

For Britain's Ministry of Defence, Afghan Lives Are Cheap. Humanity and Criminality has Plummeted to a Historic Low

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The contempt with which “liberated” Afghans are treated by the British Ministry of Defence has been revealed in figures obtained by the (London) Independent (23rd September 2013.)

“ ‘Fatality claims’ include the deaths of Afghan civilians in botched air-strikes, crossfire and road accidents involving British forces” – in an invasion into which the British, as ever, trotted obediently after their Washington masters.

A fortnight short of twelve years later, they are still mired in this “graveyard of empires” killing subsistence farmers, rural and city dwellers, husbands, wives, children and entire families – by Drone, gun, crossfire or “our convoy owns the roads” arrogance.

The families of 185 men, women and children killed by British forces actions, have been paid “barely £3,000 each.” However, where there are those “accidentally injured by British forces” – which can and does include the “accidental” loss of both legs, or arms, the average payment is: “at an average of £1,750 a time.”

The Ministry of Defence told the Independent that all claims were regarded as having: “no lower priority than UK Armed Forces personnel.”

The MOD has a near unbroken record of being “economical with the truth”, to coin the memorable phrase of Sir Robert Armstrong, a former Principle private Secretary to the Prime Minister (1970-1975) of his testimony in the 1986 “Spycatcher” trial.

In the British government, nothing changes, it seems. For injured UK service personnel, pressure groups point out that the average payment was £73,000. So much for Afghan lives having “no lower priority ...”

“It has been clear all along that compensation payments for harm to Afghan civilians have been low, inconsistent and ad hoc,” said Heather Barr, a senior researcher for Human Rights Watch in Afghanistan.

“Afghan families often rely on one or two members to support a large extended family. Should the civilian killed be such a breadwinner, £3,000 would do no more than hold off destitution for the family for a year or two.”

The figures of the dead and injured paid paltry compensation, can surely be only the tip of the iceberg of real numbers, given the years of, and ongoing carnage. They anyway only cover from 2007 to the present.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) states that 1,319 Afghan civilians were killed and 2,533 injured in the first six months of 2013 – twenty three per cent more than in the same period last year, quotes the Independent. There has also been a: “disproportionate loss of civilian life and injury” from pro-government forces, trained by, and fighting, of course, on the side of the US and UK.

Whilst the majority of deaths and casualties: “were caused by improvised explosive devices, suicide bombings and ‘complex attacks’, ‘pro-government forces’ – including Afghan army and police, and international troops – were blamed for nine per cent of the casualties, while twelve per cent were unattributed and resulted from ground engagements between pro-government forces and ‘anti-government elements.’ “

Again, the army and police are trained by the Americans and British, who, as a still occupying force – however it is dressed up by more “economy with the truth”, civilian deaths and casualties are their absolute ultimate responsibility.

In any case, all excess deaths are entirely as a result of their invasion, thus the insulting and paltry sums they occasionally and reluctantly pay out are an even further shameful disgrace.

The UNAMA Report: “also recorded fifteen civilian deaths and seven injuries in seven” Drone attacks which: “appeared to target anti-government elements.” Attacks on human beings designated “an enemy” from a cowardly computer player, in a warm office thousands of miles away.

All considered, humanity and criminality has plummeted to a historic low.

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