is that reporters, news story editors, and national-level media outlets try to report as accurately as possible given the resources at their disposal. For example, if *The Times* of India, reports an incident, I am assuming that an editor judged the account to be accurate. Behroz Khan has provided outstanding detailed reporting on events on the ground for the Pakistan Jang newspaper's *The News International*.

My belief is that casualty figures reported shortly after a bombing incident are a fairly accurate description of what occurred. Surviving victims who resided in the area have first-hand knowledge of the local demographics. Three additional factors argue for using reports immediately after an incident in Afghanistan:

1. Locating bodies can prove to be very difficult [even in the developed United States as seen with the WTC attacks] and hence relying purely upon body counts compiled later will seriously underestimate the casualties;
2. The Muslim practice of immediate burial by nightfall makes body counting difficult;  
and
3. The out-migration of families in the wake of severe bombing leads to victim accounts simply disappearing.

Lastly, I have assigned greater reliability to accounts where greater detail has been provided,

e.g., names of persons, survivor accounts, description of bombing results, and the like. The great majority of U.S bombs fell upon or next to individual homes or upon villages, making it easier to develop accurate tallies [as compared to the 1000s working in a couple giant skyscrapers where initial casualties were greatly exaggerated]. Few of the hundreds of bombing incidents here reported resulted in over 30 civilian deaths. The high count of deaths per home is a result of the large number [ @ 6 ] of children per woman.

Specifically, I have relied upon Indian daily newspapers [especially The *Times* of India, considered the equivalent of The *New York Times*], three Pakistani dailies, the *Singapore News*, British, Canadian and Australian [*Sydney Morning Herald*, *Herald Sun*] newspapers, the *Afghan Islamic Press* [AIP based in Peshawar], the *Agence France Press* [AFP], the South African Broadcasting Corp. News, *Pakistan News Service* [PNS], and *Reuters*, *BBC News Online*, *Al Jazeera*, and a variety of other reputable sources. It should be noted that the independent, private *Afghan Islamic Press* [AIP] agency in Islamabad, Pakistan reported consistently lower cumulative casualty figures than the Taliban: on October 13th, AIP reported 250 whereas the Taliban listed 300 civilians killed; on November 6th, the AIP listed 633 while the Taliban reported about 1,500 civilian deaths.[29] The A.I.P. data listed 204 people killed in Kandahar, 163 in Nangarhar province east of Jalalabad, 92 in Kabul, and 79 in Herat. Many of the Taliban claims about civilian casualties are later confirmed by journalists on the scene, eye-witnesses, survivors, families of victims, U.N. sources, NGOs [like RAWA and *Emergency Italy*] etc.[30]

My tabulation for October 31st enters a figure of 15 civilians dying in a bombing attack of a Red Crescent hospital in Kandahar. Three different assessments were made in the aftermath:[31]

1. The Taliban claimed the raid killed 11 people;
2. The Pentagon said the strike missed both the hospital and another Red Crescent building nearby, and commented "it was a legitimate terrorist target, intentionally struck . . ."
3. Journalists later saw a large crater in the center of the clinic and hospital vehicles crushed by collapsed masonry. One doctor reported 15 dead and 25 seriously injured.[32]

Faced with such discrepancies, to me the most credible source is the doctor: 15 died. The similar figure is also mentioned in The *Times* [November 1, 2001], The *Independent* [October 31, 2001], and in both *Reuters* and *AFP* reports, as well as in Pakistan's leading English daily, *DAWN* [November 1, 2001]. In **Appendix 2**, I present additional detailed analysis of discrepancies and the lying in the mainstream media.

The oft-mentioned difficulties of getting accurate figures of impact deaths from aerial bombing need not detract from attempting to carry out such a study.[32a] To refrain invites leaving the terrain of public conversation occupied by the dubious assertions of the involved participants [e.g., the Pentagon and U.S State Department]. The bombing incidents described in this report mostly involve Afghan civilians killed by virtue of proximity to what U.S military planners deemed were "military targets."

Ms. King of the A.P., reports on an incident which took place on Saturday, October 13th .

The civilian areas of Qala Mir Abas and Qala Wakil were hit as part of the U.S bombing of Kabul airport. [32b] The Pentagon admitted that an incorrectly programmed 'smart bomb' missed a military helicopter at Kabul airport and fell into a residential neighborhood. [32c] Whereas the Taliban claimed that 4 civilians had been killed, Ms. King mentions that an A.P. correspondent who went to the scene was able to only 'confirm' one civilian death.

My dossier cites major British [2], Pakistani [3], and U.S [1] newspapers which mention a figure of four. [32d] A 2,000 lb. JDAM bomb was dropped from a Navy F-18 in a pre-dawn raid upon a series of mud homes in the Qala Mir Abas neighborhood, 2 kms. south of Kabul airport, killing four and injuring eight . The four killed included women and children. The figure of four seems the most plausible: it is cited in six newspapers and the bomb was very large-hitting a neighborhood at a time when people were sleeping.

Our tabulation represents a serious underestimate of actual civilian casualties: for many entries, no specific figures were given with note being made of "many", "scores", "dozens", or "countless" casualties [33] ; and data is simply unavailable in many cases, e.g., no data available for November 3, 4, 11 and 13, and for the effects of massive carpet-bombing by B-52s after October 30th. For example, on November 17th, massive carpet-bombing of Khanabad in Kunduz province, killed over 150 civilians. [34] As has been amply commented upon elsewhere, the widespread bombing has also stopped truck traffic [carrying supplies] and has contributed to the utter collapse of Afghanistan's hospital system in the heavily bombed areas like Kandahar [as staff fear going to work]. [35] No account is taken here either of bombing causing indirect casualties [e.g., from lack of water, power, medical care, etc.]. The Afghan hospital system had collapsed by late October under the bombing onslaught as hospital staff fled for safety. [36] Those wounded able to, head off to clinics in Pakistan, while "those too wounded or poor to make the journey have been left to die in their homes in Kandahar" [*ibid*]. In Kabul's 300 bed children's hospital, supplies ran out and most of the staff fled. [37]

The report raises trenchant questions about mainstream U.S reporting and official government claims, about the alleged accuracy of so-called 'smart' weapons, and about the *revealed differential values* put upon human lives by U.S military strategists and their political bosses. One thing which the mainstream press states and with which we do concur, is that U.S bombing 'works' to achieve its goal -- defeat the opposition whether in the Persian Gulf War, the Bosnian air campaign, or Kosovo, and now Afghanistan. [38]

On November 7th, U.S heavy bombers obliterated the **village of Khan Aqa** in Kapisa province, located 34 miles north of Kabul, as part of the new carpet-bombing phase of the air war in the plains north of Kabul. The bombing was captured in a photo by the A.P.:

A professor of religious studies points out that for years the U.S. government ignored the Taliban's egregious human rights violations against *Afghan civilians*, and only turned against the Taliban when they were in some fashion connected with the loss of *U.S. lives*. ***The differential value of lives is revealed.*** He goes on to pose a critical question: what is the 'price' for American 'success' in Afghanistan? How can we weigh the costs against the success?

