

CIA Crimes

Panetta Turns a Blind Eye

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In a tribute to the seven CIA agents killed December 30th by a suicide bomber in Afghanistan, Agency Director Leon Panetta wrote, “Our officers were engaged in an important mission in a dangerous part of the world.”

What he neglected to tell readers of the Washington Post, the Juneau Empire, the Monterey Herald and other mainstream publicity outlets is that CIA agents, like the United States itself, have no business in that part of the world. The U.S. is only in Afghanistan because eight years ago it launched a war of aggression against that small country and occupied it. Now Panetta is distressed as militants there strike back at the occupiers—occupiers who are breathing life into a crooked, dishonest, Kabul regime whose stellar achievements are dope-peddling and vote-stealing.

Panetta also failed to tell readers that, if not for such CIA actions as the violent overthrow of the government of Iran in 1953 to get that country’s oil, and the 2003 U.S. aggression against Iraq to get that country’s oil, the Middle East might not be quite so violent today. Those aren’t Boy Scout camps President Obama is reinforcing in Afghanistan.

Panetta begins his article of January 13th, “CIA Victories Come At A Cost,” by playing on the sympathy of American readers. He opens with the words, “The horrible news on Dec. 30 that a suicide bomber had taken seven American lives in Afghanistan may have been, for some, a stark reminder that we are at war.” All well and good as we recall John Donne’s famous line “Any man’s death diminishes me” and we grieve for the loss of those men and their suffering families.

But Panetta admits in his own words, “In the past year we have done exceptionally heavy damage to al Qaeda. That’s why the extremists hit back.” Got that? It is extremism for al Qaeda to hit back but it is not extremism for the CIA to launch its drone aerial rocket strikes against al Qaeda—assassination strikes that a protesting Pakistan government has urged the U.S. halt as they are killing innocent civilians, in aggregate probably in the hundreds.

Director Panetta scolds those who fault the slain men (and I do not) for “poor tradecraft” because of what happened at Forward Operating Base Chapman. War is the essence of deception and ugly new tactics only beget ugly new responses. On its face, war is a low-down, sneaky, dishonest business, characterized by surprise attacks, double-dealing, and nauseating violence. That is what the CIA received but that is what the CIA historically has dished out. It is beyond pity that al Qaeda does not see how its own violent tactics only stoke the fires of hatred and conflict. It should be remembered Gandhi liberated India by non-violence, not by suicide bombers. As for America, it daily dishonors the example of

Reverend Martin Luther King.

In his article, Panetta praises the slain CIA officers for their “devoted work” and CIA agents in general for their “courage,” yet he has not condemned or punished a single CIA agent for the cowardly torturing of Moslem prisoners in chains, and he continues the illegal practice of rendition. Leon Panetta finds evil only where he wants to find it. He is the compliant servant of a war machine that is bent not only on controlling the energy resources of the Middle East but of one which has been systematically ringing the entire planet in military bases from which it can spy upon, and rain destruction upon, any people in any region.

Panetta’s expressions of sorrow and regret over the losses of his officers, however genuine and deeply felt, resemble Queen Victoria’s expressions of remorse for the fallen troops in the telegrams of congratulations she sent to her generals upon their victories as they expanded the British Empire by criminal force and violence.

Two thousand years ago the Roman emperor Aurelian complained in a letter, “Surely, the gods have decreed that my life should be a perpetual warfare.” And while he lamented the deaths of “seven thousand of my soldiers ...slain in the contest...in Dacia and the camps along the Danube,” Aurelian would have had no complaint had Rome not subjugated those territories, and his troops would have been alive, not dead, if Rome had not occupied them. Americans who wonder today why 5,000 of their troops have died in the Middle East could do no better than to read Edward Gibbon’s “The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.”

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