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Obama's Finest Hour: Killing Innocent People for "Made-Up Crap"

By Chris Floyd

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If ever I am tempted by the siren songs of my tribal past as a deep-fried, yellow-dawg Democrat, and begin to feel any faint, atavistic stirrings of sympathy for the old gang, I simply think of things [like the scenario below](#), sketched last week by Johann Hari, and those wispy ghosts of partisanship past go howling back to the depths:

Imagine if, an hour from now, a robot-plane swooped over your house and blasted it to pieces. The plane has no pilot. It is controlled with a joystick from 7,000 miles away, sent by the Pakistani military to kill you. It blows up all the houses in your street, and so barbecues your family and your neighbours until there is nothing left to bury but a few charred slops. Why? They refuse to comment. They don't even admit the robot-planes belong to them. But they tell the Pakistani newspapers back home it is because one of you was planning to attack Pakistan. How do they know? Somebody told them. Who? You don't know, and there are no appeals against the robot.

Now imagine it doesn't end there: these attacks are happening every week somewhere in your country. They blow up funerals and family dinners and children. The number of robot-planes in the sky is increasing every week. You discover they are named "Predators", or "Reapers" – after the Grim Reaper. No matter how much you plead, no matter how much you make it clear you are a peaceful civilian getting on with your life, it won't stop. What do you do? If there was a group arguing that Pakistan was an evil nation

that deserved to be violently attacked, would you now start to listen?

...[This] is in fact an accurate description of life in much of Pakistan today, with the sides flipped. The Predators and Reapers are being sent by Barack Obama's CIA, with the support of other Western governments, and they killed more than 700 civilians in 2009 alone – 14 times the number killed in the 7/7 attacks in London. The floods were seen as an opportunity to increase the attacks, and last month saw the largest number of robot-plane bombings ever: 22. Over the next decade, spending on drones is set to increase by 700 per cent.

Friends, it's very simple: if you support Barack Obama and the Democrats -- even if reluctantly, even if you're just being all sophisticatedly super-savvy and blogospherically strategic about it, playing the "long game" or eleven-dimensional chess or what have you -- you are supporting the outright murder of innocent people who have never done anything against you or yours. You have walked into a house, battered down the bedroom door, put the barrel of a gun against the temple of a sleeping child, and pulled the trigger. That is what you are supporting, that is what you are complicit in, *that is what you yourself are doing*.

But hey, let's be all super-savvy and eleventh-dimensional ourselves here for a moment. Let's be pragmatic, and technocratic, let's be grown-ups, let's not get sidetracked by a bunch of jejune, dorm-room, hippy-dippy moralizing. No, let's concentrate on practicalities, let's get down to brass tacks, let's be *serious* and focus on "what works" to protect our national security. OK, so here's the practical result of the illegal campaign of mass murder that Obama is waging on the sovereign territory of one of America's allies:

... Drone technology was developed by the Israelis, who routinely use it to bomb the Gaza Strip. I've been in Gaza during some of these attacks. The people there were terrified – and radicalised. A young woman I know who had been averse to political violence and an advocate of peaceful protest saw a drone blow up a car full of people – and she started supporting Islamic Jihad and crying for the worst possible revenge against Israel. Robot-drones have successfully bombed much of Gaza, from secular Fatah to Islamist Hamas, to the brink of jihad.

Is the same thing happening in Pakistan? David Kilcullen is a counter-insurgency expert who worked for General Petraeus in Iraq and now advises the State Department. He has shown that two per cent of the people killed by the robot-planes in Pakistan are jihadis. The remaining 98 per cent are as innocent as the victims of 9/11. He says: "It's not moral." And it gets worse: "Every one of these dead non-combatants represents an alienated family, and more recruits for a militant movement that has grown exponentially as drone strikes have increased. ... It could be poised to get even worse: Bob Woodward's Obama's Wars says the US has an immediate plan to bomb 150 targets in Pakistan if there is a jihadi attack inside America.

Why, it's almost as if the drone campaign was *designed* to create more and more enemies

-- and more and more contracts for war profiteers to build more and more drones, which can then be used to create more and more enemies, which means more and more contracts for say, it *is* a practical plan, after all! A practical plan to *create* terrorism, not quell it.