"Yet few stop to ask the question of ends versus means. This dulling of conscience is another hidden price we pay for war. In Afghanistan, as in Serbia and the Persian Gulf, it all feels so effortless, so painless, and so right. Why bother to ask the moral questions? Since the price in U.S. lives is so small, why bother our consciences at all? Each war makes it easier to start the next war, with no questions asked and no bodies counted.

But the question of ends and means will not disappear so easily. Should we carpet bomb every nation where human rights are violated? If so, we will be bombing -- and making enemies -- constantly, around the world. It is tempting to think every future war will be as easy as this one. Sooner or later, though, we will run into a seriously capable enemy, as we did in Vietnam.

If we will not go to war against every brutal regime, how will we know when and where to start bombing? The U.S. ignored the Taliban's horrendous violations for years. Our government accepted and even aided their rule, despite the pleas of women's rights groups. Apparently we will make war on brutal regimes only when something else is at stake."**[39]**

The high level of Afghan civilian casualties from bombing may result from different causes: (1). Imprecise or malfunctioning missile and bomb guidance systems; (2). Poor targeting by fallible human beings; (3). The close proximity of dense civilian population to 'military' targets; or (4). The enemy deliberately hiding its military hardware in civilian areas [the human shield argument].**[40]** The latter can be quickly dispensed with as reflecting the racism of those proposing such an argument.**[41]** Moreover, in the 1980s, the Soviets centralized their military hardware in urban areas of Afghanistan as these were simply better protected. Many of the 'military targets' like government buildings, civilian radio stations, etc. were located in populated urban areas. For the sake of argument, I'll assume that the first two causes play only a minor role in explaining the high civilian casualties.

The third cause requires some discussion. When faced with the indisputable 'fact' of having



Smoke rises after a U.S. airstrike on Khanaqa village, 34 miles from Kabul. American jets dropped dozens of bombs late yesterday and today [Nov 7, 2001] on Taliban positions defending the Afghan capital. (AP photo)

[from: [www.sunspot.net/news/custom/attack/bal-bombing1107.photo](http://www.sunspot.net/news/custom/attack/bal-bombing1107.photo)]



hit a civilian area, the Bush-Blair team responds that a military facility close-by was the target. In every case we can document, this turns out to be a long abandoned military facility. For example, in the incident where four night watchmen died when the offices of a United Nations de-mining agency in Kabul was bombed, the Pentagon said it was near a military radio tower. U.N. officials said the tower was a defunct, abandoned medium and short wave radio station that hadn't been in operation for over a decade and was situated 900 feet away from the bombed U.N. building. On October 19th, U.S. planes had circled over Tarin Kot in Uruzgan early in the evening, then returned after everyone went to bed and dropped their bombs on the residential area, instead of on the Taliban base two miles away. [42] Mud houses were flattened and families destroyed. An initial bombing killed twenty and as some of the villagers were pulling their neighbors out of the rubble, more bombs fell and ten more people died. A villager involved explained:

"We pulled the baby out, the others were buried in the rubble. Children were decapitated. There were bodies with no legs. We could do nothing. We just fled." [43]

On October 21st, U.S planes apparently targeting their bombs at a Taliban military base -- long abandoned -- released their deadly cargo on the Kabul residential area of Khair Khana, killing eight members of one family who had just sat down to breakfast. [44] A day later, on October 22, U.S planes dropped BLU-97 cluster bombs [made by Aerojet/Honeywell] on the village of Shakar Qala near Herat. [45] Twenty of the village's 45 houses were destroyed or badly damaged. They missed the Taliban encampments located 500-700 yards away and killed 14 people immediately with a 15th dying after picking up the parachute attached to one of the 202 bomblets dispersed by the BLU-97. In Kosovo, the dud rate was 10% [46] A recent report argues that between 7-30% of the cluster bomblets fail to explode upon impact. The United Nations mine-clearing officials in the region, noted that 10-30% of the U.S missiles and bombs dropped on Afghanistan did not explode, posing a lasting danger. [47]

Such munition dropped in civilian areas poses a lasting danger. Fourteen thousand unexploded cluster bomblets littered the fields, streets and homes of Afghanistan by late November [for details see **Appendix 3**]. A UN official in Afghanistan estimates that live bombs and mines maim, on average 40 to 100 people a week in Afghanistan and half of these die before they get any medical help. [48] On Monday, November 26th, after heavy U.S bombing in the preceding days of the Shamshad village in Nangarhar province, one or three Afghan children were blown up and seven wounded by a cluster bomb as they were collecting firewood and hard papers for burning fire at home. [49] At 6:20 a.m. on November 24th, U.S bombs fell in the mountainous border area, 300 kilometers southwest of Peshawar, killing 13 in an attack aimed at a long abandoned Taliban training camp. [50]

In many instances, U.S. bombs fall on spots without any military significance. On October 25th, a U.S. bomb hit a fully loaded city bus at Kabul Gate, in Kandahar, incinerating 10-20 passengers. [ 51 ] Another typical example was provided when U.S. planes bombed the mountain village of Gluco, located on the Khyber Pass, on Sunday and Monday [November 18-19th], killing seven villagers. [52] The village was far away from any military facilities. A reporter for *The Telegraph* visited Gluco, noting:

"their wooden homes looked like piles of charred matchsticks. Injured mules lay braying in the road along the mountain pass that stank of sulphur and dead animals. . . ."

