

By Debra Sweet

World Can't Wait and others are responding to the killings yesterday in Afghanistan that at least one US Army staff sergeant is alleged to have carried out. 16 Afghan civilians including children were killed inside homes, in 2 villages, in completely unprovoked aggression, according to witnesses.

Here, villagers protest outside the U.S. base in the Panjwai District of Kandahar Province, Afghanistan.

We are devoting full attention today to this incident, because it so embodies what's wrong with the US occupation of Afghanistan. [Join a vigil](#), write to the media in response to this coverage - speak out. Even if you're on spring break! Email your message to debrasweet@worldcantwait.net and we'll publish more.

This is What Liberation Looks Like: U.S. Massacre in Afghanistan

By Dennis Loo

11 March 2012 - Reporting on its website tonight, The New York Times stated: "Stalking from home to home, a United States Army sergeant methodically killed at least 16 civilians, 9 of them children, in a rural stretch of southern Afghanistan [in Kandahar Province] early on Sunday [March 11, 2012]."

After murdering these innocents one by one, this U.S. soldier - many Afghan witnesses, including one whose father was killed, saw several U.S. soldiers involved in the attack - then covered his/their victims with a blanket and set them afire.

"This incident is tragic and shocking, and does not represent the exceptional character of our military and the respect that the United States has for the people of Afghanistan," Mr. Obama said in a statement.

Yet another example of the "exceptional character of our military" and its extraordinary "respect" for the Afghan people – one of a whole string of incidents that show the U.S. high regard for the people whose country it has been occupying for more than ten years in the longest war in U.S. history (not counting its wars on Native Americans).

The Marines who filmed their urinating on the corpses of dead Afghan fighters is another instance of the "exceptional character of our military" and its extraordinary "respect" for the Afghan people.

The Korans deliberately burned by the U.S. in Afghanistan is still another illustration of the "exceptional character of our military" and its extraordinary "respect" for the Afghan people.

The 2005 Haditha Massacre where at least two dozen unarmed Iraqi civilians were murdered by U.S. troops under the command of Staff Sergeant Frank Wuterich who admitted that he had told his soldiers to "shoot first and ask questions later" is but more evidence of the "exceptional character of our military" and its extraordinary "respect" for the Iraqi and Afghan people.

In return for his "exceptional character" Wuterich was convicted of "dereliction of duty."

The U.S. policy of bombing large gatherings in Afghanistan, including wedding parties, is still another example of the "exceptional character of our military" and its extraordinary "respect" for the Afghan people.

This is what liberation looks like, U.S. style.

To those who want to assert, as Mr. Obama and Mr. Panetta keep having to repeat, that these actions do not represent the attitudes and policies of their fine military machine, let's note for the record and for accuracy's sake that these wars were illegal, immoral, and unjust in the first place. These atrocities are merely the most publicized incidents of a policy; these are not aberrations. These are the results of the mentality and deliberate policies of this government, first under Bush and now under Obama.

As Cofer Black, Director of the CIA's Counterterrorism Center, replied to the Russian official who was warning him that the U.S. plans to invade and occupy Afghanistan were going to lead to the same disastrous results as what happened to the Russians:

"We're going to kill them," he said. "We're going to put their heads on sticks. We're going to rock their world." [i]

This is not some random, solitary bad apple speaking. This is the Director of the CIA's Counterterrorism Center. This is a U. S. leader. This is their view of the Afghan people. This is an example of their mindset.

Aggressive war. Unjust and immoral occupation in which U.S. soldiers are routinely instructed by their superiors to "shoot first and ask questions later." Free fire zones. Torture of innocents. Indefinite detention. Drone attacks. Breaking down Afghan civilians' homes' doors in the dead of the night and then one by one, gunning down the families inside - men, women, and children - then covering their bodies with blankets and setting them afire.

These are not the actions of lone, mad, pathological individuals; this is U.S. policy. This is how empires behave and think.

Here is U.S. style liberation. Here is yet another fine example of the exceptional character of the U.S. military and U.S. government.

[i] Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 103.

Dennis Loo is on the Steering Committee of World Can't Wait. His new book, *Globalization and the Demolition of Society*, explores how free market fundamentalism creates a global situation where governments must increasingly rely on secrecy, deception, surveillance, fear and force to maintain control.