The Value of Afghan Life Through the American Eye

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Airstrikes in Afghanistan have been a consistent occurrence by the American military for over nineteen years. Often, Americans excuse these brutal acts of bombings in the name of defense, bravery, and patriotism—but I beg the question: how has the mass murder of innocent civilians, for the purpose of "uniting the country" brought upon by the U.S., escaped the label of terrorism?

On the 26th of August, the United States military conducted a drone strike in Kabul to "prevent a deadly attack at the airport" (BBC), however when the claimed target was reached, a secondary explosion resulted in the massacre of an approximated ten civilians. The tragic story follows a family getting sacrificed for the greater good, the same story has been used for the past 19 years. By creating this narrative, the U.S. is able to feign an ethical framework and keep its constituents on board with its airstrike agenda. I believe that the U.S.'s goal has never been to save lives, but to save face.

In conducting an airstrike, I would hope that the military puts in efforts to prevent these mass deaths, however the material reality is that the U.S. military combined with U.S. intelligence has not found any way to contain these casualties. In fact, it is quite clear that the military's thought process was to end the current threat permanently, regardless of the consequences that local people would have to face. There is no plausible way that they are unaware of the damage they cause, leading me to believe that the state has and continues to value American lives over any other.

The victims of this imperialistic country had life and in a moment of violent trife, they were deprived of it. According to CNN, the head of military has stated that *if* they took innocent life, they would rectify the wrongdoings, however the very sentiment that civilian deaths have

been theoretical and that there is a lack of proof comes off as harmful and extremist. If U.S.

intelligence lacks the information they need to prove the countless massacres of innocent people

through their militarized regime, I believe they are blatantly disregarding human life in the name

of power.

Law Enforcement Today corroborates this point through the use of President Trump's

tweet stating "Can anyone even imagine taking out our military before evacuating civilians and

others who have been good to our country and who should be allowed to seek refuge?" Using the

rhetoric that the people who need to be saved are *only* the civilians who have been good to the

country that has repeatedly destroyed their homes is dehumanizing to the thousands of civilians

who do not have the same access to resources in Afghanistan as U.S. citizens. The public eye can

internalize that message and shift their viewpoint from "saving the civilians" to "saving the

patriotic passport holders," which contributes to xenophobic people getting their discriminatory

mindsets validated. The rhetoric used by people in positions of power often instills doubt within

the civilian mindset, and I believe that it can border propaganda when used to falsify narratives.

If the people of the U.S. are told by a position of power that America is the greatest and has not

committed murder, that may be the only access to information they have, and result in

incontestably following the state in its actions regardless of personal morals. The country is able

to maintain its position by denying their action in pursuit of moral righteousness.

Fox News states "the White House counters that the withdrawal would be messy no

matter what and that the airlift out of the country has saved many lives." We can hope as

constituents of the state that the country is acting in good faith, however the volume of drone

strikes that have resulted in mass killings of innocent civilians proves a fallacy in the logic they

thrive on. The government has dredged up the notion that the actions taken to both remove troops from Afghanistan and continue their pattern of bombing a country has rested upon the importance of human life. It is more comfortable for the people in this country to collectively disengage from the conversation that the military may be causing more harm than reducing it. An American life is not vacuously more valuable than an Afghani life, it's time for the U.S. to recognize that.