The wheat trader, Noor Mohamed, recounted the effects of U.S. bombing on the highways of Afghanistan. Noor travels the Chaman to Ghazni road for his wheat business. During the week of November 29th, he saw the burnt-out, twisted, still smoking mess just north of Kandahar of a 15 lorry fuel convoy. The charred remains of the drivers and all the dozens of unfortunate souls who had bargained for a ride to Chaman, sickened Noor.[53]

A refugee, Abdul Nabi, told the *AFP* on October 24th, upon arriving in a refugee camp on the Pakistan border, how he had seen two groups of bodies -- 13 and 15 corpses -- remainders of civilians near bombed out trucks on the road between Herat and Kandahar.[54] Our data reveals that this U.S. attack was carried out on October 22nd, against four trucks carrying fuel oil.

Fleeing refugees have become the Pentagon's "new targets of opportunity." During the couple weeks since November 25th, numerous first-hand reports tell how hovering U.S. aircraft seeking out "targets of opportunity" in the Kandahar region, have fired missiles and dropped bombs upon fleeing taxis, trucks, and buses.[55] A 39 year old, Afghan refugee in a Quetta hospital, Rukia, who lost her family of five children on December 3rd when a U.S. bomb was dropped upon her neighborhood in Kandahar, tells a typical story. She fled Kandahar before she could bury her children, as she was wounded in her stomach and had her left arm shattered in the bomb blast. She was nearly bombed again on the Kandahar to Spin Boldak highway, as a relative was driving her to a hospital in Quetta. Rukia said,

*"They're bombing anything that moves. It's not true that they bomb civilians by accident. They're targeting the innocent people instead of Osama bin Laden."* [emphasis added by M.H., *ibid*].

On December 4th, an ambulance in Kandahar was struck killing four. On December 2nd, a jeep carrying civilians was hit near Spin Boldak killing 15. On December 1st, Reuters [12/1/01] reported a U.S. attack on four trucks and 5 buses on the highway to Spin Boldak, killing 30. *Dawn* [12/2/01] cited the incineration by air of three refugee vehicles in front of the Maji Hotel in Arghisan on December 1st. On November 30th, U.S. planes bombed two trucks on the highway from Herat, killing at least four. On November 27th, attracted by the lights of a vehicle, U.S. bombers hit a hamlet of five houses between Kandahar airport and the city, killing Mohammed Khan's entire family of 5 and 10 others.[56] Mohammed Khan also fled to Chaman for hospital treatment for his arms and legs.[57] On December 6th, a Pakistani truck carrying fresh fruits was attacked by U.S. planes on the highway between Spin Boldak and Kandahar.[58]

Afghan civilians in proximity to alleged military installations will die, and must die, as 'collateral damage' of U.S. air attacks aiming to destroy these installations in order to make future military operations in the sky or on the ground less likely to result in U.S. military casualties. **The military facilities of the Taliban were mostly inherited from the Soviet-supported government of the 1980s which had concentrated its military infrastructure in cities, which could be better defended against the rural insurgency of the mujahadeen. This reality is compounded insofar as the Taliban maintained dispersed facilities: smaller units spread out. U.S. military strategists and their bombers, thus, engaged in a very widespread high intensity of bombing. Such intense urban bombing causes high levels of civilian casualties.** From the point of view of U.S.

policy makers and their mainstream media boosters, the 'cost' of a dead Afghan civilian is zero as long as these civilian deaths can be hidden from the general U.S public' view. The 'benefits' of saving future lives of U.S military personnel are enormous, given the U.S public's post-Vietnam aversion to returning body bags.

The absolute need to avoid U.S. military casualties means fling high up in the sky, increasing the probability of killing civilians:

". . . better stand clear and fire away. Given this implicit decision, the slaughter of innocent people, as a statistical eventuality is not an accident but a priority -- -in which Afghan civilian casualties are substituted for American military casualties."[59]

But, I believe the argument goes deeper and that race enters the calculation. The sacrificed Afghan civilians are not 'white' whereas the overwhelming number of U.S. pilots and elite ground troops are white. This 'reality' **serves to amplify the positive benefit-cost ratio of certainly sacrificing darker Afghans today [and Indochinese, Iraqis yesterday] for the benefit of probably saving American soldier-citizens tomorrow.** What I am saying is that when the "other" is non-white, the scale of violence used by the U.S. government to achieve its state objectives at minimum cost knows no limits. A contrary case might be raised with Serbia which was also recently subjected to mass bombing. But, the Serbs were in the view of U.S. policymakers and the corporate media tainted ['darkened'] by their prior 'Communist' experience. No instance exists [except during World War II] where a foreign Caucasian state became the war target of the U.S. government. [60] The closest example might be that of the war waged by Britain upon Northern Ireland and, there, the British troops applied *focused* violence upon its Caucasian 'enemy.' When the "other" is a non-white foreigner, the state violence employed becomes amplified.

The use by the U.S. Air Force of weapons of enormous destructive capability -- including fuel air bombs, B-52 carpet bombing, BLU-82s, and CBU-87 cluster bombs [shown to be so effective at killing and maiming civilians who happen to come upon the unexploded 'bomblets'] -- reveals the emptiness in the claim that the U.S. has been trying to avoid Afghan civilian casualties.

"Even though civilian deaths have not been the deliberate goal of the current bombing -- -as they were for the attackers of 9/11 -- the end result has been a distinction without a difference. Dead is dead, and when one's actions have entirely foreseeable consequences, it is little more than a precious and empty platitude to argue that those consequences were merely accidental."[61]

The 1000 and 2000 JDAM-type bombs which hit the Red Cross warehouse in Kabul and the village of Kama Abo, are designed to "inflict maximum damage over the widest battlefield area."