And what is the "evidence" used by the Administration militarists as they draw up their target lists for the defenseless villages in Pakistan? What is the "intelligence" produced by the [\\$75 billion lavished on our 200,000 security apparatchiks](#) every year? On what basis is Barack Obama killing people in Pakistan? Hari reports:

..[The] press releases uncritically repeated by the press after a bombing always brag about "senior al-Qa'ida commanders" killed – but some people within the CIA admit how arbitrary their choice of targets is. One of their senior figures told The New Yorker: "Sometimes you're dealing with tribal chiefs. Often they say an enemy of theirs is al-Qa'ida because they want to get rid of somebody, or they made crap up because they wanted to prove they were valuable so they could make money."

That's right: Barack Obama is killing hundreds of innocent civilians in Pakistan on the basis of *crap made up for money*. Made-up crap. For money. That's why a child who is just as precious as your child is to a parent who is just as real a person as you are was killed this week, by Barack Obama and the Democratic Party and the entire bipartisan foreign policy establishment of the United States of America: *crap made up for money*.

And of course, it's not just tribal chiefs making up crap for blood money: the entire aforementioned bipartisan foreign policy establishment is now and has for years been making up crap "so they could make money" -- for themselves, for their corporate patrons, for their government agencies, for their defense and "security" stockholdings, for the perpetuation of their bloated, belligerent, pig-ignorant domination of world affairs and American society -- by killing innocent people all over the world.

"But oh my gosh, oh my lord, we have to support Obama! What if those Tea Party Republicans get into power? What would happen then?" What would happen? The same goddamned thing that's happening right now, that's what. More and more war, more and more murder, more and more domination by a militarist kleptocracy. As Glenn Greenwald [notes this week](#), Obama and the Tea Partiers (and the neocons, and the liberal hawks, and the Bush Regime war criminals) are in lockstep (even goosestep) on keeping the War Machine stoked and rolling.

That's why the opposition to the Tea Party Republicans has been so anemic, focused almost entirely on personality flaws or asinine comments or resume padding or stupid things they did in college. The Democrats can't possibly attack them on *substance* -- i.e., the fact that the Tea Partiers are rabid warmongers who delight in murder, torture and repression and believe that the poor, the sick, the old, the weak, the unlucky, and the vulnerable should just eat shit and die already -- because *these are the same positions the Democrats hold!* Who "reformed" health care into a gargantuan, guaranteed boondoggle for rapacious conglomerates? Who bailed out the bankers and left millions in the hands of

savage "robo-signers?" Who set up the "Catfood Commission" and stocked it from top to bottom with long-time, deep-dyed haters of the poor and the weak? It wasn't Dick Cheney, bub.

I don't want to see the Tea Partiers in power. But I'm not going to support one faction of murderers and plunderers just to keep out another faction of murderers and plunderers. Hari makes this good analogy about the drone program:

Yet many people defend the drones by saying: "We have to do something." If your friend suffered terrible third-degree burns, would you urge her to set fire to her hair because "you have to do something"? Would you give a poisoning victim another, worse poison, on the grounds that any action is better than none?

Similarly, I say: would you support one murderer -- who likes to break into children's bedrooms and blow their brains out -- in order to stop another murderer, who would do the same thing, from taking over a vicious gang of murderers? What would be the basis, the reason for your support? That the first murderer wears nicer suits? Digs cooler music? Throws better street parties? Leaves a pretty little flower next to the blown-out brains?

For a system sunk so deeply in evil, there is no "lesser" evil to choose. The [militarist kleptocracy itself is evil](#), and every political faction that does not denounce it and seek to dismantle it is complicit in this evil. The choice is to stand *outside* such factions; the choice is non-cooperation with evil, as advocated by Thoreau, Tolstoy, Gandhi, King. I'm not going to spend my brief time here on earth standing with blood-soaked killers, no matter what factional name they give themselves, or what loyalties they might claim on our myth-clouded memories of the past. I'm not going to teach my children that all we can do is to grovel before one child-murdering maniac or another, to keep quiet, to never speak the truth, to sell their votes, their dignity and their souls to murderers who would pervert every good instinct -- and every bad instinct -- every worthy hope and every nasty fear, to keep themselves in power.

Dead children. Made-up crap. For money. That's what our leading "dissidents" [want us to support](#). There is much that could be said about [the utterly puerile arguments](#) being offered for this murder-abetting stance; but in the interests of brevity, and civility -- and my own sanity -- I will forbear, and simply say: no thanks.