

VIDEO: NATO Tries to Silence a Truth-Teller in Afghanistan After Killing Pregnant Women

By [Derrick Crowe](#)

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [AFGHANISTAN](#)

Q: Why would U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan go out of their way to smear a journalist?

A: Because he told the truth about a night raid that killed Afghan civilians, including pregnant women.

Last week, I spoke with Afghanistan-based journalist Jerome Starkey about his reporting on special forces raids that killed civilians and NATO's surprising—and disappointing—response. This video contains disturbing images, and an even more disturbing story of violence, and an attempt to silence a truth-teller. It shows why it's absolutely essential that we keep pushing back against the Pentagon's message machine.

Over the past few months, Starkey exposed two incidents where NATO initially claimed to have engaged and killed insurgents, when they'd in fact killed civilians, including school children and pregnant women. In both cases, when confronted with eye-witness accounts obtained by Starkey that clearly rebutted NATO's initial claims, NATO resisted publicly recanting.

[In the first case](#), NATO officials told him they no longer believed that the raid would have been justified if they'd known what they now know, but no official would consent to direct attribution for this admission.

[In the second case](#), NATO's initially made [sensational claims](#) that they'd discovered during the raid the bodies of pregnant women that had been bound, gagged and executed. Starkey's reporting forcefully rebutted this claim. Instead of simply retracting their story, NATO went so far as to attempt to damage Starkey's credibility by telling other Kabul-based journalists that they had proof he'd misquoted ISAF spokesman Rear Adm. Greg Smith. When Starkey demanded a copy of the recording, NATO initially ignored him and eventually admitted that no recording existed. NATO only admitted their story was false in a retraction buried several paragraphs deep in [a press release](#) that led with an attack on Starkey's credibility.

Under Gen. Stanley McChrystal, NATO's made a big show of apologizing early and often when civilians are killed in broad daylight. But Starkey's reporting and ISAF's reaction to it shows that their natural inclination to escape accountability remains strong and operative when they think they can get away with violent mistakes under the cover of darkness.

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