In so many words, *intent matters little but race matters much.*

The U.S bombing campaign has also directly targeted certain civilian facilities deemed hostile to its war success. On October 15th, U.S bombs destroyed Kabul's main telephone exchange, killing 12. [62] In late October, U.S warplanes bombed the electrical grid in Kandahar knocking out all power, but the Taliban were able to divert some electricity to the city from a generating plant in another province, Helmand, but that generation plant [at

Kajakai dam] was then bombed knocking out all power supplies to Kandahar and Lashkargah.[63] On October 31st, it launched seven air strikes against Afghanistan's largest hydro-electric power station adjacent to the huge Kajakai dam, 90 kilometers northwest of Kandahar, raising fears about the dam breaking.[64] On November 12th, a guided bomb scored a direct hit on the Kabul office of the Al Jazeera news agency, which had been reporting from Afghanistan in a manner deemed hostile by Washington.[65] On November 18th, U.S warplanes bombed religious schools [Madrasas] in the Khost and Shamshad areas. U.S bombers have singled out trucks carrying fuel oil into Afghanistan from Iran, through Herat onto Kandahar and up to Kabul.[66] Before the U.S bombing campaign started about 30 fuel trucks a day arrived in Kabul. But since a tanker convoy was struck on the road between Herat and Kandahar on October 22nd [my data], only five tankers at most arrived in Kabul. Private businessmen almost stopped bringing fuel picked up at the Iranian border town of Islam Qila, 30 miles west of Herat. Fuel convoys and fuel depots became favored targets for U.S jets. An eyewitness reports that a truck carrying cooking oil to towns north west of Kandahar had broken down on October 16th, and its three drivers slept in the truck. At 4 a.m. on October 17th, the truck was hit by a cruise missile. The three bodies were brought to the Kandahar hospital.[67]

Electricity, telephones, news, fuel supplies, cooking oil, and spirituality are 'fair' targets.

The widespread, un-focused bombing and missile attacks by the United States, besides killing close to 4,000 Afghan civilians since October 7th, has contributed to wholesale panic amongst residents of villages and cities, leading to floods of refugees seeking to escape. Both Kabul and Kandahar were reported as having only 20% of their populations remaining, comprising primarily those too poor to flee. Interviews with the refugees point out that they blame the U.S for their current misery.[68] This mass exodus from the cities of Afghanistan is further testimony to the terror effects of the intense U.S bombing of urban areas, not in the sense of carpet-bombing [like Tokyo or Dresden] but rather in the large number of dispersed targets struck.

The strategic U.S. bombing of Afghanistan has been guided by two concerns: (1). The U.S does not want to lose any combat troops; and (2) it does not want to lose expensive and technologically sophisticated aircraft.[69] Hence, the hi-tech bombing carried on from above 30,000 feet where anti-aircraft guns and Stinger missiles cannot reach. In other words, unwilling to risk "our" pilots and planes, U.S war strategists cannot help but hit "their" mud homes, apartment complexes, bus stations, oil tanker trucks, buses and tractors, Red Crescent clinics, hospitals, mosques, schools, religious institutions [madaris and madrassas], Red Cross warehouses, etc.[70]



On November 11th, U.S. planes bombed a bus carrying fleeing refugees on the north road out of Kabul, carrying fleeing refugees: 35 died.

The war on civilians is not news. The reason has been amply displayed: the public must neither hear nor see images of the carnage on the ground, else their 'resolve' for war be shaken. The video precision techno-war must run uncontested. As a reporter wrote, "No one reports from Kabul, and that suits generals fine." [71]

During the first three weeks [October 7-30th], U.S. bombing focused upon the cities and Taliban infrastructure, inflicting heavy civilian casualties, as a means of splitting the Taliban leadership. When this failed and a growing anti-war movement began gathering worldwide, the United States resorted to its tried old carpet-bombing of troops and countryside with its blunderbusses of the skies, the B-52 bomber. [72] This was also necessary as the ground forces of the so-called Northern Alliance showed themselves unwilling to engage the Taliban on the ground. It had the fortunate political side-effect of putting civilian casualties further away from the public gaze, compared to the previous bombing of "military targets" in urban areas. On October 31st, B-52's began with the carpet-bombing of Bagram and Mazar-i-Sharif front-line areas -- "a B-52 bomber made its debut in the war, sending up a wall of orange flame and clouds of dust along Taliban positions overlooking opposition-held Bagram airbase north of Kabul." [73] The front-line, however, weaves its way through the typical Afghan mud hut villages where civilians continued living. On November 4th, the U.S. upped the ante and dropped two BLU-82 sub-atomic bombs [equivalent to a tactical nuclear weapon] on Taliban positions in northern Afghanistan. [74] The bombs destroy everything in a 600 yard radius, giving off a mushroom-like cloud, and has an-nerving effect upon the targeted troops. On November 23rd -- a week into Ramadan -- a third BLU-82 was dropped just south of Kandahar. A nightmarish progression has quietly taken place:

"It's nightmarish to see that the U.S. is slowly desensitizing the public to the level of destruction taking place in Afghanistan. They have progressed from medium-sized missiles to Tomahawk and cruise missiles, to bunker-busting 2,000 lb bombs, then to [B-52] carpet-bombing using cluster bombs, and now the devastating daisy cutter bombs that annihilate everything in a 600-meter radius." [75]

A Washington-based military analyst and frequent radio commentator has sought to minimize the importance of and public discomfort felt about, civilian casualties from the U.S. air war. [76] William M. Arkin makes three points: [1] civilian deaths are to be expected given that the air campaign will last more than a few weeks because the Pentagon wants to destroy everything the Taliban may use [e.g., barracks, etc.]; [2] the public and even military and government officials overstate civilian deaths especially after a war; and [3] there is a popular myth that a ground war both guarantees military success and is less dangerous to non-combatants. With regards to the second point, Arkin cites 3,200 civilian deaths in the Persian Gulf War's 43 days, and 500 civilian deaths in Yugoslavia in 78 days of NATO bombing. In the Gulf War, 9% of the firepower used were 'smart weapons', compared to 35% in Yugoslavia. Arkin then turns to Afghanistan, arguing that targets are in its less populated areas and the percentage of smart weapons will be much higher. Hence, we need not be overly concerned about civilian 'collateral damage.'

As it turns out, on the day Mr. Arkin wrote his piece, U.S. bombs killed 160 civilians in four Afghan provinces. A F-18 dropped a 1,000 lb cluster bomb on a 200-bed military hospital in Herat, bombs killed 26 in two residential districts of Kabul and 11 in the city of Tarin Kot in the Uruzgan mountains, and 23 in the farming village of Thori located 6 hours away from Kandahar. On October 21st, the U.S. also began bombing front-line positions around Bagram

in the Shomali Valley north of Kabul, about which I have no civilian casualty data.

The following **Table 1** presents a comparison of our casualties [red line] with that announced by the Taliban [blue line] at various times. Two things stand out: our figures are relatively close to each other and the Taliban figures are an underestimate. We find this result quite explicable insofar as the Taliban initially sought to present itself as more invincible than was warranted.

Our compilation indicates a relatively stable rate of civilian deaths [slope of red line], with a falling-off between October 28th and November 14th, precisely at the time when the U.S. air war shifted towards heavy bombing of front lines north of Kabul in the Shomali plain and around Mazar-i-Sharif.

The second table, **Table 2** below, presents a day-by-day tabulation of civilian deaths. An Appendix [available upon request from the author] will present details for each day: location of air attack, weaponry used, numbers killed and other commentary, and the sources we have relied upon.

The seven *single bombing attacks* -- "*seven days of ignominy*" -- causing the greatest civilian deaths occurred on October 11, 18, 21, 23 and November 10 and 18th and December 1st. The U.S. strikes hit four small farming villages, a city, a hospital and a mosque, and the central marketplace in the Taliban stronghold, Kandahar.

## **Seven Days of Ignominy**

- **October 11th** -- the farming village of 450 persons of Karam, west of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province is repeatedly bombed, 45 of the 60 mud houses destroyed, killing at least 160 civilians.[77] Ms. Tur Bakai, who survived the attack, but all of whose children died in the attack, said, her voice barely audible, "I was asleep. I heard the prayers and suddenly it started. I didn't know what it was. I was so scared . . ."[78] ;
- **October 18th** -- the central market place, Sarai Shamali in the Madad district of Kandahar is bombed, killing 47 civilians;[79]
- **October 21st** -- a cluster bomb falls on the military hospital and mosque in Herat, killing 100;[80]
- **October 23rd** -- in the early a.m. hours, low-flying AC-130 gunships repeatedly strafe the farming villages of Bori Chokar and Chowkar-Karez [Chakoor Kariz], 25 miles north of Kandahar, killing 93 civilians;[81]
- **November 10th** the villages of Shah Aqa and a neighboring sidling, in the poppy-growing Khakrez district, 70 kilometers northwest of Kandahar are bombed, resulting in possibly over 300 civilian casualties [though I have only recorded 125][82]
- **November 18th** -- carpet-bombing by B-52's of frontline village near Khanabad, province of Kunduz, kills at least 150 civilians.[83]

## **December 1st -- "*It Just Did Not Happen*"[84]**

Village elders of Kama Ado, fifty kilometers southwest of Jalalabad, had trekked down the mountains on Thursday, November 29th to meet the governor of Nangarhar in Jalalabad. They pleaded with him to stop the American night time attacks around their village which

had killed their livestock and destroyed their water supply, but none had lost their lives.

At 3.a.m, Saturday morning, as part of the intense bombing campaign of Tora Bora, U.S. B-52 bombers made four passes over Kama Ado, dropping twenty-five 1,000 lb. JDAM MK-83 bombs, each 10 feet long. Kama Ado is a ten hour hike away from Tora Bora. Khalil Rahman survived because he had gone outside to urinate when a bomb struck his home, killing his 12 relatives. Sprina, a 50 year old widow, wounded in the attack, lost 38 of her 40 relatives. Hassan and other villagers say that in the following day, they saw only 40 of the 250-300 residents of Kama Ado. Kamal Huddin said that 156 of the 300 residents of Kama Ado had perished.

A second nearby village Khan-e-Mairjuddin, was bombed a few hours earlier with a likely death toll of 100-200, with 50 confirmed deaths by Saturday morning. And a third village, Zander Khel, also reported being hit with scores of civilian casualties, when U.S. warplanes bombed the nearby house of a minor Taliban official.

Journalists who visited Kama Ado on Saturday reported huge bomb craters, debris of houses spread over two hillsides with children's shoes, dead cows and sheep, and the tail fin of a U.S. MK-83 bomb. Locals said scores of people had been killed in three bombed villages.[85]

The response of the Pentagon and Command Central on Saturday evening? "It just did not happen." (Note: the impact of these days upon the cumulative total in **Table 2** is very visible.)

## Conclusion

This dossier has presented detailed and reliable information about the large number of civilians killed in U.S. bombing and missile attacks on Afghanistan since October 7th. Naturally, some might seek to dismiss parts or all of the report by attacking the sources employed. But, to do so would mean having to accuse news agencies from many countries, reporters from many countries, and newspapers from many countries of lying. We have sought to cite whenever possible multiple sources. The specific, detailed stories provided by victims, on-lookers, and refugees lend credibility.

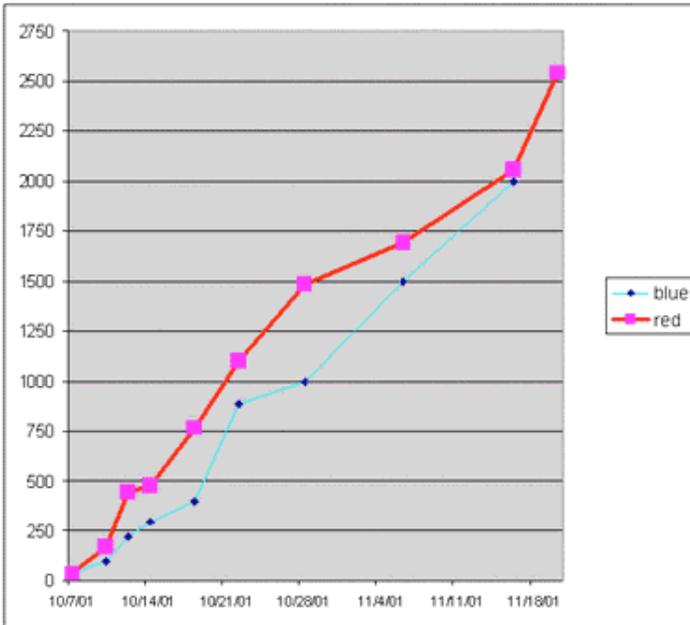
Natasha Walter[86] has eloquently stated our responsibility:

"They are far away from us, it's true, but their grief still rises from television screens and news reports. And this time around, we are implicated. These people are suffering from terror visited on them from the West. Yes, I know they have also suffered over the years from the evils of their fundamentalist rulers but we now share the blame for their plight. If it were not for the missiles the West has sent into Kandahar and Kunduz, these children whose faces we now see in our newspapers would not have had to take to the roads, desperately trudging the hills and deserts and sitting in tents on a bare plain.

And don't think that just because they have suffered so much during the last generation that their grief is any the less now. Or because they don't get obituaries in *The New York Times* that each of the civilian lives lost in Afghanistan isn't as precious to their loved ones as the people who died in the Twin Towers."

**Table 1. Cumulative Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan**

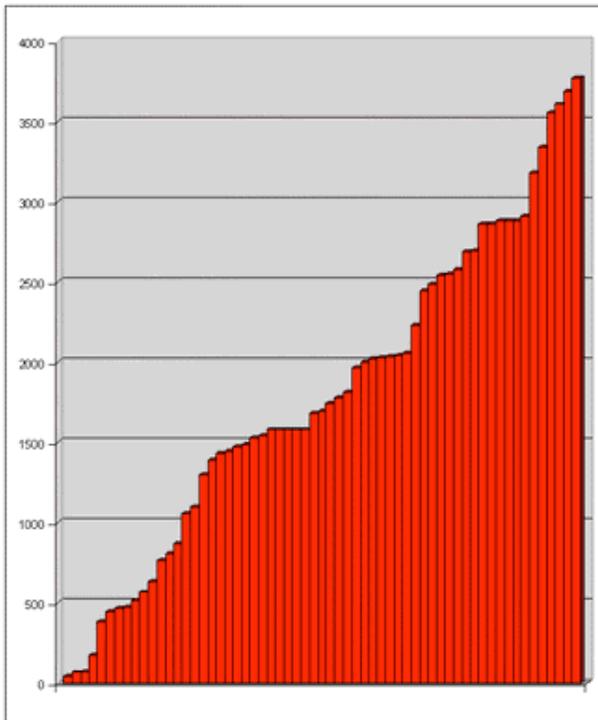
[red line: our data is red line, and blue line is Taliban reporting]



Note: On Sunday, October 21st, the Taliban reported that over 1,000 civilians had been killed [Pakistan News Service, October 22, 2001]. On November 12th, the Taliban reported that over 2,000 Afghan civilians had been killed since the start of the U.S. bombings [see "Taliban Says Bombing Has Killed 2,000," *Pakistan News Service-PNS* [November 12, 2001]].

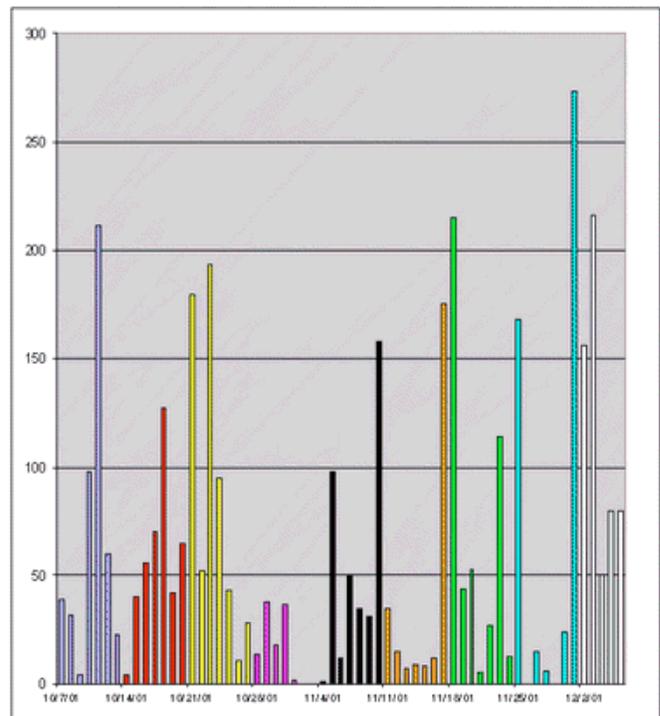
**Table 2. 'The Slope of Infamy': Cumulative Civilian Deaths Caused by U.S. Aerial Bombing Since October 7, 2001 [-December 3rd]**

[horizontal axis represents days starting with October 7th]



**Table 3. Daily Civilian Casualty Count**

[October 7 - December 6]



# Appendix 1

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## **The U.S. bombing through the words of Afghan refugees:**

### **"Voices from Afghanistan"**

Source: *BBC News Online*, Thursday, 25 October, 2001.

**The bombardment of Afghanistan has caused untold numbers of people to flee their homes -- as much as 70% of the population of three major Afghan cities is on the move, the United Nations has said. While the Pentagon admits only that a few bombs have gone astray, refugees and internally displaced persons who spoke to the BBC say that innocent people have borne the brunt of the attacks.**

**Mohammed Gul**, who worked at Kandahar military hospital, spoke to the BBC in the Pakistani border city of Quetta:

"Since the American bombing started a lot of people died. Bombs were hitting people's houses. They damaged lots of houses and they injured and killed lots of innocent people. We were there and I saw about 50 people who died and some became injured.

"There are no health facilities and medicine. The Taleban do not have the power to stop American bombing, because the planes are very high and the anti-aircraft [guns] can't reach them. When the bombing stops, people came out of their houses and continue their life under the pressure of war.

"Because of the bombing no one can sleep. Women and children can not eat or drink anything. Everyone is looking to the sky and waiting and thinking when will the American aircraft come and start killing them."

#### **Man from Helmand, in southern Afghanistan, speaking on arrival in Quetta:**

"The situation is somehow all right, but the bombs are going on the wrong places. They don't damage any military headquarters but they are killing innocent people.

"The places where Taleban were before are not there anymore. They moved out and went to mountains and other places where they can hide."

#### **People arriving in Quetta from Kandahar, in southern Afghanistan:**

"The situation was very bad in Kandahar. Americans were bombing day and night.

"The Taleban and Osama [Bin Laden] didn't face any damage, but innocent people were injured and killed. Homes were destroyed.

"All people are leaving and coming here. Children are dying. America was bombing innocent people's houses not military headquarters.

"A lot of people died and many were injured. About 200 or 300 houses were damaged."

#### **A resident of Kabul speaking of the destruction in the capital:**

"The street next to my home was bombed, and 18 were killed and 23 injured. Everything was destroyed there.

"The doors and window glass of our homes were broken. I have a baby child, one and a half years old. Even she is afraid of the plane sounds and bombing, and she runs towards me and hugs me when the planes come over.

"I am surprised by those who claim to be defending human rights. Those who claim that the terror attacks were carried out by the followers of Osama and his group, may be wrong.

"But still if they are right, two buildings have been destroyed and some people have been killed.

"Anyway now it has been done, and we are also sorry for the victims of the attack. But now these American and British planes have added our nation's blood [to that of the dead in Washington and New York] and they have made all people frightened.

"No one can go to sleep for whole night up to the morning. Their planes come proudly at a low altitude and as a result the plastic in all our windows and doors -- whose glass has already been broken -- started shaking in this cold weather.

"In the Darulaman area they again carried out a heavy bombardment in which many houses were destroyed and many people have been washed in blood and made another disaster.

"At the moment when I am talking to you, the planes are going up and down and who knows what might be their goal and what disaster might happen again to the poor and innocent people."

**Afghan children in Peshawar, Pakistan, worry about US-led bombing in their country.**

**Sultan Sarwar, a young boy:**

"It has been three days since I arrived in Peshawar from Jalalabad. My uncles are still there. My school was closed because of the fighting and bombing there. My classmate Zubair is still there."

**Hamid, a nine-year-old boy:**

"As America started its bombing in Afghanistan, my parents sent me to Peshawar with the hope [that I would] not be killed there. Now I am living in my uncle's home. I miss my parents and other family members very much."

**Feriba, a young girl:**

"I and all my classmates are very sad because of the situation in our homeland. When our teacher said in the class that many people have been killed in Afghanistan, I and my all classmates started weeping because everyone has relatives there. I expect America not to kill the poor Afghans. They are hungry and poor."

**Despite US radio broadcasts in local languages, many Afghans have no clear idea of why they are under attack.**

**An ironmonger in the small town of Hojibahodin:**

"Bin Laden killed many donkeys and many people and animals, and they killed (Northern Alliance commander Ahmed Shah) Masood. That's why they are attacking."

*BBC News Online* [October 12, 2001], reported on the U.S. bombing of the Sultanpur mosque in Jalalabad, which killed 15 people. A Kabul man who had escaped to Peshawar, told a BBC reporter on October 12th that he had witnessed the destroyed mosque:

"I saw it with my own eyes. It had been hit at nine o'clock at night. And I saw for myself that many people had been killed."

*The Toronto Globe & Mail* [November 24, 2001], described U.S. bombers pummeling Taliban positions in the Khanabad-Kunduz area during the 21st -- 23rd and talking with one

of three burqa-clothed women who had walked six hours to flee the rain of bombs in Khanabad:

"A neighbor of ours has a 14 year-old daughter who was killed by a bomb on Wednesday along with her brother. Last week, there was a doctor who was killed with 12 members of his family."

Another woman in a burqa described how a village was struck by U.S. bombs and rockets on Thursday [November 22nd]:

"Five houses were destroyed and all the people were killed."

Kate Holt of *The Independent* [November 25, 2001] reports on the effect of recent U.S. bombing of the small market town of Nahrin in Baghlan province:

"The living are as much casualties as the dead. Bibi is one of the thousands of innocent people who have been forced to flee their homes as the bombing of Taliban targets continues in the "war against terrorism". Hers is a terrible tale.

"The bombs started falling from the sky," she recalls. "My husband ran outside to find our son and then he screamed. I ran to the door. He and my son were lying dead. The rest of us left when the fighting had stopped. We just wanted to get away from the bombs and the killing." Severely traumatized by her experiences, Bibi left the remote Afghan village of Nahrin with her five remaining children and traveled south. "I just wanted to reach the safety of a camp, but now we are here there is nothing." Tears are streaming down her face."

***Ridiculous? Propaganda? The claim could not be independently verified?***

David Rhode wrote in *The New York Times* [December 12, 2001] about the bombing of the village of Mowshkheyl in Paktika province. [87a] At 4 a.m. on Sunday morning, December 9th, the American planes struck just as families were preparing the daily predawn meal that is part of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. A day earlier, a group of "Arabs" had passed through the village on their flight from Kandahar. The bomb released hundreds of smaller bombs that sprayed the area with shrapnel, reported Bibi Hawa, aunt of a 6 year old girl paralyzed by the attack, hospitalized in Ghazni. The girl, Palwasha, has a tiny shard of metal which neatly severed her spinal chord. The girl's mother, Rose, was struck by shrapnel which tore through her abdomen. The hospital doctor spoke about other injured dying. Thirteen people were killed and more than 40 were injured, said Bibi Hawa.



Bibi Hawa and her 6 yr old niece

## Appendix 2

### Analysis of Discrepancies and Lying in Mainstream Corporate Media

I have chosen to analyze more closely one [of literally hundreds possible] newspaper article published in a major British newspaper, as representative of the lies and distortion found in the mainstream press.[87] The authors solemnly intone "far fewer Afghan civilians have been killed by American bombs than is claimed by Taliban propaganda." Citing "an intelligence report obtained by *The Sunday Telegraph*" which is purported to have employed data gathered by satellite and unmanned reconnaissance aircraft, they allege that most Taliban claims are falsehoods and propaganda. They then present a listing of Taliban claims and "The Truth" per intelligence report. No independent research is carried out by the reporters who merely cite the intelligence report! I publish below both 'The Claim' and 'The Truth', followed in the last column by my own assessment. Five incidents during October 2001 are examined. These five bombing attacks alone, in our estimate, resulted in ***a minimum of 239 dead Afghan civilians!***

Who is lying?

Date of U.S. bombing	Taliban 'claim' as stated in the 'report':	Pentagon/State Department 'truth':	My assessment:
October 11	Bombed Karam village, 200 killed.	Hit military base on hillside. While possible civilians killed, Taliban claims are predictably exaggerated	Two jets bomb the mountain village of Karam comprised of 60 mud houses, during dinner after evening prayer time, killing 100-160 in Karam alone. Reported by: <i>DAWN, the Guardian, the Independent, International Herald Tribune, the Scotsman, the Observer, and BBC News.</i>
October 13	Missile hits civilian homes in Kabul, killing civilians	Pentagon acknowledges a stray missile accidentally struck a populated Kabul area, killing or injuring civilians.	In early a.m., F-18 drops 2,000 lb JDAM bombs upon the dirt-poor Qila Meer Abas neighborhood, 2 kms. south of Kabul airport, killing 4. Reported in: <i>Afghan Islamic Press, Los Angeles Times, Frontier Post, Pakistan Observer, the Guardian, and BBC News.</i>
October 21	Bombed Herat hospital, killing 100+ civilians.	Pentagon admits missing military barracks, but says hospital is "considerable distance" from where bomb landed and bomb blast unlikely to cause civilian deaths.	F-18 dropped a 1,000 lb cluster bomb on a 200-bed military hospital and mosque, missing the target by 500-1000 meters. Reported in <i>Afghan Islamic Press, Pakistan News Service, Frontier Post, the Guardian, Times of India, Agence France Presse, and by the U.N.</i>
October 29	Hit mosque in Kandahar, killing civilians. Note: I have NOT been able to find this Taliban claim.	No air strike in the general area. Claim is a lie.	A pre-dawn bombing raid and 8-9 cluster bombs fell on October 24th on the mosque in the village of Ishaq Sulaiman near Herat, killing 20. Reported in: <i>Agence France Presse, Reuters, DAWN, the Herald, etc.</i>
October 31	Red Crescent clinic in Kandahar hit, killing 11.	A military target was hit and a Red Crescent hospital was in vicinity -- 100s of meters away and was undamaged.	Pre-dawn raid, F-18 drops a 2,000 lb JDAM bomb on the clinic, killing 15-25. The clinic is reduced to a mangled mess of iron and concrete [photo]. Reported in: <i>DAWN, the Times, the Independent, the Guardian, Reuters, and Agence France Presse</i>

## **Appendix 3**

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### **The Aerojet/Honeywell CBU-87 Cluster Bomb**

The U.S. delivers approx. 14,500 land mines by ‘air delivery’ to Afghan civilians as part of ‘Enduring Freedom’

**Sunday, November 25th, Kalakan village.** A farmer returns to his village in the evening and is killed as he walks on one of the CBU-87’s 202 bomblets.

**Tuesday, November 27th, village of Qala Shater near Herat, a 12yr. Old boy** picks up the bright yellow soda-can sized bomblet, loses his arm.

The CBU-87, 1,000 lb. bomb was developed by the Aerojet General Corp. in 1983, which produced it along with the Alliant Techsystems Inc. [Hopkins, Minn.]. Today, the CBU-87s are assembled in an Army factory in southern Kansas, from parts supplied by Honeywell [Minn.] and Aerojet [Sacramento].

The ‘mother bomb’ carries 202 bright yellow bomblets [each the size of a soda can]. The mother bomb explodes about 300-400 feet above earth and the 202 bomblets are dispersed with little parachutes. They are supposed to explode upon landing, but at least 5% do not. The CBU-87’s ‘footprint’ is about 400x800 feet. One CBU-87 spreads bomblets over about three football fields. One B1-B ‘Lancer’ bomber can carry 30 CBU-87 bombs.[88]

To date [November 30th ] the US bombers have dropped about 600 CBU-87s upon Afghanistan. Assuming a dud rate of 12%, [89] doing the arithmetic, this means there are about 14,500 unexploded bomblets littering the Afghan countryside and villages . . . akin to landmines.

## **Appendix 4**

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### **Daily Casualty Count of Afghan Civilians Killed in U.S. Bombing Attacks**

## **Appendix 5**

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### **Spatial Distribution of Afghan Civilian Casualties Caused by the U.S. Air War, October 7 - December 6th**

## Footnotes

1. The figure of 93 comes from our data compilation [see chart later, citing reports from *Al Jazeera*, the *BBC*, *Dawn* [November 1, 2001], and *The Hindu*]. A detailed on-the-scene account is given in "Merciless U.S Bombing Obliterates Village: 60 Killed," *Dawn* [November 2, 2001]. The U.S organization, *Human Rights Watch* reported a figure of 35 deaths, but this was based only upon interviews with survivors in a Quetta hospital. Commentary from Stephen Gowans, "Our Masters of Propaganda," *Swans Commentary* [November 12, 2001], at: [www.swans.com/library/art7/gowans12.html](http://www.swans.com/library/art7/gowans12.html)
2. Murray Campbell, "Bombing of Farming Village Undermines U.S Credibility," *Toronto Globe & Mail* [November 3, 2001].
3. Richard Norton-Taylor, "The Return of the B-52s," *The Guardian* [November 2, 2001].
4. Norman Solomon, "Orwellian Logic 101 -- A Few Simple Lessons," at *FAIR*: [www.fair.org/media-beat/980827.html](http://www.fair.org/media-beat/980827.html)
5. from: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south\\_asia/newsid\\_1619000/1619332.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1619000/1619332.stm)
6. "Taliban Says 20 Civilians Killed in Kabul," *The Guardian* [October 9, 2001], "'I Wish God Destroys Their Cities' says 16 year-old bombing victim," from Torkham [October 9, 2001]
7. Richard Lloyd Parry, "Tragic Place in History Claimed by Odd-Job Man," *The Independent* [October 10, 2001].
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19. Robyn Dixon in Bangi, "Living with War: Dying a Way of Like for Civilians in Afghanistan," *Los Angeles Times* [November 19, 2001].
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21. James S. Robbins, "Humanity of the Air War. Look How Far We Have Come," *The National Review* [October 19, 2001]. Robbins is on the staff of the National Defense University.
22. Michael Barone, "The Cost of War: Civilian Casualties and Collateral Damage Are Inevitable in Any War," *US News & World Report* [October 30, 2001].
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31. Andrew Gumbel, "Who is Winning the War of Lies?" *The Independent* [November 4, 2001], but also "U.S Jets Bomb Hospital," *The Independent* [October 31, 2001].
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- 32a. As mentioned in Laura King, "In Bomb-Battered Afghanistan, An Accurate Count Nearly Impossible to Come By," *AP Worldstream* [October 19, 2001].
- 32b. See "The Sustained U.S Bombing of Afghanistan is Killing Innocent People," *Saudi-Online.com* [October 15, 2001], citing Arab News.

- 32c. Luke Harding, "Stray Missile Had Wrong Coordinates," *The Guardian* [October 15, 2001].
- 32d. At <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mwhero> under October 13th . The incident was reported in: *The Guardian* [October 15, 2001], the *Los Angeles Times* [October 14, 2001], *Out There News* [October 13, 2001], the *Frontier Post* [October 14, 2001], *BBC News* [October 29, 2001], *Pakistan Observer* [October 14, 2001], and *Pakistan News Service* [October 14, 2001].
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34. Justin Huggler, "**Carpet Bombing Kills 150 Civilians in Frontline Town**," *The Independent* [November 19, 2001].
35. "Afghan Hospital System Collapses. Injured Civilians Forced to Cross Border," *Pakistan News Service* [October 28, 2001].
36. "Afghan Hospital System Collapses. Injured Civilians Force to Cross Border," *The Frontier Post* [October 29, 2001].
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